



TERMINAL REVIEW OF THE UNEP/GEF ENABLING ACTIVITY 9641

“DEVELOPMENT OF MINAMATA INITIAL
ASSESSMENT AND NATIONAL ACTION
PLAN FOR ARTISANAL SMALL-SCALE
GOLD MINING IN ERITREA”

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About the Review¹

Joint Evaluation: No

Report Language(s): English

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Brief Description: This report is a terminal review of a United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Global Environment Facility (GEF) project implemented by UNEP and executed by the United Nations Training and Research (UNITAR) Chemicals and Waste Management Programme. The main objective of the project was to facilitate the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention by promoting the use of scientific and technical knowledge and tools by national stakeholders in Eritrea. The project was also to enable compliance of Eritrea to Article 7 (ASGM) of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. The review sought to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The review has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote learning, feedback, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP and executing partners including the relevant agencies and stakeholders in the project country.

Disclaimer: This report has been prepared by an external consultant as part of a Terminal Review, which is a management-led process to assess performance at the project's operational completion. The UNEP Evaluation Office provides templates and tools to support the review process and provides a formal assessment of the quality of the Review report, which is provided within this report's annexed material. The findings and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of Member States or the UN Environment Programme Senior Management.

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Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining in Eritrea
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¹ This data is used to aid the internet search of this report on web-based platforms.

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Project Identification Table

Executing Agency:	UNITAR and Ministry of Land, Water and the Environment (MoLWE)		
Sub-programme:	Chemicals and Wastes	Expected Accomplishment(s):	PoW 2016-2017 - Subprogramme 5 chemicals and waste - EA (a) countries increasingly have the necessary institutional capacity and policy instruments to manage chemicals and waste soundly, including the implementation of related provisions in the multilateral environmental agreements".
UN Environment approval date:		Programme of Work Output(s):	(2) Secretariat support provided to the INC to prepare the Minamata Convention on Mercury during the interim period, prior to its entry into force.
GEF project ID:	9641	Project type:	EA
GEF Operational Programme #:	2	Focal Area(s):	C&W
GEF approval date:	21/09/2016	GEF Strategic Priority:	Mercury
Expected start date:		Actual start date:	19/01/2017
Planned completion date:	30/10/2018	Actual completion date:	31/12/2020
Planned project budget at approval:	\$ 700,000	Actual total expenditures reported as of 31 December 2020:	\$ 680,000
GEF grant allocation:	\$ 700,000	GEF grant expenditures reported as of 31 December 2020	\$ 680,000
Project Preparation Grant - GEF financing:	n/a	Project Preparation Grant - co- financing:	n/a
Expected Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	n/a	Secured Medium-Size Project/Full- Size Project co-financing:	n/a
First disbursement:	19/01/2017	Date of financial closure:	3/12/2021
No. of revisions:	0	Date of last revision:	n/a
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	n/a	Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:	Last: Next:
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (planned date):	n/a	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	n/a

Terminal Review (<i>planned date</i>):	March 2020	Terminal Review (actual date):	September 2021
Coverage - Country(ies):	Eritrea	Coverage - Region(s):	Africa
Dates of previous project phases:	n/a	Status of future project phases:	n/a

Executive Summary

1. This report is the Terminal Review of the enabling activity (EA) entitled “Development of Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA) and National Action Plan (NAP) for Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM) in Eritrea”, executed by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and co-executed with the Ministry of Land, Water and the Environment (MoLWE) of Eritrea. The project’s total budget was \$700,000. Eritrea has not yet ratified the Minamata Convention but has taken other meaningful steps such as participating in the sub-regional workshop organized by UNEP from 04 to 07 February 2016 in Lusaka, Zambia and developed a draft national roadmap on the Minamata Convention. It also participated in the INC7 of the Minamata Convention from 10 to 15 March 2015 in Jordan, initiated discussions with key ministries and stakeholders, and undertook a preliminary analysis of key mercury-related issues and stakeholders at the national level. On 4 July 2016, Eritrea notified the Minamata Secretariat that Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) and processing in which mercury amalgamation is used to extract gold from ore, was more than insignificant within its territory.
2. The project was developed based on the guidelines for Minamata Initial Assessments, developed by the GEF Secretariat, and National Action Plans, approved by the Minamata COP. The GEF Chief Executive Officer endorsed the project on 21 September 2016 as part of GEF’s efforts to achieve the objectives of its Chemicals and Waste Focal Area Strategy, in particular goal 1 “develop the enabling conditions, tools and environment for the sound management of harmful chemicals and wastes”; program 2 “support enabling activities and promote their integration into national budgets and planning processes, national and sector policies and actions and global monitoring”.
3. The objective of the MIA and NAP project was to facilitate the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention by the use of scientific and technical knowledge and tools by national stakeholders, setting a baseline of data about the presence of mercury in different environmental media through the inventory of emissions and releases. The assessment also aimed to reinforce the National Coordination Mechanism on Chemicals Management, currently operational in the country, by ensuring specific mercury considerations are also addressed without duplicating efforts. Eritrea had indicated that availability of data is a major challenge to design adequate strategies for mercury reduction, therefore, Eritrea expected to benefit from the enabling activities funded under the GEF to identify domestic mercury challenges and to implement future obligations under the Minamata Convention. At the end of the projects, Eritrea would also be in compliance with article 7 of the Convention with the ASGM NAP serving as a roadmap for an early implementation of the Minamata Convention. The sharing of experiences and lessons learned throughout the project was also expected to be an important contribution to other countries with similar socio-economic profile within the region.
4. The project, covering both MIA and NAP development in Eritrea, had three outcomes, organized in three major components. Each outcome had its own expected outputs with specific activities to achieve the desired outputs and outcome.
 - Component 1: Global technical support for MIA and NAP development
 - Component 2: Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA) and National Action Plan (NAP) development
 - Component 3: MIA validation and NAP endorsement and submission to the Minamata Secretariat
5. The review analysed project documentation, country-produced assessment reports, and carried out interviews via telephone, in person, electronic/on-line surveys with relevant persons of the

project Executing Agency (UNITAR), the reviewer of the NAP global component, the Eritrea National Project Coordinator and project stakeholders, in consultation with the UNEP-based Task Manager.

Criterion	Rating
A. Strategic Relevance	Satisfactory
1. Alignment to UN Environment MTS and POW	HS
2. Alignment to GEF/Donor strategic priorities	HS
3. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities	S
4. Complementarity with existing interventions	HS
B. Quality of Project Design	Satisfactory
C. Nature of External Context	Favourable
D. Effectiveness	Satisfactory
1. Achievement of outputs	S
2. Achievement of direct outcomes	S
3. Likelihood of impact	Moderately Likely
E. Financial Management	Satisfactory
1. Completeness of project financial information	S
2. Communication between finance and project management staff	S
3. Compliance with UN Environment standards and procedures	S
F. Efficiency	Moderately Satisfactory
G. Monitoring and Reporting	Satisfactory
1. Monitoring design and budgeting	S
2. Monitoring of project implementation	S
3. Project reporting	S
H. Sustainability	Moderately Likely
1. Socio-political sustainability	L
2. Financial sustainability	ML
3. Institutional sustainability	ML
I. Factors Affecting Performance	Satisfactory
2. Quality of project management and supervision	S
3. Stakeholders participation and cooperation	HS
4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity	S
5. Country ownership and driven-ness	S
6. Communication and public awareness	S
Overall Project Rating	Satisfactory

Note: ML (Moderately likely); L (Likely); MS (Moderately Satisfactory); S (Satisfactory); HS (Highly Satisfactory).

Summary of Findings

- The MIA and NAP project was expected to facilitate Eritrea's ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention of Mercury by providing key stakeholders with the scientific and technical knowledge and tools. Despite delays in project delivery, the project is rated as 'satisfactory'.
- The project design was rated as satisfactory, linking the project to UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy and Programme of Work, as well as to GEF 5 Strategic Priorities. Relevance to national priorities and needs was highlighted especially in the ASGM sector. The project design highlighted the links to the country's sustainable development goals.

8. The strengths of the design include the strategic relevance, stakeholder analysis, background on Eritrea's mercury and ASGM activities, the governance and supervision arrangements, and the risk identification and social safeguards. The governance and supervision arrangements clearly identify how the project is to be executed and monitored, sharing, and defining stakeholder roles and responsibilities, to encourage sound implementation. The financial planning is sound and does not display any deficiencies, and the funding is budgeted coherently for the timeline and outputs of the project. Moreover, the project has a clear Theory of Change presented in narrative form. Stakeholder analysis was robust at the design phase where all relevant government agencies, civil society, and mining communities to be engaged were identified.
9. The project had delays brought about by communication challenges between the EA and the national co-executing partner, as well as by the rainy season and lack of transport availability to ASGM sites. A no-cost extension was granted to allow more time to conduct national consultations/validation, to finalize the reports on challenges and opportunities as well as in drafting the final MIA and NAP. A more realistic timeframe that considers potential challenges caused by the country's seasonal climate would benefit future projects.
10. Despite the aforementioned delays, the project was able to deliver the outputs that led to the desired outcomes: The National Coordination Committee was enhanced, and all stakeholders were engaged including civil society via the Stakeholder Advisory Group. The project delivered on the assessment of national infrastructure capacity on mercury management, including relevant national legislations, and multilateral environment agreements on chemicals and waste where Eritrea is signatory.
11. Achievement of outcomes could be attributed directly to the project, the good quality of project design, management and supervision, stakeholders' participation, communication, and public awareness. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity were highlighted in the ASGM NAP.
12. Law in Eritrea prohibits using mercury in ASGM and requires large scale mining companies to carry out social and environmental impact assessments, and regular monitoring by the regulatory agencies, increasing the likelihood of the project's sustainability. While socio-political sustainability is likely, institutional, and financial sustainability after project completion were rated moderately likely. A regional framework that encourages countries in the subregion (East Africa) to share data, experiences, and information (such as private sector engagement) and agrees on a common approach towards financial sustainability is needed. By ratifying the Convention, Eritrea would have access to funding for implementation work as well as continued access to the latest discussions and developments on the topic of mercury management.
13. The close working relationship among stakeholders in Eritrea is currently sustained by a National Coordination Committee on Chemicals and Waste that includes government agencies, local government authorities, civil society, academia, and local mining communities. However, the group would benefit from communicating and meeting regularly. The stakeholder analysis at the design phase was thorough and is highly satisfactory, as it includes relevant stakeholders including their interest/influence and their potential role done in consultation with the national government.
14. In terms of the process and quality of delivering the MIA and NAP, the project benefitted by a series of peer reviews by both the EA and the IA. Furthermore, the GEF ASGM global component also provided valuable inputs into the final products.
15. The project's **challenges** have been mainly the time management and delays in reporting and delivery that resulted in delays of funds being released from IA to EA. A more realistic project timeframe would benefit the project, factoring in communication infrastructure, timing of activities, and accessibility to project sites.

16. The gender and socio-economic dimensions and links to poverty alleviation were highlighted in the project document, however there was no sex-disaggregated data in the MIA. Nevertheless, gender considerations, i.e., on the role of women, were highlighted in the ASGM NAP. Reference was made on the vulnerable populations at risk (women, youth, and children) in the MIA and ASGM NAP.
17. Overall, this project was able to deliver on the outputs and outcomes, with the support of the executing agency and the implementing agency Task Manager.

Lessons Learned

Lesson 1: The Executing Agency must hold pre-implementation information/expectation setting sessions with the country. It is important to engage the EA and stakeholders in the project design stage to have a sense of ownership of the project upfront.

Lesson 2: The difficulties in communication between the EA and the national co-executing partner caused delays in the project and a plan for communication channels must be in place before project inception. A more realistic timeframe would benefit the project, factoring in budget negotiations, communication infrastructure, timing, and access to project sites, as well as stability of international consultants and consistent templates of the inventory.

Lesson 3: Timing of visits and accessibility to ASGM sites should be considered in project planning. Delays of project execution were also due to the rainy season and transport required for the project team to reach the project sites.

Lesson 4: Contracts/agreements between the IA and EA and with the partner executing agency need to be very specific on activity and monitoring timelines. This will help avoid project extensions and ensure timely delivery of outputs.

Lesson 5: Gender dimensions of chemicals/mercury should be included in the assessment. While gender and the role of women was highlighted in the MIA and ASGM NAP, there was no sex-disaggregated data in the MIA.

Lesson 6: Constant and regular communication between the project IA and EA addressing issues and concerns throughout execution contributes to positive delivery of outputs. The smooth collaboration among the government agencies and stakeholders (especially the mining community) in Eritrea delivered on the outputs in both MIA and NAP.

Lesson 7: Eritrea should engage with other countries in the subregion (East Africa) and agree on a common approach towards financial sustainability for chemicals management. Eritrea should also build bilateral and multilateral relationships with the international community to access funding.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The EA and its executing partner (in this case the national government) should be in contact before the start of project implementation to agree on their respective expectations and requirements and responsibilities. The EA, its executing partner and stakeholders would benefit from engagement in the project design stage to have a sense of ownership of the project from the start.

Recommendation 2: Communication requirements (including internet access) should be factored in when planning project duration and budget, allowing additional implementation time in countries

with limited means of communication.

Recommendation 3: Seasonal timing and access to project sites should be considered in the timeline of project delivery and financial planning.

Recommendation 4: Ensure the Executing Agencies are fully aware of the workplan, deliverables and reporting timelines stated in contracts and agreements to ensure a timely release of funds and minimize no-cost extensions.

Recommendation 5: Gender, socio-economic, local communities, elders and legal (human rights) experts should be engaged in future projects. Costing for such experts should be included in the project budget.

Recommendation 6: Maintain regular communication between the IA, EA and national coordinators to address issues that may arise during project execution. Designation of the appropriate national coordinators (with track record of project delivery) is fundamental to ensure project success.

Recommendation 7: Countries in the subregion (East Africa) should be encouraged to share data, experiences, and lessons learned. This could be source of financing information. Eritrea is encouraged to build bilateral and multilateral relationships with funding institutions and international organizations to explore different sources of funding, although not part of this project.

Introduction

18. This report presents the terminal review of the enabling activity entitled “Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and National Action Plan for Artisanal Small-Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) in Eritrea”. The objective of the project was to facilitate the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention by promoting the use of scientific and technical knowledge and tools by national stakeholders in Eritrea. The undertaking of a MIA is the first step towards ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury; the objective of which is to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and its compounds. Eritrea will benefit from new and updated information about the mercury situation in the country and from increased capacity in managing the risks of mercury, in particular from the ASGM sector. At the end of the project Eritrea will also be in compliance with the article 7 (ASGM) of the Minamata Convention. The sharing of experiences and lessons learned throughout the project is also expected to be an important contribution to other similar countries within region.
19. On 4 July 2016, the SAICM national focal point in Eritrea notified the Interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, in accordance with article 7 of the Minamata Convention, that ASGM and processing was more than insignificant within Eritrea. On 5 March 2016 the GEF Operational Focal Point of Eritrea endorsed the development of a Minamata Initial Assessment and an ASGM National Action Plan in Eritrea with UNEP as Implementing Agency. On 10 March 2016 the Director General of the Department of Environment of Eritrea sent a letter to the UNEP Executive Director and the GEF Chief Executive Officer informing that although the country had not signed the Minamata Convention, it was taking meaningful steps to ratify the Convention.
20. The project aimed at an early ratification and implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury on Eritrea was endorsed by the GEF CEO in September 2016, with an initial planned duration of 24 months, from the first disbursement of funds in January 2017. The project contributed to achieving sustainable development goals: SDG 3 (health and wellbeing), SDG 8 (economic growth and employment), SDG 5 (gender equality and women empowerment, SDG 6 (water and sanitation), and SDG 12 (sustainable consumption and production) in Eritrea. The project was also aligned with UNEP’s Programme of Work (PoW) 2016-2017 through its

expected accomplishment A under “the Chemicals and Waste Subprogramme”, by increasing the country’s capacity to manage chemicals and waste and by increasing collaboration between the secretariats of chemicals and waste related multilateral environmental agreements.

21. The project experienced several delays in execution due largely to the poor availability of internet access that hampered communication between the EA and co executing partner (Eritrea MoLWE). Slow start in project execution was due to the lengthy discussions for the official agreement between UNITAR and the Eritrea MoLWE. Eritrea’s border conflict with Ethiopia (a joint declaration on 9 July 2018 formally ended the border conflict) also affected project implementation. A no-cost extension was approved in May 2019 to extend the project execution 9 months from the original June 2019 completion. In addition to poor communication (limited internet access in Eritrea), the rainy season and limited access to transport prevented field work from taking place. The Eritrea MIA and ASGM NAP project was implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), with funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and executed by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), who has extensive experience on chemicals and waste management, in particular mercury management. The Eritrea Ministry of Land, Water and Environment (MoLWE) was the project co-executing agency, enabling ownership of the project since its inception. This terminal review is addressed to the government and stakeholders of Eritrea, the executing agency, the implementing agency and other countries or agencies that could benefit from the experience of initial assessments of the Minamata Convention and in drafting their ASGM National Action Plan.

The Review

22. The review was carried out from May to June 2020 by an independent consultant, Desiree M. Narvaez, under the supervision of Ludovic Bernaudat, Task Manager of the GEF team at the Chemicals and Health Branch of the Economy Division of UNEP.
23. The review has two main objectives, first to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and second to identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation on the regional level, and for the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention in Eritrea. This is to be done through promoting operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing between national stakeholders. To be effective, the review has a particular focus on how and why the results of the project were achieved, beyond displaying what the results were. Therefore, the evaluator aimed to differentiate between what would happen in the absence of the project and what happened as a result of the project.
24. The review had aimed to be as participatory as possible, and the evaluator was in contact with the Minamata and ASGM focal points of Eritrea. It was not possible to arrange travel to Eritrea due to lack of time and funding, and internet access was poor during the evaluation, Eritrea opted to send the questions by email. Email correspondence was used with the Eritrea focal points for the MIA and NAP, with the executing agency (UNITAR), with the technical experts on the MIA and NAP, and with the staff of the global component (component 1). The report of the peer reviewer of the ASGM NAP was also reviewed.
25. The desk review of all available project documentation, interviews with the EA and the email correspondence with Eritrea were the main methods used in verifying the outcomes and outputs of the project components. The performance of the project was evaluated in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, as well as its actual and potential outcomes and impacts and their sustainability. It also consisted of a likelihood of impact assessment, identifying intended and unintended effects. The factors and processes affecting project performance were also assessed, relating to preparation and readiness, quality of management and supervision,

stakeholder participation, public awareness, country ownership and responsiveness to human rights and gender equity. Finally, the project financing and the monitoring and evaluation systems were reviewed. All findings in this report are based on referenced evidence, and the sources have been crosschecked to the extent possible. The review also makes reference to the Eritrea Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA) available at the time of the review.

The Project

Context

26. The project is an enabling activity, and the MIA and the ASGM NAP process was developed as a standardized process in order to be applicable to any country. The project was designed to assess the situation regarding the levels of mercury in Eritrea and was therefore a baseline setting project to be considered as the basis for future projects related to mercury management.
27. The main objective of the project is to facilitate the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention by promoting the use of scientific and technical knowledge and tools by national stakeholders in Eritrea. The undertaking of an MIA is the first step towards implementing the Minamata Convention on Mercury; the objective of which is to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and its compounds. Eritrea will benefit from new and updated information about the mercury situation in the country and from increased capacity in managing the risks of mercury, particularly from the ASGM sector. Eritrea has not yet ratified the Minamata Convention; however, it has notified the Secretariat that it is taking meaningful steps to ratify the Convention. Eritrea participated in the INC7 meeting on Minamata Convention held from 10 to 15 March 2015 in Jordan; participated in the sub-regional workshop organized by UNEP from 04 to 07 February 2016 in Lusaka, Zambia, and developed a draft national roadmap on the Minamata Convention; initiated discussions with key ministries and stakeholders; and undertook a preliminary analysis of key mercury-related issues at the national level. The sharing of experiences and lessons learned throughout the project is also expected to be an important contribution to other similar countries within the region.

Background of Eritrea

28. Chapter 1 of the Eritrea MIA provides the country's following background: Eritrea is a north-eastern African country bordered by Sudan to the north (Ras Kasar) and west, Ethiopia to the south, Djibouti to the south-east (Dar Elwa) and the Red Sea to the East and north-east. The country is home to nine ethnic groups, speaking different languages that live with a sense of harmony². The population estimate made in 2010 by the Ministry of Local Government revealed that the population size of Eritrea is approximately 3.2 million inhabitants and is not uniformly distributed throughout the country. The age distribution is higher in the younger age groups than in the older age. It is also marked by migration due to prolonged wars. In general, the central highlands are the most densely populated part of the country, while in the lowlands are sparse.
29. Eritrea has fought thirty years of war for independence and got its independence in 1991. The war left Eritrea with ruined infrastructure and devastated economy and the government, right after the independence, put in place a transitional economic rehabilitation and reconstruction program to be implemented in phases and the economy showed appreciable improvement, until Eritrean-Ethiopian war that took place from 1998 to 2000. The war brought economic and infrastructure devastation to Eritrea.
30. The Government development efforts focused not only on rebuilding and rehabilitating the war

² Eritrea. 2010. Eritrea Mining Journal.

damaged and destroyed economic and social infrastructures, but also on formulating numerous national economic and social development strategies and policies. That includes the Macro Policy of 1994, which mapped out short, medium, and long-term reconstruction and development programs.

31. Agriculture, fishery, mining, and tourism are among sectors on which the Eritrean economy depends greatly whereby the agricultural sector contributes the largest share. Eritrea is endowed with various mineral resources including gold, silver, copper, zinc, potash, etc.
32. By virtue of its geographic location and economic development, the country faces various environmental challenges such as droughts, floods, increased variability in rainfall patterns and/or reduced precipitation, soil erosion, climate change induced deforestation, land degradation, biodiversity loss as well as environmental pollution from the mismanagement of wastes and chemicals. Also, chemical pollution is a concern in Eritrea notably with the use of pesticides, according to the National Implementation Plan³ under the Stockholm Convention had identified as being widely used at national level.

Institutional, political, and governance structure

33. Eritrea is divided into 6 regions. The form of governance and administration of the different regions is decentralised aiming at rural development. The mandate and responsibilities of the various levels of administration are set out in the Proclamation for the Establishment of Regional Administration (PERA) No. 86/1996⁴.
34. Eritrea has been dealing with the conservation and protection of the environment. In its Macro Policy of November 1994, the Government reiterated that one of the principal national development objectives is “an upgraded and safeguarded environment that is free from pollution”. In line with these policy frameworks, Eritrea has issued several regulatory frameworks and action plans covering the following sectors: Environment, Agriculture, Marine Resources, Health, Trade and Industry, Transport and Communication, Science and Technology, Finance, Marine Transport.
35. In view of the environmental challenges, the country has formulated policies and promulgated several regulatory and legal frameworks. Several action plans including national adaptation plan of action, action plan for combating desertification, national biodiversity strategy and action plan, the national environmental management plan, the health sector strategic development plan have been also developed and implemented.
36. A key legislation in Eritrea and pursuant to Legal Notice No.19/1995, of Department of Mines of the Ministry of Energy and Mines (hereafter, DoM), any artisanal mining activities with application of mercury amalgamation as well as any artisanal mining activities (regardless of whether mercury is used or not) deeper than 5 meters is totally prohibited and any artisanal mining activity that does not comply with the provisions is considered illegal.
37. Eritrea is committed to support global action in the protection of the environment and of human health. It has demonstrated political will as a signatory of the Chemicals and Waste Conventions (Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm, Bamako and Vienna) and in other Environmental Conventions (Biodiversity, Framework Convention on Climate, among others).

Mercury Management and ASGM in Eritrea

38. In Eritrea, gold mining started with the Egyptian Pharaohs in the 4th dynasty (Tissi). The process

³ <http://chm.pops.int/Implementation/NIPs/NIPTransmission/tabid/253/Default.aspx>.

⁴Ministry of Land, Water and Environment. Revised national biodiversity strategy and action plan for Eritrea 2015.

of amalgamation for the recovery of gold and silver on a large scale started in the 12th century. Amalgamation activities for gold recovery are also reported from the time of the Portuguese occupation in the 18th century. Records show that amalgamation processes were used by the Italians from 1900-1914 across the country. From the 1930s, other amalgamation activities have been recorded in the central highlands and northern and western lowlands. However, mining operations were interrupted due to WWII. Artisanal mining activities restarted in 1955 in Augaro, Hykota and Mogeraib. Since then, there has been increased mining activities in the northern part of the country (Zara). The total amount of gold extracted (1932-1999) is roughly estimated at 4700 Kg.

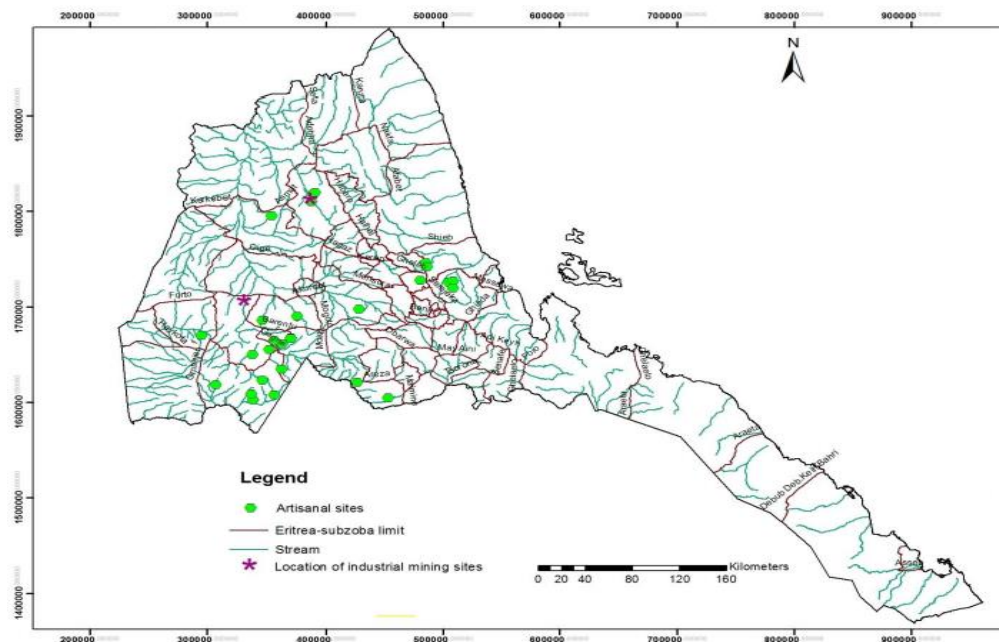


Figure 1. The geographical distribution of ASGM sites in Eritrea (source: Eritrea ASGM NAP)

39. Surveys on mercury contamination in soil conducted in the lowlands of Eritrea where ASGM had been common, including Augaro, Hykota, and Zara, showed that the amount of mercury deposited in soil is estimated to be substantial (7 tons). Moreover, there are areas in the central high lands such as Medrizen, Adi-shimagle, Adi-Tekelezan, Adi- Nefas, Torat, Adi-guntsi, Para-Dubaa, etc. where no surveys have been conducted, but mercury contamination is expected.
40. Information and understanding about mercury and its management in Eritrea is limited. Although Eritrea has not yet developed legislation, directives, procedures, or guidelines pertinent to the management of mercury, its use in Artisanal mining is prohibited. Article 30/6 of the mining proclamation states: "The holder of an artisanal mining license shall take all environmental protection measures...and shall not be allowed to use mercury". Moreover, the draft national environmental Proclamation, states that natural resources, specifically water and soil, should be protected from harmful chemicals including mercury.
41. Manufacturing, processing industries, and mining in Eritrea are scattered across the country with the latter starting to take hold in the economy of the country. Currently one of the promising assets for the economic development of the country is the mining sector, which has attracted approximately 20 listed companies of which the Bisha Mining Company has already begun production and sales of gold.

Objectives and Components

42. The MIA assessed the country's baseline conditions in terms of presence of mercury in the environment, as well as the existing legislative and institutional frameworks. The assessment included the identification of all mercury sources and releases using UNEP's Toolkit levels 1 and 2, setting a baseline that allows for future monitoring of progress in the implementation of the Convention. The assessment also aimed to reinforce the national coordination mechanism on chemicals management, as it is currently operational in the country, by ensuring that specific mercury considerations are also addressed without duplicating efforts. The AGSM NAP in Eritrea will present a roadmap on how Eritrea will be able to comply with Article 07 of the Minamata Convention.
43. The project has three outcomes, organized in three major components. Each component has its own expected outcome and outputs with specific activities to achieve the desired output and outcome.

Component 1: Global technical support for MIA and NAP development

Expected Output and planned activities:

- 1.1. Training and guidance provided to relevant national stakeholders in Eritrea to develop a MIA and develop and implement a NAP as per Annex C of the Minamata Convention.
- 1.1.1 *Develop a roster of experts and collection of tools and methodologies for MIA and NAP development;*
 - 1.1.2 *Undertake capacity building trainings and provide assistance with baseline inventories;*
 - 1.1.3 *Undertake knowledge management and information exchange through the Global Mercury Partnership website and/or Partners websites and tools;*
 - 1.1.4 *Hold a final national workshop to identify lessons learned and opportunities for future cooperation in the NAP implementation. A gender session will be included in the workshop agenda.*

Component 2: Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA) and National Action Plan (NAP) development

Expected Output and planned activities:

- 2.1. Identified and strengthened national coordination mechanism and Technical expert group that will guide the project implementation
- 2.1.1 *Organize a National Inception Workshop to raise awareness and to define the scope and objective of the MIA and NAP processes, including:*
 - a) Develop ToR for the National Coordination Mechanism and Technical Expert Group;*
 - b) Develop a strategy for awareness raising aimed at national stakeholders throughout the project;*
 - c) Identify key stakeholders and assign roles.*
 - 2.1.2 *Conduct a national assessment on existing sources of information (studies), and compile and make them available.*
- 2.2 National institutional and regulatory framework and national capacities on mercury management assessed.
- 2.2.1 *Assess key national stakeholders, their roles in mercury management and*

- institutional interest and capacities;*
- 2.2.2 *Analyse the regulatory framework, identify gaps and assess the regulatory reforms needed for the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention in Eritrea.*

Component 3: MIA validation and NAP endorsement and submission to the Minamata Secretariat

Expected Output and planned activities:

3.1 Technical support provided to Eritrea to facilitate the MIA validation and NAP endorsement and submission to the Minamata Secretariat.

- 3.1.1 *Draft and validate MIA Report;*
- 3.1.2 *Design and conduct national workshops targeting vulnerable groups and miners to complete the final NAPs and to expose the formulated NAPs on ASGM to public consultation and endorsement;*
- 3.1.3 *Design and conduct national workshops targeting appropriate national decision makers that are key to NAP endorsement and official submission to the Minamata Secretariat;*
- 3.1.4 *Develop a national MIA and NAP awareness raising and dissemination and outreach strategy.*

Milestones/Key Dates in Project Design and Implementation

44. The project was endorsed by the GEF CEO on 21 September 2016. The actual start was 1 January 2017 due to delays in administrative processes in both the implementing and the executing agencies. In addition, there were difficulties with the agreement between the EA and the national government (Eritrea Ministry of Land, Water and Environment) as co-executing agency due to communication challenges and lengthy discussions on the budget.
45. The monitoring and evaluation plan consisted of six-month financial and progress reports from the executing agency, an independent financial audit, and the independent Terminal Review. The project had one no-cost extension until 30 June 2020.

Implementation Arrangements

46. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) acted as the UN implementing agency for this project, with financing from the GEF in accordance with Article 13 on the financial mechanism of the Minamata Convention; included in the GEF V Focal Area Strategy document under the Strategic Objective 3 Pilot Sound Chemicals Management and Mercury Reduction, specifically under outcome 3.1 to build country capacity to effectively manage mercury in priority sectors. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) was the executing agency and the Eritrea Ministry of Land, Water and Environment (MoLWE) was the co-executing partner. UNITAR has a track record in delivering projects on the management of chemicals and mercury in particular. Bi-annual progress and financial reports have been submitted by UNITAR to the UNEP/GEF task manager.

Project Financing

Table1. Original and actual expenditure project budget and expenditure ratio by component

Component	Original budget	Revised budget	Expenditure as of Jun 2019	Expenditure as of June 2020	Expenditure as of December 2020	Expenditure ratio (original/actual)
Component 1	\$71,800	N/A	\$11,000	\$11,217	\$71,800	1.00
Component 2	\$503,364	N/A	\$357,585	\$325,195	\$496,750	0.99
Component 3	\$31,200	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$47,849	1.53
Project Management	\$63,636	N/A	\$47,384	\$47,384	\$63,600	1.00
M&E	\$30,000	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	0
Total	\$700,000	N/A	\$415,969	\$383,796	\$679,999	0.97

Project partners

47. The key project partners were:

- UNEP as the Implementing Agency and UNITAR as the Executing Agency
- The Eritrea Ministry of Land, Water and Environment (MoLWE) as the co-executing national partner
- The GEF as a financing partner
- The Minamata Convention secretariat
- Global Mercury Partnership

48. Project stakeholders (Ministries, Departments, Agencies, industry, mining associations, civil society, academic institutions) are well defined in the project document and in the MIA and ASGM NAP and will be elaborated in the later part of this review.

Changes in Design during Implementation

49. The project had a no-cost extension received in May 2019. A revision to the work-plan accompanied the project extension, and it consisted of completion of project activities, such as national workshops, and to complete the drafting and documentation of the MIA and ASGM NAP.

Theory of Change of the Project

50. A reconstructed Theory of Change (ToC) shown in Figure1 below was prepared based on project documentation and reviewed with project staff during the review process. It demonstrates the logical sequence of intended results from immediate outputs and intended outcomes, feeding into the longer-term impact. Not all project activities were included in the ToC reconstruction diagram. Due to the nature and scope of this project, there is one major pathway of outcomes to impact identified, along with one intermediate state.

51. Impact pathway 1 - Data Collection and Establishment of Baseline Institutional Framework: From outcomes 1, 2, 3, to project objective. The fulfilment of the project objective requires the success of all 3 main outcomes, and each outcome is linked to the next in a causal/continuous sequential logic: In order for the country to be able to ratify the Minamata Convention and comply with article 7 on ASGM, it must first assess and enhance its existing information and

capacities on ASGM with global technical support provided (Outcome 1), then it must have a complete understanding and baseline assessment of its institutional, regulatory/legal and mercury management capacities, technical inventory of mercury sources and uses, an understanding of challenges and opportunities and establishment of a national coordinating mechanism leading to the development of its MIA and NAP (Outcome 2), as well as technical support provided in the MIA validation and NAP endorsement for submission to the Minamata Convention (Outcome 3). Consequentially, at this stage, the project has reached the intermediate state at which all relevant stakeholders have the necessary information through the MIA and NAP reports to take targeted action in filling the gaps in legislation and institutional capacity, while continuously working together to reduce and stop mercury releases to the environment, and address all issues that arose during the undertaking of the inventory. All of the above leads to the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention and compliance to article 07 on ASGM, which directly supports the project's global environmental benefits of reducing mercury emissions and releases and decreasing in mercury related diseases and environmental degradation. A key assumption is that key stakeholders are willing to ratify the Minamata Convention. An important driver is the heightened awareness on mercury sources, releases, emissions, and impacts. Ultimately, human health and the environment is protected from the anthropogenic releases and emissions of mercury and mercury compounds.

52. The diagram below shows the project activities (blue boxes to the left) as inputs to the outputs generated (green boxes). The assumptions made at the design stage (Labelled A boxes in red) are also identified and linked to the relevant output. These assumptions are essential for the likelihood of realization of the intended outcome and impacts, and the most general and overarching assumptions are not linked to individual outputs, but rather to the intermediate state. The project outcome is in purple and the impact is in violet.

Figure 1: Theory of Change (Reconstructed)



Review Findings

53. This chapter will answer the questions raised in the review terms of reference; as well as those raised in the evaluation criteria matrix presented in the inception report for consistency. It will present factual findings and evidence and will analyse and interpret them as objectively as possible, then will provide a rating for each review criterion.

Strategic Relevance

UNEP's Mandate and Programme of Work

54. The project is aligned with UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy 2014-17, and Programme of Work (POW) 2016-2017 under the Chemicals and Waste (CW) Subprogramme. Eritrea's MIA and NAP contribute to UNEP's expected accomplishment A on the sound management of chemicals and waste. "Work under the sub-programme will aim to achieve the entry into force and implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury". In line with the strategy, the project increases the capacity of Eritrea to manage chemicals and waste and increases collaboration with the secretariats of chemicals and waste-related multilateral environmental agreements. The institutional and regulatory framework strengthening also falls under the same strategy, making the project very relevant and in line with UNEP's mandate.

The GEF Strategic Objectives

55. The project is also under GEF strategic priority and focal area on chemicals and waste. Mercury is a priority chemical under the chemicals and waste focal area strategy under both GEF V and GEF VI: under GEF V, it is addressed as a part of the Strategic Objective 3 Pilot Sound Chemicals Management and Mercury reduction, which has as the outcome 3.1 to build country capacity to effectively manage mercury in priority sectors; while under GEF VI, it is addressed as a part of the Chemicals and Waste Focal Area Strategy, CW1, program 2: Support enabling activities and promote their integration into national budgets, planning processes, national and sector policies and actions and global monitoring. The project details the funding mechanism, also identified by the Minamata Convention Article 13. The outcomes of the project are crosscutting and contribute to fulfilling other CW objectives under GEF VI and to the GEF Overall, the project is an initial and essential step towards ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention. Its outcomes contribute towards the sustainable development goals. The baseline information in various areas will be useful for the design of databased environmental policies, but also legal, social, economic, and developmental policies and strategies to be developed.

National and Regional Priorities

56. The project is aligned with Eritrea's goal of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDGs 1 (poverty eradication), 3 (health and wellbeing), 5 (gender and women empowerment), 6 (clean water and sanitation), 8 (economic growth and employment), and 12 (sustainable consumption and production).
57. Information and understanding about mercury in Eritrea as well as its management is limited. However, although Eritrea has not yet developed legislation, directives, procedures or guidelines pertinent to the management of mercury, the use of mercury in artisanal mining is prohibited. Article 30/6 of the mining proclamation states, "The holder of an artisanal mining license shall take all environmental protection measures...and shall not be allowed to use mercury". Moreover, the Eritrean Environmental Protection Management and Rehabilitation Framework (179/2017), proclaims that natural resources, specifically water and soil, should be protected from harmful chemicals including mercury.

58. Manufacturing/processing industries and mining in Eritrea are scattered across the country with the later starting to take hold in the economy of the country. Currently one of the promising assets for the economic development of the country is the mining sector. The sector has attracted about 20 listed companies of which the Bisha Mining Company has already began production and sales of gold.
59. Mercury pollution is a serious concern in Sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for about 16.1% of the global total anthropogenic mercury emissions to the atmosphere. It's also worth noting that information on mercury-related activities remains limited. For example, West Africa was regarded as having minimal ASGM in 2005, but as a result of newly obtained data, is now recognized as a region with considerable activity. This means that Sub-Saharan Africa is responsible for a greater proportion of global emissions than was previously assumed. The African contribution of 16.1% to the global total anthropogenic mercury emissions to the atmosphere is expected to rise as more data from Sub-Saharan Africa becomes available.
60. Furthermore, during project execution, a complimentary review and update of the Stockholm Convention national implementation plan also took place which facilitated the MIA. The project EA and national coordinators ensured complementarity of the MIA and NAP with the Stockholm Convention where the same key stakeholders participated.
61. While little information about Eritrea's national priorities is available in the project document, mercury and ASGM is clearly a priority in the region. The project is therefore relevant to global, regional, and national priorities. It very much aligns with UNEPs' Medium-term strategy and programme of work (2014-2017) expected accomplishments and the GEF's strategy on chemicals and waste.

Rating for strategic relevance: Satisfactory

Quality of Project Design

62. As per the inception report: The project design is satisfactory. It takes into consideration the current state of environmental framework, participation of Eritrea in various multilateral agreements including those on chemicals and waste and national priorities. The project document states that despite that Eritrea has not yet ratified the Minamata Convention, Eritrea has notified the Secretariat that is taking meaningful steps to ratify the Convention. Eritrea notified the secretariat about the significant use of mercury in the ASGM sector, thus the project covers both MIA and NAP. Eritrea will benefit from new and updated information about the mercury situation in the country and from increased capacity in managing the risks of mercury, in particular from the ASGM sector. The project will contribute to the achievement of the country's SDGs.
63. The aim of the project was to collect data on the level of mercury pollution present in different environmental sectors in Eritrea, in order to identify the priority issues and gaps in knowledge that need to be filled for the implementation of the Minamata Convention, while building on and strengthening already existing chemicals management mechanisms, structures or communication networks.
64. The strengths of the project design include the strategic relevance, stakeholder analysis, background on Eritrea mercury and ASGM activities, the governance and supervision arrangements, and the risk identification and social safeguards. The strategic relevance places the project in the context of UNEP's mandate and GEF's priorities. The governance and supervision arrangements clearly identify how the project is to be executed and monitored, sharing and defining stakeholder roles and responsibilities, to encourage sound implementation. The financial planning is sound, and the funding is budgeted coherently for the timeline and outputs of the project. The financial mechanisms of the project at the

design stage are well prepared, reasonable and transparent, contributing to its sustainability and overall success. Moreover, the project has a clear Theory of Change presented in narrative form. A shortcoming of the project design it was the lack of more information on Eritrea's legal framework and institutional capacities.

65. Stakeholder analysis was robust where all relevant government agencies, civil society and mining communities to be engaged were identified. This facilitated a sense of national ownership of the project. The Eritrea Ministry of Land, Water and the Environment (MoLWE) was identified as the project co-executing agency, being the ministry responsible for environmental policy formulation and implementation and other environmental management related issues including the sound management of chemicals. Among the stakeholders identified in the project document are Ministries and government agencies in charge of chemicals management, human health and safety; representatives of industry and industrial associations, which can provide data and information related to processes and products that use and contain mercury; and civil society organizations. The relevant Ministries (Environment, Energy and Mining, Health, Finance, Education, Trade and Industry, Labour and Human Welfare, Local Government, Justice, Police, Customs), miners' organizations, local communities, community leaders, private sector/large scale mining representatives, civil society, gold buying agents, waste management specialists, and representatives of the UN Country Teams were identified together with their roles.
66. The project document mentions the links to human rights and its effect on local communities as well as the socio-economic benefits. The project would positively impact poor populations, who are disproportionately affected by the impacts of environmental and health hazards. The project design also describes how vulnerable and at-risk populations in Eritrea could be identified, citing poor populations living near gold mines; as well as workers in those sectors who are considered particularly vulnerable and at risk of contamination. The project document also states that it can assist Eritrea to clearly identify areas of improvement, starting at the local, and community levels and complemented with national policies. Through the inventory process, and the mapping of key mercury pollution sources, the project would define at-risk populations across Eritrea. Project activities would also involve consultation with at-risk communities with the aim of increasing understanding about the risks of mercury exposure such as workers associations and medical associations, and poor communities living in close proximity to industry facilities and contaminated sites.
67. Gender was factored in the project design especially in many ASGM areas on the biological risk of women where women perform tasks such as pouring the mercury into the ball-mills or mixing the mercury in panning, and burning the amalgam, often with their children or infants nearby. The project sought to ensure that there were opportunities for women to contribute to, and benefit from, the project outcomes. The project document states that the EA would work with the national coordinator to ensure women are well represented on national coordinating committees, and that consultation with at-risk communities targets both women and men. The project coordinator would also ensure that when possible, data collected in the framework of this project would be disaggregated by sex and age. The NAP for the ASGM sector would fully incorporate the gender dimensions identified in the national overview of the ASGM sector and foster gender equality. Furthermore, the project document states that the project will advocate for a national regulatory framework targeting the protection of these vulnerable groups. Through these vulnerable groups, the project will also sensitize the general population about the risks of mercury.
68. According to the gender rating scale in "Evaluation on Gender Mainstreaming in the GEF", by the Independent Evaluation Office of the GEF, this project can be qualified as **1 = gender partially mainstreamed: 1** = Gender is reflected in the context, implementation, logframe, or the budget.

Rating for project design: Satisfactory

Nature of External Context

69. In terms of consideration for external factors that might affect the project, there was no mention of likelihood of conflict, despite the border dispute with neighbouring Ethiopia, that affected project delivery because of the political instability it caused. No risk of political change was predicted. Due to the short timeframe and nature of the project, it is understandable that the likelihood of natural disasters was not detailed.
70. The project preparation was satisfactory. The problem analysis is detailed and comprehensive. The comprehensive situation analysis contributed to the delivery of the initial assessment (the MIA), including on the national capacities and inventories, and an ASGM overview, as a key component of the NAP.
71. The stakeholder analysis is thorough and is highly satisfactory, as it includes relevant stakeholders including their interest/influence and their potential role. This was done in consultation with the national government. The roles and responsibilities of stakeholders at the international level (UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch, UNEP Regional Office for Africa, Minamata and BRS conventions secretariats, WHO, Global Mercury Partnership) were defined clearly at the design stage.

Rating of nature of external context: Favourable

Effectiveness

Achievement of outputs

Table 2: The core outputs of the project contributing to the outcomes:

Output	Outcome
1.1 Training and guidance provided to relevant national stakeholders in Eritrea to develop a MIA and develop and implement a NAP as per Annex C of the Minamata Convention.	Outcome 1: Global technical support for MIA and NAP development
2.1 Identified and strengthened national coordination mechanism and Technical expert group that will guide the project implementation	Outcome 2: Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA) and National Action Plan (NAP) development
2.2 National institutional and regulatory framework and national capacities on mercury management assessed.	Outcome 2: Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA) and National Action Plan (NAP) development
2.3 National inventories of mercury sources and releases and strategy for identification of mercury contaminated sites developed	Outcome 2: Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA) and National Action Plan (NAP) development

2.4 Draft NAP developed as per Annex C of the Minamata Convention	Outcome 2: Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA) and National Action Plan (NAP) development
3.1 Technical support provided to Eritrea to facilitate the MIA validation and NAP endorsement and submission to the Minamata Secretariat.	Outcome 3: MIA validation and NAP endorsement and submission to the Minamata Secretariat

72. Review of the project documentation, the deliverables and consultation with the available stakeholders confirmed that the outputs delivered are of sufficient quality and will be useful to stakeholders overall.

Project Outputs:

Training and guidance provided to relevant national stakeholders in Eritrea to develop a MIA and develop and implement a NAP as per Annex C of the Minamata Convention

73. The Global Mercury Partnership provided a roster of experts, guidance and tools for MIA and NAP development, namely: A guide on how to perform a rapid environmental assessment and prevent exposure of vulnerable population at the ASGM sites and a NAP starter kit. The website has been revised and updated: <https://web.unep.org/globalmercurypartnership/our-work/reducing-mercury-artisanal-and-small-scale-gold-mining-asgm/national-action-plans> as part of capacity building for Eritrea. Knowledge management and information exchange is facilitated via the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership website.

Identified and strengthened National Coordination Mechanism and Technical Expert Group that will guide the project implementation

74. Through this project Eritrea was able to strengthen its existing multi-stakeholder committee, chaired by the MoLWE. This National Coordination Committee dealing with chemicals management is tasked to coordinate and provide guidance on the progress made in the project. A list of committee members is included in Annex D. The National Mercury Committee (NCM) included representatives from the Ministries of Land, Water and Environment, agriculture, education, energy and mines, information, finance, foreign affairs, health, justice, local government, marine resources, trade and industry, transport and communication, as well as the private sector, mining companies, power plant, cement and pharmaceutical companies. This NCM is made up of intersectoral and multidisciplinary members and its activities are coordinated by the Department of Environment in the Ministry of Land, Water and Environment.

75. A Technical expert group (SAG) was also established with members of civil society with experience and knowledge in the national mercury uses and releases, particularly from the ASGM sector. The NCM engaged with the SAG in actual project execution. Responses to the questionnaire revealed that members were highly satisfied with their participation in the NCM.

National institutional and regulatory framework and national capacities on mercury

management assessed

76. The national policy, regulatory and infrastructure assessment was submitted as part of chapter IV of the MIA report, completed in May 2020 and produced by the co-executing agencies UNITAR and the MoLWE. The quality of the report is highly satisfactory. Chapter IV of the MIA has an extensive discussion of all laws relevant to the mercury management in Eritrea namely: the Environmental Policy, Law and Regulation, Macro-policy of November 1994, The National Development Policy, Environmental Law, Land and Water Policy, Law and Regulation, Energy and Mining Policy, Law and Regulation, Agricultural Policy, Law and Regulation, Health Policy, Law and Regulation, Marine Resources Policy, Law and Regulation, Trade and Industry Policy, Law and Regulation, Labour and Social Welfare Policy, Law and Regulation. Policies of other institutions are included such as the those of the enforcement agencies, academic and research institutions, local government, maritime transport and on information and education. Moreover, the roles of government ministries and other institutions such as Customs Office (CO), Eritrea Standards Institute (ESI), Eritrean police, National Union of Eritrea Women (NUEW) and National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (NUEYS) have been assessed and recommendations set forward. The description of the existing governmental infrastructure is highly satisfactory and important to understand the legislative and socio-economic governance. The chapter also describes the specific recommendations resulting from the policy, legal and regulatory capacity assessment that will feed into the Eritrea MIA and NAP.
77. The assessment of legislation in Chapter IV of the MIA is thus satisfactory, as it utilized the [NRDC checklist](#) as per the [IOMC MIA guidelines](#). The legislative process is also described. In both MIA and NAP, Eritrea's commitment to support global action in protecting human health is evidenced by being a Party to several environmental and Chemicals and Waste multilateral environmental agreements.
78. The assessment revealed that Eritrea has relatively strong legal and institutional systems for sound environmental management and protection. However, as regards to the specific management and use of mercury or mercury compounds, Eritrea needs to revise, update and adopt laws, regulations and directives. Apart from the mining which prohibits the use of mercury in the mining sector, there is not any specific legal regime that governs other uses of mercury and management of mercury waste
79. Despite the political will in aligning mercury and ASGM to its national development goals, Eritrea needs to enhance assessments and its technical capacities to implement the Minamata Convention and its NAP and will therefore need to develop a more comprehensive chemicals/mercury assessment and management capacities on ASGM to comply with article 07.

Mercury inventory using the UNEP Toolkit

80. Eritrea delivered a comprehensive inventory of mercury sources of inputs, emissions and release using level 2 of the UNEP inventory toolkit. The inventory is complete, and its quality was reviewed by UNITAR, whose project team included the expert who developed much of the toolkit. One survey respondent highlighted the need for country specific emission factors and appropriate instruments to quantify the level of mercury contamination in soil, water, and other media. However, the development of country- specific emission factors is not covered in this project.
81. This output has been evaluated independently and therefore its completion and timely delivery are the only factors that can be rated by the evaluator for this terminal review.

Assessment of contaminated sites

82. The inventory results included a section on contaminated sites in Eritrea with a methodology that includes a preliminary desk study revealing several contaminated sites from ASGM sites. Other contaminated sites are dump sites of general waste. Chapter 2 of the MIA on contaminated sites

includes a strategy to identify and assess the contaminated waste dump and ASGM sites, that includes: sampling, awareness raising and capacity building. The MIA chapter also describes the population at risk from exposure to contaminated sites. The NAP for ASGM prioritize the development of strategies and guidelines for the identification and assessment of contaminated sites in the country.

Minamata Initial Assessment report

83. The report was one core deliverable, submitted by the Eritrea Department of Environment of the MoLWE and UNITAR in June 2020. The report is satisfactory and has the two outputs described above (inventory and assessment of legislative framework), as well as a chapter on identifying populations at risk and the gender dimension, and a chapter on awareness raising and existing training and education opportunities of target groups and professionals, according to the IOMC MIA guidelines.
84. *Implementation plan:* The implementation plan and priorities for action is not a requirement of the MIA, but are considered good practice, and further demonstrates ownership and the country's engagement in the early implementation process. Eritrea's MIA has a Chapter on its implementation plan that includes its priority areas of action with concrete timelines, deliverables and resource requirements. The MIA also describes mainstreaming mercury in the national priorities of Eritrea.

Awareness raising materials

85. Chapter 5 of the MIA outlines awareness raising activities in Eritrea that includes several training sessions for government officials, civil society, and the private sector. It has identified its communication/outreach strategy on public education and information dissemination
86. The project delivered successfully on project outputs that led to the project outcomes. Success factors are the preparedness and quality of project design, the high stakeholder engagement, the close working relationship between the EA and the national project coordinators, and the good quality of project management with technical backstopping from UNEP as implementing agency.

Rating for Achievement of outputs: Satisfactory

Achievement of Outcomes

87. Despite delays in project execution, the successful delivery of outputs led to the delivery of outcomes as per table 2 above.
88. The fulfilment of the project objective requires the success of all 3 main outcomes, and each outcome is linked to the next in a causal/continuous sequential logic, as presented in the Theory of Change of the Project above.
89. Achievement of outcomes could be attributed directly to the project, to the good quality of project design, management and supervision, stakeholders' participation, communication and public awareness. While sex disaggregated data was missing, responsiveness to human rights and gender equity was highlighted in both the MIA and ASGM NAP.
90. It can be concluded that the project has fulfilled both outputs and outcomes and is therefore at the intermediate stage. The project will help in Eritrea's ratification and implementation of the Convention and its ASGM NAP will serve as the roadmap towards complying with Article 07 (ASGM) of the Convention.

Likelihood of Impact

91. The positive impacts of this project are as follows: Knowledge of the baseline situation in relation to mercury presence in the environment and mercury management strategies in the country; awareness raising among stakeholders and policymakers about the mercury and ASGM situation; development and dissemination of an action plan towards the early implementation of the Minamata Convention and development of an ASGM NAP. All of these impacts are a direct result of the project outcomes discussed and highlighted in Figure 1 and in the above section.
92. One unintended positive impact was observed by the executing agency: coordination across tasks teams of the National Coordination Committees has created more awareness about mercury, and chemicals management in general, among Ministries that would not necessarily have been sensitized. Also, raising awareness on the interlinkages between production, imports, the waste management and the chemicals management sectors, and among various Ministries could also be considered as an unintentional positive impact. According to one respondent: "This project has further enhanced the awareness, interest and commitment for the management of mercury". No unintended negative impacts have been observed by the evaluator or by the stakeholders consulted.
93. In terms of catalysed change, and because of the nature and scale of the project, it is not expected that it will produce any behavioural changes yet. It is expected that stakeholders will utilise all the data gathered in this project when implementing the plan outlined in the MIA and NAP reports. In terms of institutional change, the National Coordination Mechanism was strengthened through various meetings, workshops and training opportunities. Stakeholders have confirmed that the networks, task teams and structures established during the implementation of the project will remain in place and become the basis for future action. The mechanism seems robust enough to continue working towards the long-term impact of eliminating mercury emissions and releases in the country.

Attainment of Objectives and Planned Results

94. The project findings and deliverables, in the form of the full MIA report and ASGM NAP and its executive summary, along with awareness raising materials, were made available to all relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies in Eritrea, as well as the Technical expert Group. The national validation workshop that took place facilitated buy-in and support of the Eritrea MIA and NAP.

Compliance of Assumptions:

95. The Logical Framework of the project states that the following assumptions were made at the design stage:
- *"The project will make full use of existing resources nationally, regionally and globally. Regional joint activities, trainings and continuous exchange of information will take place during the regional meetings and/or lessons learned workshops through the mercury platform. Identification of common areas of work and synergies with undergoing or planned activities at the national and international level will be continuously assessed during the project".* According to project documentation and stakeholder feedback, this assumption holds.
 - *"The project will continue having the political and public support necessary for its implementation".* According to project documentation, the participating countries' increased sense of ownership and the full engagement of stakeholders apparent from interviews and feedback provided to this evaluation, this assumption holds.
 - *"National Stakeholders will facilitate and contribute to the assessment of national infrastructure, capacities and legislation".* According to feedback from project management and all relevant

stakeholders, this assumption holds as the participation levels of national stakeholders remains constant and engaged. Currently, national stakeholders have continued to communicate on national chemicals management.

- *"National stakeholders will facilitate and contribute to the identification and quantification of mercury releases"*. As the MIA and NAP reports are finalized, this assumption holds.
- *"Qualified staff and experts to carry out the project activities will be identified and retained"*. The local consultants were competent, and the national coordination mechanism is composed of competent individuals, therefore this assumption holds.
- *"Economic resources will be available to carry out all the project activities"*. Financing from the GEF and in-kind co- financing from the government was made available for the project, and the activities were carried out, therefore this assumption holds. Although the delivery and disbursement of funds was not always timely.
- *"Key stakeholders will make full use of the MIA related assessments to ratify and implement the Minamata convention"*. The project outputs in particular the MIA and ASGM NAP will facilitate ratification and implementation of the Minamata Convention in Eritrea.

Rating for effectiveness: Satisfactory

Efficiency

96. The project was able to achieve its projected outputs despite delays during the inception phase. Delays in project delivery were also due to communication challenges caused by limited internet availability. In addition, the rainy season and lack of transport to access remote ASGM sites hampered field visits, as the project team had to wait for the appropriate timing (season) and transport availability to visit the ASGM sites. Political instability caused by Eritrea's longstanding border dispute with Ethiopia also undermined communication. All these factors had a knock-on effect on report submission to the IA and the corresponding disbursement of funds to the EA. These setbacks resulted in reduced efficiency.
97. Nevertheless, the executing agency was supportive, responsive and receptive to feedback. The EA stepped in and travelled to Eritrea to enable the implementation of project activities such as trainings and workshops.
98. Eritrea also utilized and strengthened already existing chemicals management networks in various ministries, such as the National Implementation Plan (NIP) structures for the Stockholm Convention and National Chemical Profiles; in addition Eritrea produced baseline data reports where there were none.
99. The project was cost effective, though up to the time the terminal review was drafted, not all funds had been spent.

Rating for efficiency: Moderately satisfactory.

Financial Management

100. The complete and regular quarterly financial reports provide sufficient detail into how well the executing agency managed funds. There was constant communication between the financial and project management staff. The final financial report is attached as Annex B.

101. There are no financial irregularities to be reported on based on project documentation. Stakeholder feedback did not raise any issues relating to financial irregularities.

Rating for financial management: Satisfactory.

Monitoring and Reporting

102. The monitoring and reporting mechanism consisted of bi-annual progress reports submitted by UNITAR to the UNEP task manager, who provided regular feedback on these reports. This was carried out via email, Skype, or during UNEP staff missions to the meetings where the government representatives were also present. Feedback highlighted the excellent relationship between the EA (UNITAR) and its co-executing agency MoLWE and the and the relevant Ministries and stakeholders.

103. While submission of progress and financial reports was delayed due to limited communication, reports are detailed, complete and accurate in relation to the project targets and indicators. The monitoring design and budgeting by the Task Manager is sufficient for this project. Monitoring implementation and project reporting was done by the Task Manager. Regular reporting from UNEP as implementing agency to the GEF as donor was done.

Rating for monitoring and reporting: Satisfactory.

Sustainability

104. In relation to the assumptions made at the design stage, and as per the nature of the project which is enabling there are no social factors that have influenced the project progress toward its intended impacts. Eritrea has political will to implement its implementation plan and priorities as well as its ASGM NAP. Any type of political instability can effectively influence and threaten progress on the road to implementation. However, the feedback provided for the evaluation reflects a satisfactory level of country ownership to allow for the next steps to be sustained. It must be noted that this is more a reflection on the country's efforts to fully implement the Minamata Convention, which will be a lengthy process, but it is not the subject of this terminal review. This project has achieved its direct outcome, which is paving the way for other projects and activities to be undertaken in the field of mercury management, especially on ASGM.

105. It was challenging for the reviewer to contact all tertiary stakeholders, such as academic institutions and NGOs due to time constraints and communication challenges with Eritrea. However, all national co-executing partners interviewed have agreed that their relationship with the executing agency, UNITAR, was instrumental to project completion. UNITAR has a roster of experts and in-house expertise who can be deployed to countries to provide training on the inventories and has the internal capacity to review MIA and NAP reports and deliver quality results.

106. The implementation of the MIA plan will depend on the National Coordination Committee and its multiple stakeholders. It will also depend on the engagement of the national project teams in continuing to take the lead and introducing the appropriate policies, regulations, and decisions, based

on the MIA and ASGM NAP project results. Eritrea needs constant communication with members of its National Coordination on Mercury/Multistakeholder Group on Mercury for sustainability. The Technical Expert Group is still active at the time of writing this report and could be potentially sustained.

107. In Eritrea the use of mercury in Artisanal Mining is prohibited by law, which shows the country's commitment towards the sound management of mercury. The country also promulgated its environmental law in 2017 which gives great emphasis to sound management of chemical and wastes, including mercury. In addition, the large-scale mining companies which were identified (based upon the inventory) as the highest mercury emission contributors, are required to prepare obligatory social and environmental impact assessments, continuously conduct monitoring, submit regular reports to the pertinent regulatory government institutions, and undertake the necessary remedial intervention activities. This can contribute positively to the sustainability of the project.
108. The involvement of intergovernmental organizations is essential for the sustainability of the project and implementation of the Convention. Eritrea will need recommendations (experts, international consultants, examples of successful projects to model upon in the region, etc.) from experienced partners to ensure sustainability.
109. Implementation of the MIA and ASGM NAP is highly dependent on funding, therefore, a new integrated approach of financing including the private sector, is needed.

Rating for sustainability: Moderately likely

Factors and processes affecting project performance

Preparation and readiness

110. The project experienced delays due to communication challenges with Eritrea and lengthy budget discussions. Late reporting caused delays in the release of funds. The project was granted a no-cost extension in May 2019 to complete activities and related reporting. The project was managed efficiently and effectively, with reported regular communication between UNITAR and UNEP.

Rating for project management and supervision: Satisfactory.

Quality of project implementation and execution

111. UNEP and UNITAR had a satisfactory performance in the project. UNEP provided continuous follow up and backstopping and played a role in the delivery of component 1. UNITAR were very supportive of the Eritrea National Coordinator and stakeholders on the ground and played a role in linking the project components. Despite the difficulties in communicating directly with Eritrea, they continued to reach out to the MoLWE.
112. Due to delays in project execution, a no-cost project extension was approved.

Rating for quality of project implementation and executions: Satisfactory.

Stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships

113. The degree of effectiveness of collaboration between stakeholders is satisfactory, drawing on a very robust stakeholder analysis from the start of the project. The engagement of academia as local consultants facilitated delivery of the inventories. The Project Document listed all relevant stakeholders who were engaged in project execution. Due to travel limitations and the challenges in

reaching all stakeholders in Eritrea, an email survey developed by the reviewer was used to gauge stakeholder participation. Overall, the respondent felt sufficiently involved in the implementation, and stakeholders felt they had an active role in actual execution and were actively engaged in the committee meetings and its decision-making process.

Rating for stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships: Highly Satisfactory.

Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity

114. The project strongly considers human rights and gender equity in both MIA and NAP. Both reports point to the role of women in the NCM, and in ASGM where women are considered a vulnerable population. Human rights are also elaborated in the ASGM NAP where respect of human rights and dignity are highlighted.

Rating for responsiveness to human rights and gender equity: Satisfactory

Country ownership and driven-ness

115. Eritrea displays a sufficient level of country ownership, engaging practically all relevant government agencies in the process of producing an MIA and ASGM NAP. This ownership is also reflected in the gender and socio-economic considerations in both MIA and NAP.

116. However, it may not be able to deliver on its MIA implementation plan and ASGM NAP without the proper financing mechanism and support of international organizations. Eritrea would also benefit from sharing of data and experiences in the subregion to obtain information on financial sustainability.

Rating for country ownership and driven-ness: Satisfactory.

Communication and public awareness

117. Eritrea developed an outreach/communication strategy and awareness materials from conducted trainings, but these were not available at the time of this review. Materials developed under the ASGM NAP are satisfactory. Awareness raising and public awareness are continuous efforts that should be included in all upcoming projects relating to the Minamata Convention.

Rating for communication and public awareness: Satisfactory.

Rating for factors affecting performance: Satisfactory.

Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Conclusions

118. Without the MIA project, it would be challenging for Eritrea to ratify and implement the Minamata Convention. The data, inventories and information on mercury and its compounds will allow the country to implement and comply with its obligations under the Convention, with the ASGM NAP serving as the country's roadmap to comply with article 7. With the MIA and NAP, Eritrea is able to collect data on the quantity of mercury present in the environment (air, water, land), and quantify the amount of mercury containing products imported illegally and disposed of informally by different sectors and industries (medical devices, batteries, dental amalgam, ASGM), in order to draft appropriate action plans and to identify tailored priorities on the road towards implementation. Using the necessary scientific and technical knowledge and tools, the project delivered a complete MIA and ASGM NAP that allows mercury management to be mainstreamed into the country's priorities. The

MIA and NAP created sufficient awareness on mercury and its compounds at the national level. The MIA and NAP underwent sufficient review by national stakeholders and national/local consultants as well as global technical experts in a cost-effective manner.

119. The project's **achievements** have been the quality of project design, preparation and readiness, stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships, smooth collaboration among the government agencies and stakeholders (especially the mining community) in Eritrea that delivered on the outputs in both MIA and NAP. While regular communication between the executing agency (UNITAR) and the co-executing partner (Eritrea MoLWE) was often difficult to achieve, the EA was in constant communication with the implementing agency (UNEP) to address issues and concerns during implementation.
120. This close working relationship among stakeholders in Eritrea is currently sustained by the National Coordination Mechanism Committee, established as part of the Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plan, that includes government agencies, local government authorities, civil society, academia, and local mining communities. This group continues to communicate and meet regularly coordinated by the Eritrea MoLWE. Country ownership and drivenness was evident during project execution.
121. The project's **challenges** have been mainly the timing of completion against the original, proposed timeframe and delays in reporting and delivery that resulted in delays of fund release from IA to EA. These were due to communication challenges between the EA and the national co-executing partner, delays due to the rainy season and limited of transport access to ASGM sites, and some political issue due to Eritrea's conflict with neighbouring Ethiopia (before the agreement in 2018). These factors causing delays were not anticipated in the project design, and a more realistic project timeframe should have been set.
122. Despite gender and socio-economic dimensions and links to poverty alleviation being highlighted in the project document, there was no sex-disaggregated data in the in the MIA, as it was not considered in the inventory survey. Nevertheless, gender considerations were highlighted in the ASGM NAP, with reference made to vulnerable populations at risk (women, youth, and children) and links to human rights and effects on indigenous people.
123. Eritrea's environmental law addressing sound management of chemicals and waste and prohibiting the use of mercury in Artisanal Gold Mining is an excellent foundation for project sustainability, however, implementation of the ASGM NAP is highly dependent on financial resource availability, which is a challenge as resources are scarce in the country.
124. Overall, the project was able to deliver on the outputs and outcomes, with the support of the executing agency and the implementing agency Task Manager. Eritrea is on course to ratifying and implementing the Minamata Convention, ultimately protecting human health and the environment from the toxic effects of mercury.

Lessons Learned

Lesson 1: The Executing Agency must hold pre-implementation information/expectation setting sessions with the country. It is important to engage the EA and stakeholders in the project design stage to have a sense of ownership of the project upfront.

Lesson 2: The difficulties in communication between the EA and the national co-executing partner caused delays in the project and a plan for communication channels must be in place before project inception. A

more realistic timeframe would benefit the project, factoring in budget negotiations, communication infrastructure, timing, and access to project sites, as well as stability of international consultants and consistent templates of the inventory.

Lesson 3: Timing of visits and accessibility to ASGM sites should be considered in project planning. Delays of project execution were also due to the rainy season and transport required for the project team to reach the project sites.

Lesson 4: Contracts/agreements between the IA and EA and with the partner executing agency need to be very specific on activity and monitoring timelines. This will help avoid project extensions and ensure timely delivery of outputs.

Lesson 5: Gender dimensions of chemicals/mercury should be included in the assessment. While gender and the role of women was highlighted in the MIA and ASGM NAP, there was no sex- disaggregated data in the MIA.

Lesson 6: Constant and regular communication between the project IA and EA addressing issues and concerns throughout execution contributes to positive delivery of outputs. The smooth collaboration among the government agencies and stakeholders (especially the mining community) in Eritrea delivered on the outputs in both MIA and NAP.

Lesson 7: Eritrea should engage with other countries in the subregion (East Africa) and agree on a common approach towards financial sustainability for chemicals management. Eritrea should also build bilateral and multilateral relationships with the international community to access funding.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The EA and its executing partner (in this case the national government) should be in contact before the start of project implementation to agree on their respective expectations and requirements and responsibilities. The EA, its executing partner and stakeholders would benefit from engagement in the project design stage to have a sense of ownership of the project from the start.

Recommendation 2: Communication requirements (including internet access) should be factored in when planning project duration and budget, allowing additional implementation time in countries with limited means of communication.

Recommendation 3: Seasonal timing and access to project sites should be considered in the timeline of project delivery and financial planning.

Recommendation 4: Ensure the Executing Agencies are fully aware of the workplan, deliverables and reporting timelines stated in contracts and agreements to ensure a timely release of funds and minimize no-cost extensions.

Recommendation 5: Gender, socio-economic, local communities, elders and legal (human rights) experts should be engaged in future projects. Costing for such experts should be included in the project budget.

Recommendation 6: Maintain regular communication between the IA, EA and national coordinators to address issues that may arise during project execution. Designation of the appropriate national coordinators (with track record of project delivery) is fundamental to ensure project success.

Recommendation 7: Countries in the subregion (East Africa) should be encouraged to share data,

experiences, and lessons learned. This could be source of financing information. Eritrea is encouraged to build bilateral and multilateral relationships with funding institutions and international organizations to explore different sources of funding, although not part of this project.

Annex A: Assessment of Quality of Project Design Template

TEMPLATE FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT DESIGN QUALITY (PDQ)

2. Key sources of information for completing this assessment include the approved project document (ProDoc), the Project Review Committee (PRC) review sheet, the project logical framework or Theory of Change (TOC) at design stage and, where appropriate, a revised project design following a Mid-Term Evaluation/Review. (For GEF projects the GEFSEC reviews sheet and UNEP response sheet should also be reviewed).

3. Unless otherwise marked, 'Section Rating'² refers to the question: *In the project design documents, how satisfactorily is the criteria addressed?* Satisfactoriness refers to both the completeness and quality of the content. The section ratings should be aggregated, using the weightings described below, to determine an overall rating for the Quality of Project Design. During the course of the evaluation the overall project design quality rating should be entered in the final evaluation ratings table under Item B. Quality of Project Design

A.	Nature of the External Context ³		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design (e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)	Section Rating (see footnotes 2 & 3) - Highly Unfavourable to Highly Favourable
1	Does the project document identify any unusually challenging operational factors that are likely to negatively affect project performance?	i)Ongoing/high likelihood of conflict?	No	There is no mention of likelihood of conflict.	2
		ii)Ongoing/high likelihood of natural disaster?	No	There is no mention of likelihood of natural disasters, as it is unlikely they will affect the implementation of the project.	
		iii)Ongoing/high likelihood of change in national government?	No	There is no mention of likelihood of change in national government.	
B.	Project Preparation		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design (e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)	Section Rating
2	Does the project document entail a clear and adequate problem analysis?		Yes	Yes, the ProDoc clearly states the need for a national assessment of mercury capacities (institutional and regulatory) to develop an MIA and NAP in Eritrea.	4
3	Does the project document entail a clear and adequate situation analysis?		Yes	Yes, the ProDoc presents an adequate situation analysis but would have been better to highlight other relevant national legislation on chemicals and MEAs that Eritrea has signed or ratified.	

4	Does the project document include a clear and adequate stakeholder analysis?		Yes	Yes, the ProDoc has a thorough stakeholder analysis.	
5	If yes to Q4: Does the project document provide a description of stakeholder consultation during project design process? (If yes, were any key groups overlooked: government, private sector, civil society and those who will potentially be negatively affected)		Yes	The stakeholder consultation process is well described.	
6	Does the project document identify concerns with respect to human rights, including in relation to differentiated gender needs and sustainable development?	i) Sustainable development in terms of integrated approach to human/natural systems	N/A	This project aims to gather data in order to have a baseline for presence of Hg, therefore it will not affect human/natural systems.	
		ii) Gender	Yes	Yes, the project document specifies that opportunities for women will be present by ensuring that they are well represented in national coordinating committees.	
		iii) Indigenous peoples	Yes	This project mentions engagement of indigenous peoples living in ASGM areas.	
C.	Strategic Relevance		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design (e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)	Section Rating
7	Is the project document clear in terms of its alignment and relevance to:	i) UNEP MTS and PoW	Yes	The project document highlights its relevance to UNEP MTS and POW.	5
		iii) UNEP/GEF/Donor strategic priorities (incl Bali Strategic Plan and South South Cooperation)	Yes	The project document mentions its alignment to the GEF priority area of chemicals and waste.	

		ii) Regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities?	Yes	The project document provides a description of alignment and relevance to national priorities, current activities and UNDAF SDGs.	
		iv) Complementarity with other interventions	Yes	Yes, there is mention of how this project complements other initiatives by UNEP/GEF.	
D.	Intended Results and Causality		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design (e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)	Section Rating
8	Is there a clearly presented Theory of Change?		Yes		5
9	Are the causal pathways from project outputs (goods and services) through outcomes (changes in stakeholder behaviour) towards impacts (long term, collective change of state) clearly and convincingly described in either the lograme or the TOC?		Yes		
10	Are impact drivers and assumptions clearly described for each key causal pathway?	-	Yes	There is only one main causal pathway ; all descriptions are clear.	
11	Are the roles of key actors and stakeholders clearly described for each key causal pathway?		No	Not in the ToC but this is implied and clarified in a different section of the project document.	
12	Are the outcomes realistic with respect to the timeframe		Yes	If there are no delays in delivery of all activities, the timeframe is realistic for undertaking the activities.	

	and scale of the intervention?				
E.	Logical Framework and Monitoring		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design (e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)	Section Rating
13	Does the logical framework:	i) Capture the key elements of the Theory of Change/ intervention logic for the project?	Yes		5
		ii) Have 'SMART' indicators for outputs?	Yes		
		ii) Have 'SMART' indicators for outcomes?	Yes		
14	Is there baseline information in relation to key performance indicators?		Yes		
15	Has the desired level of achievement (targets) been specified for indicators of outputs and outcomes?		Yes		
16	Are the milestones in the monitoring plan appropriate and sufficient to track progress and foster management towards outputs and outcomes?		Yes	Yes, sufficient assuming there are no delays or errors. Perhaps accounting for errors and delays would be useful in the future.	
17	Have responsibilities for monitoring activities been made clear?		Yes		
18	Has a budget been allocated for monitoring project		Yes		

	progress?				
19	Is the workplan clear, adequate and realistic? (eg. Adequate time between capacity building and take up etc)		Yes	Timing realistic assuming all disbursements and no administrative delays occur.	
F.	Governance and Supervision Arrangements		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design (e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)	Section Rating
20	Is the project governance and supervision model comprehensive, clear and appropriate? (Steering Committee, partner consultations etc.)		Yes	Yes, the PSC's role and implementation arrangements/supervision is clear. The exact composition of the PSC is not in the project document but provided by UNEP TM.	5
21	Are roles and responsibilities within UNEP clearly defined?		Yes	As Implementing Agency, UNEP is responsible for overall supervision, monitoring and evaluation, and overarching technical support and advice.	
G.	Partnerships		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design (e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)	Section Rating
22	Have the capacities of partners been adequately assessed?		Yes		5
23	Are the roles and responsibilities of external partners properly specified and appropriate to their capacities?		Yes		

H.	Learning, Communication and Outreach		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design (e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)	Section Rating
24	Does the project have a clear and adequate knowledge management approach?		Yes	The project aims to collect data in order to establish a baseline for the presence of mercury in the environment as well as information on the ASGM sector. It relies on a toolkit provided and revised by UNEP, guidance document on NAP development and an established MIA and NAP report template.	5
25	Has the project identified appropriate methods for communication with key stakeholders during the project life? (If yes, do the plans build on an analysis of existing communication channels and networks used by key stakeholders?)		Yes	The project includes an element/component of knowledge management and sharing, via national meetings and training sessions and webinars. At the national level, will convene a national coordination mechanism that will meet and communicate regularly. there is also two other levels of communication: Country to EA (UNITAR), and EA to UNEP, both respectively reporting semi-annually.	
26	Are plans in place for dissemination of results and lesson sharing at the end of the project? If yes, do they build on an analysis of existing communication channels and networks ?		Yes	Yes, the Mercury Platform provides a virtual communication channel, in addition to sharing reports with the GEF and the Minamata Convention secretariat (and thus their website) virtually. Practically: national inception meetings and project closure meetings are planned in order to share results and lessons learnt.	
I.	Financial Planning / Budgeting		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design (e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)	Section Rating
27	Are the budgets / financial planning adequate at design stage? (coherence		Yes	Yes, the financial audit should cover this, but the figures add up for initial budget.	Satisfactory 5

	of the budget, do figures add up etc.)				
28	Is the resource mobilization strategy reasonable/realistic? (If it is over-ambitious it may undermine the delivery of the project outcomes or if under-ambitious may lead to repeated no cost extensions)		N/A	The project is financed via the Convention's mechanism: a GEF grant and in-kind contribution from Eritrea.	
J	Efficiency		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design (e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)	Section Rating
29	Has the project been appropriately designed in relation to the duration and/or levels of secured funding?		Yes		4
30	Does the project design make use of / build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency?		Yes	The project considers existing partnerships at country level.	

31	Does the project document refer to any value for money strategies (ie increasing economy, efficiency and/or cost-effectiveness)?		Yes	The project document details a cost effectiveness analysis/strategy.	
32	Has the project been extended beyond its original end date? (If yes, explore the reasons for delays and no-cost extensions during the evaluation)		Yes	The project has been extended mainly due to delays in delivery, which in turn are caused by delays in disbursement of funds from GEF/UNEP which was in turn due to delays in reporting from Eritrea to UNITAR.	
K.	Risk identification and Social Safeguards		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design (e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)	Section Rating
33	Are risks appropriately identified in both the ToC/logic framework and the risk table? (If no, include key assumptions in reconstructed TOC)		Yes	The risk assessment is implicitly included in the ProDoc.	5
34	Are potentially negative environmental, economic and social impacts of the project identified and is the mitigation strategy adequate? (consider unintended impacts)		N/A	The project's aim is to provide a baseline for mercury data and information in the country, therefore it will have no negative impacts on the environmental, social, and economic dimensions. The NAP's action plan elements are also developed so as to consider the diverse socio-economic impacts of assessing the informal gold mining sector, being careful not to create negative impacts	
35	Does the project have adequate mechanisms to		N/A	The project's aim is to provide a baseline for information on mercury in the country, therefore it will have no negative environmental footprint. For the NAP's considerations of	

	reduce its negative environmental footprint? (including in relation to project management)			alternative mining strategies, negative or unintended consequences are considered.	
L.	Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic Effects		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design (e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)	Section Rating
36	Was there a credible sustainability strategy at design stage?		Yes	The combination of assumptions, risk assessment and the scoping nature of the project, provides for a credible sustainability strategy at the design stage.	5
37	Does the project design include an appropriate exit strategy?		No	This does not apply due to the nature of the Enabling Activity.	
38	Does the project design present strategies to promote/support scaling up, replication and/or catalytic action?		Yes	This does not apply due to the nature of the project as a scoping and baseline establishing activity. The project does promote a sustainable communication channel nationally via the national coordination mechanism	
39	Did the design address any/all of the following: socio-political, financial, institutional and environmental sustainability issues?		Yes	Clearly stated in section B of the prodoc.	
M.	Identified Project Design Weaknesses/Gaps		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design (e.g. questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)	Section Rating
40	Were there any major issues not flagged by PRC?		No		5
41	What were the main issues raised by		N/A		

	PRC that were not addressed?				
N	UNEP Gender Marker Score	SCORE		Comments	No Rating
42	<p>What is the Gender Marker Score applied by UN Environment during project approval? (This applies for projects approved from 2017 onwards)</p> <p>0 = gender blind: Gender relevance is evident but not at all reflected in the project document.</p> <p>1 = gender partially mainstreamed: Gender is reflected in the context, implementation, logframe, or the budget.</p> <p>2a = gender well mainstreamed throughout: Gender is reflected in the context, implementation, logframe, and the budget.</p> <p>2b = targeted action on gender: (to advance gender equity): the principle purpose of the project is to advance gender equality.</p> <p>n/a = gender is not</p>	1	Yes	It is specified that the project is to ensure opportunities for women to participate, contribute to and benefit from the project outcomes. Meetings and data to be collected specify gender disaggregated data. Gender is reflected in the context, implementation, and budget	

	considered applicable: A gender analysis reveals that the project does not have direct interactions with, and/or impacts on, people. Therefore gender is considered not applicable.					
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NOTES

- 1 For Terminal Evaluations/Reviews where a revised version of the project was approved based on a Mid-Term Evaluation/Review, then the revised project design forms the basis of this assessment.
- 2 A number rating 1-6 is used for each section: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1.
- 3 For 'Nature of External Context' the 6-point rating scale is changed to: Highly Favourable = 1, Favourable = 2, Moderately Favourable = 3, Moderately Unfavourable = 4, Unfavourable = 5 and Highly Unfavourable = 6.
(Note that this is a reversed scale)

Annex B: Project Budget and Expenditures

Final Financial Report

FINAL EXPENDITURE STATEMENT and UNLIQUIDATED OBLIGATIONS REPORT (US\$)											
Project title:		Development of Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA) and National Action Plan (NAP) for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining (ASGM) in Eritrea									
Project number:		GEF Project ID 9641; 2017/MIA_NAP Eritrea TARCW028									
Project implementing agency/organization:		UN Environment									
Project implementation period:		From:	19.01.2017			to:	30.06.2020				
Reporting period:		From:	1.08.2020			to:	31.12.2020				
UNEP Budget Line		UNEP approved budget				Actual expenditure incurred*					
		Total project budget	Expenditure for Aug-Dec 2020	Expenditure for Jan-Jul 2020	Outstanding advances from IPs from current semester/Pre-financing for current year 2020	Total expenditures for current YEAR 2020	Cumulative expenditures for previous YEAR 2019	Cummulative expenditures for previous YEAR 2018	Cummulative expenditures for YEAR 2017	Total cumulative expenditures to date	Cummulative unspent balance to-date
		A	B	C	D	E=B+C	F	G	H	I=E+F+G+H	K=A-I
1100	Project personnel					-				-	-
1101	International Project Manager	31,320				-		13,320	18,000	31,320	-
1102	National Project coordinator	27,120	13,464			13,464	4,616	9,040	27,120	-	-
1103	National Project assistant	5,160	2,752			2,752	688	1,720	5,160	-	-
1200	Consultants					-		-	-	-	-
1201	National Consultants	261,000	136,150			136,150	55,450	35,400	34,000	261,000	-
1202	International consultants for Hg inventory	35,000		1,127		1,127		12,123	21,750	35,000	(0)
1203	International consultants for ASGM inventory	35,000				-		29,500	5,500	35,000	-
1204	International consultants for MIA and NAP development	65,000	17,647	6,751		24,398		53,249	5,000	82,647	(17,647)
1300	Administrative support					-		-	-	-	-
1301	Project Finance Officer					-		-	-	-	-
1600	Travel on official business					-		-	-	-	-
1601	Travel project coordinator/ project staff	30,064	5,000			5,000		-	10,200	15,200	14,864
2100	Sub-contracts (UN entities)					-		-	-	-	-
2101	Mercury Global Partnership -UNEP***	60,000	60,000			60,000		-	-	60,000	-
3200	Group training					-		-	-	-	-
3201	Training on national inventory development	20,000	3,200			3,200		-	20,000	23,200	(3,200)
3202	Training on NAP development, database	20,000	-			-		2,800	14,000	16,800	3,200
3300	Meetings/Conferences					-		-	-	-	-
3301	National project inception workshop	10,000				-		-	10,000	10,000	-
3302	Final national lessons learned workshop	10,000	9,393			9,393		607	-	10,000	-
3303	National Coordination Committee meetings	8,000	4,000			4,000			4,000	8,000	-
3304	Validation workshop	8,000	8,000			8,000			-	8,000	-
4100	Expendable equipment					-		-	-	-	-
4101	Operational costs	3,036	2,322			2,322			600	2,922	114
4200	Non-expendable equipment					-		-	-	-	-
4201	Computer, fax, photocopier, projector	6,000				-		-	6,000	6,000	-
4202	Software	3,000	3,000			3,000		-	-	3,000	-
5200	Reporting costs					-		-	-	-	-
5201	Summary reports, database building	24,300	6,564	7,848		14,412		3,968	5,000	23,380	920
5202	Preparation of final report	5,000	7,330	872		8,202	5,048	-	-	13,250	(8,250)
5300	Sundry					-		-	-	-	-
5301	Communications (postage, bank transfer, etc)	3,000	617	166		783		2,217	-	3,000	(0)
5500	Evaluation					-		-	-	-	-
5501	Independent terminal evaluation	20,000				-		-	-	-	20,000
5502	Independent financial audit	10,000				-		-	-	-	10,000
99	GRAND TOTAL	700,000	279,439	16,765	-	296,204	60,498	158,488	164,810	680,000	20,000
***USD80,000 is maintained with UNEP for terminal evaluation and sub-contracts and not managed by UNITAR											
***The spending of the UN Sub contract funds, budget line 2101 (Mercury Global Partnership -UNEP), were communicated to us by the UNEP											
**The actual expenditures should be reported in accordance with the specific budget lines of the approved budget (Appendix 1) of the project document in Annex 1											

Annex C: Financial Management Tables

Table 1. Expenditure by Component

Component <i>All figures as USD</i>	Estimated cost at design	Actual Cost/ expenditure	Expenditure ratio (actual/planned)
Component 1	\$71,800	\$71,800	1.00
Component 2	\$503,364	\$496,750	0.99
Component 3	\$31,200	\$47,849	1.53
Project Management	\$63,636	\$63,600	1.00
M&E	\$30,000	\$0	0
Total	\$700,000	\$679,999	0.97

Table 2: Financial Management Table

NON-GEF AND GEF PROJECTS			
Financial management components:		Rating	Evidence/ Comments
1. Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures:		S	
Any evidence that indicates shortcomings in the project's adherence ⁵ to UNEP or donor policies, procedures or rules		No	
2. Completeness of project financial information⁶:			
Provision of key documents to the reviewer (based on the responses to A-H below)		HS	
A.	Co-financing and Project Cost's tables at design (by budget lines)	Yes	Budget at design by outputs available
B.	Revisions to the budget	Yes	Budget revisions available
C.	All relevant project legal agreements (e.g. SSFA, PCA, ICA)	Yes	Agreement documents available
D.	Proof of fund transfers	Yes	Proof of transfers available
E.	Proof of co-financing (cash and in-kind)	N/A	No co-financing allocated
F.	A summary report on the project's expenditures during the life of the project (by budget lines, project components and/or annual level)	Yes	Final financial report available

⁵ If the Review raises concerns over adherence with policies or standard procedures, a recommendation maybe given to cover the topic in an upcoming audit, or similar financial oversight exercise.

⁶ See also document 'Criterion Rating Description' for reference

G.	Copies of any completed audits and management responses (where applicable)	N/A	
H.	Any other financial information that was required for this project (list):	N/A	
3. Communication between finance and project management staff		S	
Project Manager and/or Task Manager's level of awareness of the project's financial status.		S	
Fund Management Officer's knowledge of project progress/status when disbursements are done.		S	
Level of addressing and resolving financial management issues among Fund Management Officer and Project Manager/Task Manager.		S	
Contact/communication between by Fund Management Officer, Project Manager/Task Manager during the preparation of financial and progress reports.		HS	
Project Manager, Task Manager and Fund Management Officer responsiveness to financial requests during the review process		S	
Overall rating		S	

Annex D: List of Key Stakeholders

List of stakeholder's experts that were involved in both MIA and NAP projects.			
No.	Name of Experts	Organization/Institution	Relevance on the project
1	Mr. Kibrom Asmerom	Ministry of Land, Water and Environment	MIA and NAP project Supervisor
2	Dr. Aron Hailemichael	College of Science, EIT	Lead consultant of the MIA and NAP project
3	Mr. Habteab Tsige	College of Engineering, EIT	Lead consultant of mercury inventory and identification of emissions and resources
4	Eng. Bahreselam Sielu	College of Engineering, EIT	Task team of mercury inventory and identification of emissions and resources
5	Eng. Belainesh Ghebrensaie (Ms)	Ministry of Trade and Industry	Task team of mercury inventory and identification of emissions and resources
6	Eng. Teame Tekleab	Ministry of Land, Water and Environment	Project Coordinator of mercury inventory and identification of emissions and resources
7	Mr. Ermias Yohannes	Ministry of Energy and Mine	Lead Consultant of ASGM overview and NAP
8	Eng. Robel Kibrom	Ministry of Land, Water and Environment	Project Coordinator of ASGM overview and NAP
9	Eng. Issac Sium	Ministry of Energy and Mine	Task team of ASGM overview and NAP
10	Mr. Abreham Melak	Ministry of Justice	Lead Consultant of institutional, policy and regulatory assessment at national level
11	Mr. Awet Tewelde	Ministry of Justice	Task team of institutional, policy and regulatory relevant to MIA assessment at national level
12	Eng. Abeselom Haile	Eritrean Standard Institute	Task team of institutional, policy and regulatory relevant to MIA assessment at national level
13	Mr. Tuemzgi Tesfay	College of Agriculture, Hamelmalo	Lead Consultant of Mercury Contaminated sites
14	Ms. Tsehay Melake	Ministry of Land Water and Environment.	Task team of Mercury Contaminated sites
15	Mr. Biniam Ahferom	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	Task team of identification of population at risk and assessment of potential gender dimensions
16	Dr. Leul Banteyrega	Ministry of Health	Task team of identification of population at risk and assessment of potential gender dimensions
17	Mr. Yonotan Mesfin	MoF (Custom office)	Task team under Source of information for preparation of MIA and NAP
18	Eng. Kibreab Ghebremariam	Ministry of Local Government	Task team under Source of information for preparation of MIA and NAP
19	Mr. Kidane Yohanes	Ministry of Agriculture	Data Provider

20	Mr. Yonas Ghebremedhin	Ministry of Agriculture (National Animal and Plant Health Laboratory)	Data Provider
21	Mr. Mohammed-idris Hamdnor	Hirgigo Power Plant	Data Provider
22	Mr. Merhawi Tewelde	Dental Clinic	Data Provider
23	Dr. Mohammed XXX	Dental Clinic	Data Provider
24	Mr. Andemichael Fissehaye	Pharmacist	Data Provider
25	Ms. Tsehay Melake	Ministry of Land Water and Environment.	Data Provider
26	Bisha Mining Share Company	Bisha Mining Share Company	Data Provider
27	Mr. Iyassu Bahta	Ministry of Health- National Medicine and Food Administration	Data Provider
28	Mr. Beyene Misghinna	Eritrean Standards Institute	Data Provider
29	Mr. Teklemariam Asfaha	Ghedem Cement Factory	Data Provider
30	Mrs. Tiebe Kindiya	National Union of Eritrean Women	Data Provider
31	Mr. Muluebrhan Gebreyohannes	Administration of Zoba Maekel-Environment Division	Data Provider
32	Mr. Ibrahim Abdu	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Data Provider
33	Mr. Berhane Kidane	Ministry of Trade and Industry- Dept. of Industrial Development	Data Provider
34	Mr. Abrhanm Tesfayohannes	Zara Mining Share Company	Data Provider
35	Mr. Biniam Ahferom	Miistry of Labour Social Welfare	Data Provider
36	Lt. Col. Yosief Tsegai	National Police and Security Forces	Data Provider

Annex E: Key Documents Consulted

GEF 2009. The ROtL Handbook: Towards Enhancing the Impacts of Environmental Projects GEF 2016. Report of the GEF to the 7th Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Mercury

GEF 2017. Independent Evaluation Office Chemicals and Waste Focal Area Study

UNDP 2011. Energy & Environment Practice – Gender Mainstreaming Guidance Series – Chemicals Management – “Chemicals and gender”

UN Environment 2014. Request for Persistent Organic Pollutants Enabling Activity: Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in Africa

UN Environment 2014. Project Cooperation Agreement for the MIA Project

UN Environment 2016. Evaluation Office: Guidance on the Structure and Contents of the Main Evaluation Report

UN Environment 2019. Terms of Reference for the Terminal Review of the UN Environment/Global Environment Facility project “Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining in Eritrea”

UNEP 2020. “Defining the road ahead: Challenges and solutions for developing and implementing national action plans to reduce mercury use in artisanal small-scale gold mining”

UNEP Project document and logical framework (Eritrea)

Project evaluation inception report (June 2020)

Project Bi-annual narrative reports and financial reports

UNEP medium term strategy and programme of work (2014- 2017)

GEF policies, strategies and programme pertaining to chemicals and waste

Annex F: Brief CV Of the Evaluator

Desiree Montecillo- Narvaez, MD, MPH is Environmental Health Specialist at UNICEF HQ in New York and is the technical lead of UNICEF's Healthy Environments for Healthy Children global framework. As such, Desiree works in the interface between children's health and the environment, preventing the health impact of environmental hazards (toxic metals and chemicals, hazardous waste, risks such as air pollution and climate change) on children's health. In addition, she coordinates the UNICEF's "Protecting Every Child's Potential" programme implementation in 4 PECP countries. For 15 years, Desiree was previously Programme Officer at UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch in Geneva where she worked on policies, plans, and projects related to the chemical lead, mercury, endocrine disrupting chemicals, and on children's environmental health. Earlier, Desiree worked briefly at WHO HQ and with the Philippine Department of Health as Regional Director.

Desiree holds a bachelor's degree in Biology, a Medical Degree, a master's degree in Public Health from the University of the Philippines, and a Certificate in Chronic Disease Epidemiology from the Stanford University USA. She has presented in various fora (national, regional, global) and has co-authored as well as reviewed several scientific publications.

Annex G: Review TORs (without annexes)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terminal Review of the UN Environment/Global Environment Facility project “Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Eritrea”

Section 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Project General Information

Table 1. Project summary

Executing Agency:	UNITAR and Ministry of Land, Water and the Environment (MoLWE)		
Sub-programme:	Chemicals and Wastes	Expected Accomplishment(s):	PoW 2016-2017 - Subprogramme 5 chemicals and waste - EA (a) countries increasingly have the necessary institutional capacity and policy instruments to manage chemicals and waste soundly, including the implementation of related provisions in the multilateral environmental agreements”.
UN Environment approval date:		Programme of Work Output(s):	(2) Secretariat support provided to the INC to prepare the Minamata Convention on Mercury during the interim period, prior to its entry into force.
GEF project ID:	9641	Project type:	EA
GEF Operational Programme #:	2	Focal Area(s):	C&W
GEF approval date:	21/09/2016	GEF Strategic Priority:	Mercury
Expected start date:		Actual start date:	19/01/2017
Planned completion date:		Actual completion date:	31 Dec 2020
Planned project budget at approval:	\$700,000	Actual total expenditures reported as of Jun 19:	\$415,969
GEF grant allocation:	\$700,000	GEF grant expenditures reported as of Jun 19:	\$415,969

Project Preparation Grant - GEF financing:	n/a	Project Preparation Grant - co-financing:	n/a
Expected Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	n/a	Secured Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	n/a
First disbursement:	19/01/2017	Date of financial closure:	31 Mar 2020
No. of revisions:	0	Date of last revision:	N/A
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	n/a	Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:	Last: n/a Next: n/a
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (planned date):	n/a	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	n/a
Terminal Review (planned date):	Q4 2019	Terminal Review (actual date):	Q4 2019
Coverage - Country(ies):	Eritrea	Coverage - Region(s):	National
Dates of previous project phases:	n/a	Status of future project phases:	n/a

Project rationale

The Minamata Convention on Mercury identifies and describes in its Article 13 the financial mechanism to support Parties from developing countries and countries with economies in transition to implement the Convention⁷. It identifies two entities that will function as the Financial Mechanism:

- a) the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund (GEF); and
- b) A Specific International Programme to support capacity-building and technical assistance.

The GEF has been strongly committed to support the ratification and further implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury since GEF-5 (2009-2013). The GEF-5 strategy contained a pilot program on mercury to accompany the negotiations of the Minamata Convention. An amount of \$15 million was set aside in GEF-5 to fund projects aimed at reducing mercury use, emissions and exposure; improving data and scientific information at the national level and enhancing capacity for mercury storage; and address waste and contaminated sites⁸. The gap between signature at end of 2013 and the start of GEF-6 in 2014 was considered a crucial period for countries to determine the feasibility of accepting or ratifying the convention after signature. Accordingly, the GEF Council agreed to invest up to \$10 million to help countries with initial assessments of the mercury situation in their countries.

In GEF-6 the GEF programmed additional \$30 million for countries to develop Minamata Initial Assessments and ASGM Action Plans⁹.

The GEF Secretariat in consultation with the Interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention was tasked to develop initial guidelines for enabling activities and pre-ratification projects. The initial guidelines were presented as an information document at the 45th Council Meeting and revised by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee 6 (GEF/C.45/Inf.05/Rev.01). Main features of the Minamata Initial Assessments are a) assessment of national regulatory framework in the context of preparation for a decision whether to ratify; b) inventory of mercury emissions and releases; c) prepare to implement the obligations of the Minamata Convention on Mercury as soon as possible. This document was complemented by the

⁷ Text of the global legally binding instrument on mercury agreed by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on its 5th session in January 2013. The text was adopted and opened for signature at the Diplomatic Conference held in Minamata and Kumamoto, Japan in October 2013.

⁸ Strategy for the pilot is presented in the document GEF/C.39/Inf.09

⁹ UNEP/MC/COP.2/INF/3

“Guidance document on the preparation of national action plans for artisanal and small-scale gold mining¹⁰, adopted by the Conference of the Parties (COP) (decision MC-1/13).

On 04 July 2016 the GEF Operational Focal Point of Eritrea sent a letter to the UNEP Executive Director and the GEF Chief Executive Officer informing that although the country had not yet signed the Minamata Convention, Eritrea was taking meaningful steps to ratify the Convention. This same day the SAICM national focal point of Eritrea notified the Interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, in accordance with article 07 of the Minamata Convention, that artisanal and small-scale gold mining and processing was more than insignificant within Eritrea; and the GEF Operational Focal Point endorsed the development of a Minamata Initial Assessment and a ASGM National Action Plan in Eritrea with UNEP as Implementing Agency. The project was developed based on the guidelines for Minamata Initial Assessments, developed by the GEF Secretariat, and National Action Plans, approved by the Minamata COP. The GEF Chief Executive Officer endorsed the project on 21 September 2016 as part of GEF’s efforts to achieve the objectives of its Chemicals and Waste Focal Area Strategy, in particular goal 1 “develop the enabling conditions, tools and environment for the sound management of harmful chemicals and wastes”; program 2 “support enabling activities and promote their integration into national budgets and planning processes, national and sector policies and actions and global monitoring”.

The project also contributed to achieve UNEP’s Programme of Work for 2016-2017 through its expected accomplishment A under subprogramme 5 chemicals and waste.

The project was aimed at facilitating the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention by providing key national stakeholders in Eritrea with the scientific and technical knowledge and tools needed for that purpose. As of 31 July 2019 Eritrea had not yet ratified the Minamata Convention.

Project objectives and components

Objective:

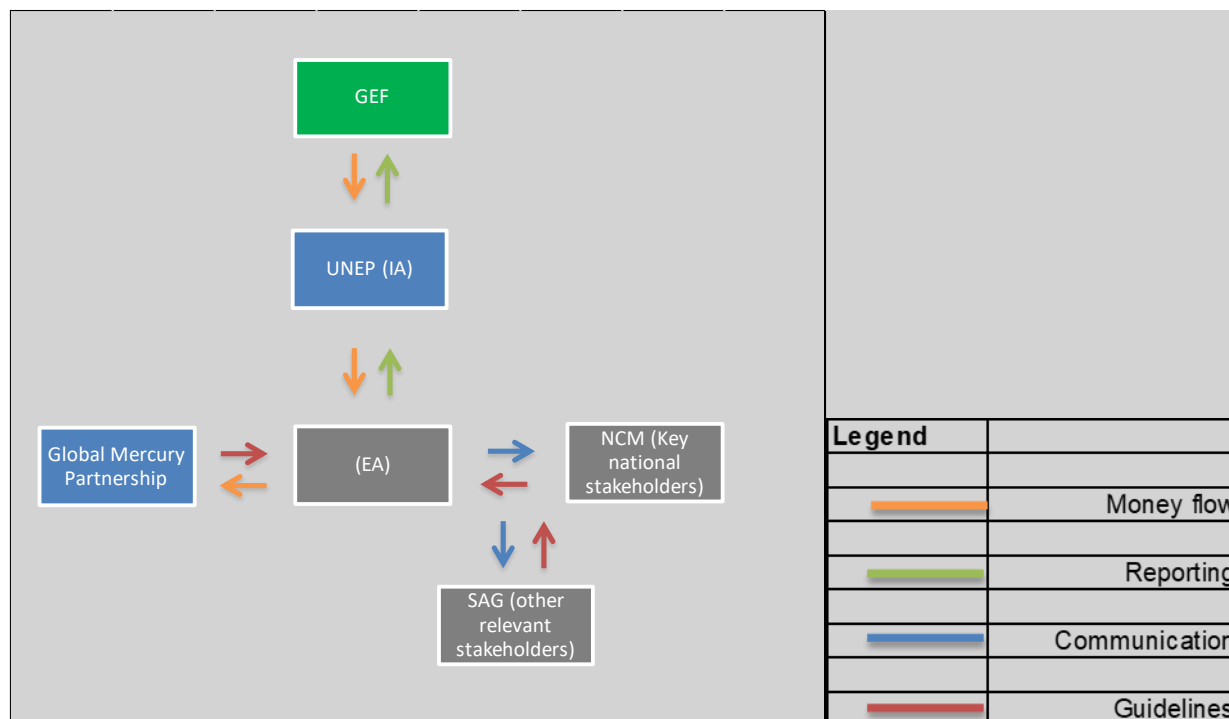
Ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention contributes to the protection of human health and the environment from the risks posed by unintentional and intentional emissions and releases, unsound use and management of mercury in Eritrea.

Components:

1. Global technical support for MIA and NAP development
2. Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA) and National Action Plan (NAP) development
3. MIA validation and NAP endorsement and submission to the Minamata Secretariat

¹⁰ UNEP/MC/COP.1/17

Executing Arrangements



Project Cost and Financing

Component	Original budget	Revised budget	Expenditure as of Jun 19
Component 1	\$71,800	N/A	\$11,000
Component 2	\$503,364	N/A	\$357,585
Component 3	\$31,200	N/A	\$0
Project Management	\$63,636	N/A	\$47,384
M&E	\$30,000	N/A	\$0
Total	\$700,000	N/A	\$415,969

Implementation Issues

- Change of project manager at executing agency.

Section 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

Key Evaluation principles

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

and when verification is not possible, the single source will be mentioned (whilst anonymity is still protected). Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out.

The “Why?” Question. As this is a terminal review and similar interventions are envisaged for the future, particular attention should be given to learning from the experience. Therefore, the “Why?” question should be at the front of the consultants’ minds all through the review exercise and is supported by the use of a theory of change approach. This means that the consultants need to go beyond the assessment of “what” the project performance was, and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of “why” the performance was as it was. This should provide the basis for the lessons that can be drawn from the project.

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

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

Objective of the Review

In line with the UN Environment Evaluation Policy¹¹ and the UN Environment Programme Manual¹², the Terminal Review (TR) is undertaken at completion of the project to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The review has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UN Environment, Groundwork and all the national counterparts. Therefore, the review will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation [especially for the second phase of the project, if applicable].

Key Strategic Questions

In addition to the evaluation criteria outlined in Section 10 below, the review will address the **strategic questions** listed below. These are questions of interest to UN Environment and to which the project is believed to be able to make a substantive contribution:

- Has the project facilitated the accession of the country to the Minamata Convention?
- Is the country aware of its obligations under the Convention?
- How is the implementation of the NAP articulated?

Evaluation Criteria

¹¹ <http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEPEvaluationPolicy/tabid/3050/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

¹² http://www.unep.org/QAS/Documents/UNEP_Programme_Manual_May_2013.pdf . This manual is under revision.

All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. Sections A-I below, outline the scope of the criteria and a link to a table for recording the ratings is provided in Annex 1). A weightings table will be provided in excel format (link provided in Annex 1) to support the determination of an overall project rating. The set of evaluation criteria are grouped in nine categories: (A) Strategic Relevance; (B) Quality of Project Design; (C) Nature of External Context; (D) Effectiveness, which comprises assessments of the achievement of outputs, achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact; (E) Financial Management; (F) Efficiency; (G) Monitoring and Reporting; (H) Sustainability; and (I) Factors Affecting Project Performance. The review consultants can propose other evaluation criteria as deemed appropriate.

A. Strategic Relevance

The review will assess, in line with the OECD/DAC definition of relevance, *'the extent to which the activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor'*. The review will include an assessment of the project's relevance in relation to UN Environment's mandate and its alignment with UN Environment's policies and strategies at the time of project approval. Under strategic relevance an assessment of the complementarity of the project with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups will be made. This criterion comprises four elements:

i. *Alignment to the UN Environment Medium Term Strategy¹³ (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW)*

The review should assess the project's alignment with the MTS and POW under which the project was approved and include reflections on the scale and scope of any contributions made to the planned results reflected in the relevant MTS and POW.

ii. *Alignment to UN Environment /GEF/Donor Strategic Priorities*

Donor, including GEF, strategic priorities will vary across interventions. UN Environment strategic priorities include the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building¹⁴ (BSP) and South-South Cooperation (S-SC). The BSP relates to the capacity of governments to: comply with international agreements and obligations at the national level; promote, facilitate and finance environmentally sound technologies and to strengthen frameworks for developing coherent international environmental policies. S-SC is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing countries. GEF priorities are specified in published programming priorities and focal area strategies.

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

The review will assess the extent to which the intervention is suited, or responding to, the stated environmental concerns and needs of the countries, sub-regions or regions where it is being implemented. Examples may include: national or sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies or Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) plans or regional agreements etc.

iv. *Complementarity with Existing Interventions*

An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project mobilization, took account of ongoing and planned initiatives (under the same sub-programme, other UN Environment sub-programmes, or being implemented by other agencies) that address similar needs of the same target groups. The review will consider if the project team, in collaboration with Regional Offices and Sub-Programme Coordinators, made efforts to ensure their own intervention was complementary to other interventions, optimized any synergies and avoided duplication of effort. Examples may include UNDAFs or One UN programming. Linkages with other interventions should be described and instances where UN Environment's comparative advantage has been particularly well applied should be highlighted.

¹³ UN Environment's Medium Term Strategy (MTS) is a document that guides UN Environment's programme planning over a four-year period. It identifies UN Environment's thematic priorities, known as Sub-programmes (SP), and sets out the desired outcomes, known as Expected Accomplishments (EAs), of the Sub-programmes.

¹⁴ <http://www.unep.org/GC/GC23/documents/GC23-6-add-1.pdf>

Factors affecting this criterion may include: stakeholders' participation and cooperation; responsiveness to human rights and gender equity and country ownership and driven-ness.

B. Quality of Project Design

The quality of project design is assessed using an agreed template during the review inception phase, ratings are attributed to identified criteria and an overall Project Design Quality rating is established. This overall Project Design Quality rating is entered in the final review ratings table as item B. In the Main Review Report a summary of the project's strengths and weaknesses at design stage is included.

Factors affecting this criterion may include (at the design stage): stakeholders' participation and cooperation and responsiveness to human rights and gender equity, including the extent to which relevant actions are adequately budgeted for.

C. Nature of External Context

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

D. Effectiveness

The review will assess effectiveness across three dimensions: achievement of outputs, achievement of direct outcomes and likelihood of impact.

i. Achievement of Outputs

The review will assess the project's success in producing the programmed outputs (products and services delivered by the project itself) and achieving milestones as per the project design document (ProDoc). Any *formal* modifications/revisions made during project implementation will be considered part of the project design. Where the project outputs are inappropriately or inaccurately stated in the ProDoc, a table should, for transparency, be provided showing the original formulation and the amended version. The achievement of outputs will be assessed in terms of both quantity and quality, and the assessment will consider their usefulness and the timeliness of their delivery. The review will briefly explain the reasons behind the success or shortcomings of the project in delivering its programmed outputs and meeting expected quality standards.

Factors affecting this criterion may include: preparation and readiness and quality of project management and supervision¹⁵.

ii. Achievement of Direct Outcomes

The achievement of direct outcomes is assessed as performance against the direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed¹⁶ Theory of Change (TOC). These are the first-level outcomes expected to be achieved as an immediate result of project outputs. As in 1, above, a table can be used where substantive amendments to the formulation of direct outcomes as necessary. The review should report evidence of attribution between UN Environment's intervention and the direct outcomes. In cases of normative work or where several actors are collaborating to achieve common outcomes, evidence of the nature and magnitude of UN Environment's contribution should be included.

¹⁵ In some cases, 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UN Environment to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UN Environment.

¹⁶ UN Environment staff are currently required to submit a Theory of Change with all submitted project designs. The level of 'reconstruction' needed during an evaluation will depend on the quality of this initial TOC, the time that has lapsed between project design and implementation (which may be related to securing and disbursing funds) and the level of any changes made to the project design. In the case of projects pre-dating 2013 the intervention logic is often represented in a logical framework and a TOC will need to be constructed in the inception stage of the evaluation.

Factors affecting this criterion may include: quality of project management and supervision; stakeholders' participation and cooperation; responsiveness to human rights and gender equity and communication and public awareness.

iii. Likelihood of Impact

Based on the articulation of longer term effects in the reconstructed TOC (i.e. from direct outcomes, via intermediate states, to impact), the review will assess the likelihood of the intended, positive impacts becoming a reality. Project objectives or goals should be incorporated in the TOC, possibly as intermediate states or long term impacts. The Evaluation Office's approach to the use of TOC in project reviews is outlined in a guidance note available on the EOU website, web.unep.org/evaluation and is supported by an excel-based flow chart called, Likelihood of Impact Assessment (see Annex 1). Essentially the approach follows a 'likelihood tree' from direct outcomes to impacts, taking account of whether the assumptions and drivers identified in the reconstructed TOC held. Any unintended positive effects should also be identified and their causal linkages to the intended impact described.

The review will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead, or contribute to, unintended negative effects. Some of these potential negative effects may have been identified in the project design as risks or as part of the analysis of Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards.¹⁷

The review will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role or has promoted scaling up and/or replication¹⁸ as part of its Theory of Change and as factors that are likely to contribute to longer term impact. Ultimately UN Environment and all its partners aim to bring about benefits to the environment and human well-being. Few projects are likely to have impact statements that reflect such long-term or broad-based changes. However, the review will assess the likelihood of the project to make a substantive contribution to the high level changes represented by UN Environment's Expected Accomplishments, the Sustainable Development Goals¹⁹ and/or the high level results prioritised by the funding partner.

Factors affecting this criterion may include: quality of project management and supervision, including adaptive project management; stakeholders' participation and cooperation; responsiveness to human rights and gender equity; country ownership and driven-ness and communication and public awareness.

E. Financial Management

Financial management will be assessed under three broad themes: completeness of financial information, communication between financial and project management staff and compliance with relevant UN financial management standards and procedures. The review will establish the actual spend across the life of the project of funds secured from all donors. This expenditure will be reported, where possible, at output level and will be compared with the approved budget. The review will assess the level of communication between the Task Manager and the Fund Management Officer as it relates to the effective delivery of the planned project and the needs of a responsive, adaptive management approach. The review will verify the application of proper financial management standards and adherence to UN Environment's financial management policies. Any financial management issues that have affected the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance will be highlighted.

Factors affecting this criterion may include: preparation and readiness and quality of project management and supervision.

F. Efficiency

¹⁷ Further information on Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards (ESES) can be found at <http://www.unep.org/about/eses/>

¹⁸ *Scaling up* refers to approaches being adopted on a much larger scale, but in a very similar context. Scaling up is often the longer term objective of pilot initiatives. *Replication* refers to approaches being repeated or lessons being explicitly applied in new/different contexts e.g. other geographic areas, different target group etc. Effective replication typically requires some form of revision or adaptation to the new context. It is possible to replicate at either the same or a different scale.

¹⁹ A list of relevant SDGs is available on the EO website www.unep.org/evaluation

In keeping with the OECD/DAC definition of efficiency, the review will assess the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution. Focussing on the translation of inputs into outputs, cost-effectiveness is the extent to which an intervention has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its results at the lowest possible cost. Timeliness refers to whether planned activities were delivered according to expected timeframes as well as whether events were sequenced efficiently. The review will also assess to what extent any project extension could have been avoided through stronger project management and identify any negative impacts caused by project delays or extensions. The review will describe any cost or time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe and consider whether the project was implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternative interventions or approaches.

The review will give special attention to efforts by the project teams to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency. The review will also consider the extent to which the management of the project minimised UN Environment's environmental footprint.

Factors affecting this criterion may include: preparation and readiness (e.g. timeliness); quality of project management and supervision and stakeholders' participation and cooperation.

G. Monitoring and Reporting

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

i. Monitoring Design and Budgeting

Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART²⁰ indicators towards the achievement of the projects outputs and direct outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender or groups with low representation. The review will assess the quality of the design of the monitoring plan as well as the funds allocated for its implementation. The adequacy of resources for mid-term and terminal review should be discussed if applicable.

ii. Monitoring of Project Implementation

The review will assess whether the monitoring system was operational and facilitated the timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period. It will also consider how information generated by the monitoring system during project implementation was used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensure sustainability. The review should confirm that funds allocated for monitoring were used to support this activity.

iii. Project Reporting

UN Environment has a centralised Project Information Management System (PIMS) in which project managers upload six-monthly status reports against agreed project milestones. This information will be provided to the Review Consultant(s) by the Task Manager. Projects funded by GEF have specific evaluation/review requirements with regard to verifying documentation and reporting (i.e. the Project Implementation Reviews, Tracking Tool and CEO Endorsement template²¹), which will be made available by the Task Manager. The review will assess the extent to which both UN Environment and donor reporting commitments have been fulfilled.

Factors affecting this criterion may include: quality of project management and supervision and responsiveness to human rights and gender equity (e.g. disaggregated indicators and data).

H. Sustainability

Sustainability is understood as the probability of direct outcomes being maintained and developed after the close of the intervention. The review will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to

²⁰ SMART refers to indicators that are specific, measurable, assignable, realistic and time-specific.

²¹ The Evaluation Consultant(s) should verify that the annual Project Implementation Reviews have been submitted, that the Tracking Tool is being kept up-to-date and that in the CEO Endorsement Template Table A and Section E have been completed.

undermine or contribute to the persistence of achieved direct outcomes. Some factors of sustainability may be embedded in the project design and implementation approaches while others may be contextual circumstances or conditions that evolve over the life of the intervention. Where applicable an assessment of bio-physical factors that may affect the sustainability of direct outcomes may also be included.

i. Socio-political Sustainability

The review will assess the extent to which social or political factors support the continuation and further development of project direct outcomes. It will consider the level of ownership, interest and commitment among government and other stakeholders to take the project achievements forwards. In particular, the review will consider whether individual capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

ii. Financial Sustainability

Some direct outcomes, once achieved, do not require further financial inputs, e.g. the adoption of a revised policy. However, in order to derive a benefit from this outcome further management action may still be needed e.g. to undertake actions to enforce the policy. Other direct outcomes may be dependent on a continuous flow of action that needs to be resourced for them to be maintained, e.g. continuation of a new resource management approach. The review will assess the extent to which project outcomes are dependent on future funding for the benefits they bring to be sustained. Secured future funding is only relevant to financial sustainability where the direct outcomes of a project have been extended into a future project phase. The question still remains as to whether the future project outcomes will be financially sustainable.

iii. Institutional Sustainability

The review will assess the extent to which the sustainability of project outcomes is dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance. It will consider whether institutional achievements such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. are robust enough to continue delivering the benefits associated with the project outcomes after project closure.

Factors affecting this criterion may include: stakeholders' participation and cooperation; responsiveness to human rights and gender equity (e.g. where interventions are not inclusive, their sustainability may be undermined); communication and public awareness and country ownership and driven-ness.

I. Factors and Processes Affecting Project Performance

These factors are rated in the ratings table, but are discussed as cross-cutting themes as appropriate under the other evaluation criteria, above.

i. Preparation and Readiness

This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilisation stage of the project. The review will assess whether appropriate measures were taken to either address weaknesses in the project design or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation. In particular, the review will consider the nature and quality of engagement with stakeholder groups by the project team, the confirmation of partner capacity and development of partnership agreements as well as initial staffing and financing arrangements. (Project preparation is covered in the template for the assessment of Project Design Quality).

ii. Quality of Project Implementation and Execution

Specifically, for GEF funded projects, this factor refers separately to the performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping and supervision provided by UN Environment, as the implementing agency.

The review will assess the effectiveness of project management with regard to: providing leadership towards achieving the planned outcomes; managing team structures; maintaining productive partner relationships (including Steering Groups etc.); communication and collaboration with UN Environment colleagues; risk management; use of problem-solving; project adaptation and overall project execution. Evidence of adaptive project management should be highlighted.

iii. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation

Here the term 'stakeholder' should be considered in a broad sense, encompassing all project partners, duty bearers with a role in delivering project outputs and target users of project outputs and any other collaborating agents external to UN Environment. The assessment will consider the quality and effectiveness of all forms of communication and consultation with stakeholders throughout the project life and the support given to maximise collaboration and coherence between various stakeholders, including sharing plans, pooling resources and exchanging learning and expertise. The inclusion and participation of all differentiated groups, including gender groups, should be considered.

iv. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity

The review will ascertain to what extent the project has applied the UN Common Understanding on the human rights based approach (HRBA) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Within this human rights context, the review will assess to what extent the intervention adheres to UN Environment's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment.

The report should present the extent to which the intervention, following an adequate gender analysis at design stage, has implemented the identified actions and/or applied adaptive management to ensure that Gender Equity and Human Rights are adequately taken into account. In particular, the review will consider to what extent project design (section B), the implementation that underpins effectiveness (section D), and monitoring (section G) have taken into consideration: (i) possible gender inequalities in access to and the control over natural resources; (ii) specific vulnerabilities of women and children to environmental degradation or disasters; (iii) the role of women in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation.

v. Country Ownership and Driven-ness

The review will assess the quality and degree of engagement of government / public sector agencies in the project. The review will consider the involvement not only of those directly involved in project execution and those participating in technical or leadership groups, but also those official representatives whose cooperation is needed for change to be embedded in their respective institutions and offices. This factor is concerned with the level of ownership generated by the project over outputs and outcomes and that is necessary for long term impact to be realised. This ownership should adequately represent the needs and interests of all gender and marginalised groups.

vi. Communication and Public Awareness

The review will assess the effectiveness of: a) communication of learning and experience sharing between project partners and interested groups arising from the project during its life and b) public awareness activities that were undertaken during the implementation of the project to influence attitudes or shape behaviour among wider communities and civil society at large. The review should consider whether existing communication channels and networks were used effectively, including meeting the differentiated needs of gender and marginalised groups, and whether any feedback channels were established. Where knowledge sharing platforms have been established under a project the review will comment on the sustainability of the communication channel under either socio-political, institutional or financial sustainability, as appropriate.

Section 3. REVIEW APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

The Terminal Review will be an in-depth review using a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders are kept informed and consulted throughout the review process. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used as appropriate to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts. It is highly recommended that the consultant(s) maintains close communication with the project team and promotes information exchange throughout the review implementation phase in order to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the review findings. Where applicable, the consultant(s) should provide a geo-referenced map that demarcates the area covered by the project and, where possible, provide geo-reference photographs of key intervention sites (e.g. sites of habitat rehabilitation and protection, pollution treatment infrastructure, etc.)

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

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

Relevant background documentation, inter alia;

Project design documents (including minutes of the project design review meeting at approval); Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent, revisions to the project (Project Document Supplement), the logical framework and its budget;

Project reports such as six-monthly progress and financial reports, progress reports from collaborating partners, meeting minutes, relevant correspondence and including the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool etc.;

Project outputs: Inception workshop report, training report, Minamata Initial Assessment and ASGM National Action Plan final documents for DRC, final meeting report

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

UN Environment Task Manager (TM);

Project management team;

UN Environment Fund Management Officer (FMO);

Sub-Programme Coordinator;

Project partners, including, UNITAR, the Ministry of Land, Water and the Environment, Global Component partners and national counterparts

Relevant resource persons.

Review Deliverables and Review Procedures

The review team will prepare:

- **Inception Report:** (see Annex 1 for links to all templates, tables and guidance notes) containing an assessment of project design quality, a draft reconstructed Theory of Change of the project, project stakeholder analysis, review framework and a tentative review schedule.
- **Preliminary Findings Note:** typically, in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, the sharing of preliminary findings is intended to support the participation of the project team, act as a means to ensure all information sources have been accessed and provide an opportunity to verify emerging findings.
- **Draft and Final Review Report:** (see links in Annex 1) containing an executive summary that can act as a stand-alone document; detailed analysis of the review findings organised by evaluation criteria and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations and an annotated ratings table.

- **Review Bulletin:** a 2-page summary of key review findings for wider dissemination.

Review of the draft review report. The review team will submit a draft report to the Task Manager and revise the draft in response to their comments and suggestions. The Task Manager will then forward the revised draft report to other project stakeholders, for their review and comments. Stakeholders may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions as well as providing feedback on the proposed recommendations and lessons. Any comments or responses to draft reports will be sent to the Task Manager for consolidation. The Task Manager will provide all comments to the review team for consideration in preparing the final report, along with guidance on areas of contradiction or issues requiring an institutional response. Terminal Review Reports and their ratings will be validated by the UN Environment Evaluation Office and an Evaluation Manager will advise the Task Manager of the role played by the Evaluation Manager in the review validation process.

At the end of the review process, the Project Manager will circulate the **Lessons Learned**.

The Consultants' Team

For this review, the review team will consist of a consultant who will work under the overall responsibility of the Task Manager (Ludovic Bernaudat) in consultation with the Fund Management Officer (Anuradha Shenoy) and the Sub-Programme Coordinators of the Chemicals and Wastes sub-programme (Tessa Goverse). The consultant will liaise with the Task Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the review. It is, however, the consultant's individual responsibility to arrange for their visas and immunizations as well as to plan meetings with stakeholders, organize online surveys, obtain documentary evidence and any other logistical matters related to the assignment. The UN Environment Task Manager and project team will, where possible, provide logistical support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the consultants to conduct the review as efficiently and independently as possible.

The consultant will be hired for 1 month spread over the period 4 months and should have: an advanced university degree in environmental sciences, international development or other relevant political or social sciences area; a minimum of 1 year of technical / evaluation experience, and using a Theory of Change approach; a broad understanding of the Minamata Convention along with excellent writing skills in English; and, where possible, knowledge of the UN system, specifically of the work of UN Environment.

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

Details of Evaluation Consultants' Team Roles can be found on the Evaluation Office of UN Environment website: www.unep.org/evaluation.

Schedule of the review

The table below presents the tentative schedule for the review.

Table 3. Tentative schedule for the review

Milestone	Deadline
Inception Report	10 Sep 2019
Telephone interviews, surveys etc.	20 Sep 2019
PowerPoint/presentation on preliminary findings and recommendations	30 Sep 2019
Draft report to Task Manager	20 Oct 2019
Draft Review Report shared with UN Environment Project Manager and team	31 Oct 2019
Draft Review Report shared with wider group of stakeholders	15 Nov 2019
Final Review Report	30 Nov 2019
Final Review Report shared with all respondents	15 Dec 2019

Annex H: Quality Assessment of the Terminal Review Report

Quality Assessment of the Terminal Review Report

Review Title: Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and National Action Plan for Artisanal Small-Scale Gold Mining in Eritrea (GEF 9641)

Consultant: Desiree Montecillo-Narvaez

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

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final Review Report Rating
Substantive Report Quality Criteria		
<p>Quality of the Executive Summary:</p> <p>The Summary should be able to stand alone as an accurate summary of the main review product. It should include a concise overview of the review object; clear summary of the review objectives and scope; overall project performance rating of the project and key features of performance (strengths and weaknesses) against exceptional criteria (plus reference to where the review ratings table can be found within the report); summary of the main findings of the exercise, including a synthesis of main conclusions (which include a summary response to key strategic review questions), lessons learned and recommendations.</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>A detailed summary which covers all the necessary material, but which may lead to repetition in the report. The recommendations do not appear to be actionable, rather they are general guidance for future project designs.</p>	4
<p>I. Introduction</p> <p>A brief introduction should be given identifying, where possible and relevant, the following: institutional context of the project (sub-programme, Division, regions/countries where implemented) and coverage of the review; date of PRC approval and project document signature); results frameworks to which it contributes (e.g. Expected Accomplishment in POW); project duration and start/end dates; number of project phases (where appropriate); implementing partners; total secured budget and whether the project has been reviewed/evaluated in the past (e.g. mid-term, part of a synthesis evaluation, evaluated by another agency etc.)</p> <p>Consider the extent to which the introduction includes a concise statement of the purpose of the review and the key intended audience for the findings?</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>No reference to UNEP's MTS/POW to which the project contributes – this is in the Project Identification Table (table 1). Reasons for project implementation delays are given.</p>	4
<p>II. Review Methods</p> <p>A data collection section should include: a description of review methods and information sources used, including the number and type of respondents; justification for methods used (e.g. qualitative/quantitative; electronic/face-to-face); any selection criteria used to identify respondents, case studies or sites/countries visited; strategies used to increase stakeholder engagement and consultation; details of how data were verified (e.g. triangulation, review by stakeholders etc.).</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>The description of the methods is brief and the limitations, their effects and action taken to address them are not given. No ethical statements are given. The group of people consulted with during the Review is small and no country visit was undertaken. It is noted that this is an Enabling Activity</p>	3

<p>Efforts to include the voices of different groups, e.g. vulnerable, gender, marginalised etc) should be described.</p> <p>Methods to ensure that potentially excluded groups (excluded by gender, vulnerability or marginalisation) are reached and their experiences captured effectively, should be made explicit in this section.</p> <p>The methods used to analyse data (e.g. scoring; coding; thematic analysis etc.) should be described.</p> <p>It should also address review limitations such as: low or imbalanced response rates across different groups; gaps in documentation; extent to which findings can be either generalised to wider review questions or constraints on aggregation/disaggregation; any potential or apparent biases; language barriers and ways they were overcome.</p> <p>Ethics and human rights issues should be highlighted including: how anonymity and confidentiality were protected and strategies used to include the views of marginalised or potentially disadvantaged groups and/or divergent views. E.g. <i>'Throughout the review process and in the compilation of the Final Review Report efforts have been made to represent the views of both mainstream and more marginalised groups. All efforts to provide respondents with anonymity have been made'</i></p>	<p>project but a broader respondents base would have enriched the findings. (e.g. if the project was establishing the baseline regarding mercury in Eritrea then a more diverse group of potentially affected people would have been needed to ensure their perspectives were taken into account.)</p> <p>It is noted that UNEP Evaluation Office provides a suite of tools, guidelines and templates to support consultants carrying out Reviews. These include structured guidance on how to establish ratings against the review criteria.</p>	
<p>III. The Project</p> <p>This section should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Context:</i> Overview of the main issue that the project is trying to address, its root causes and consequences on the environment and human well-being (i.e. synopsis of the problem and situational analyses). • <i>Results Framework:</i> Summary of the project's results hierarchy as stated in the ProDoc (or as officially revised) • <i>Stakeholders:</i> Description of groups of targeted stakeholders organised according to relevant common characteristics • <i>Project implementation structure and partners:</i> A description of the implementation structure with diagram and a list of key project partners • <i>Changes in design during implementation:</i> Any key events that affected the project's scope or parameters should be described in brief in chronological order • <i>Project financing:</i> Completed tables of: (a) budget at design and expenditure by components (b) planned and actual sources of funding/co-financing 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>A broad and historical context of Eritrea is given.</p> <p>Stakeholders are not described in detail although there is a section headed 'Project Partners'. Para 66 of this report suggests the Project Design had a rich analysis of stakeholders and one would have expected this to inform the Review. Para 83 notes that the groups at risk of exposure from contaminated sites are described in the MIA.</p> <p>The description of implementation arrangements does not go beyond the Implementing and Executing Agencies and repeats earlier text in the report.</p> <p>The length of the no cost extension (2 years and 2 months) is not given in this text – it is in the Project Identification Table.</p>	3
<p>IV. Theory of Change</p> <p>The reconstructed TOC at Review should be presented clearly in both diagrammatic and narrative forms. Clear articulation of each major causal pathway is expected, (starting from outputs to long term impact), including explanations of all drivers and assumptions as well as the expected roles of key actors.</p> <p>This section should include a description of how the TOC</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>A good attempt made to articulate a Theory of Change with higher level results even though this is an Enabling Activity project (i.e. has a strong focus on output level results). The outcome statements don't quite meet the UNEP guidance on outcomes (uptake of outputs). They fall short of indicating which group</p>	4

<p>at Review²² was designed (who was involved etc.) and applied to the context of the project? Where different groups (e.g. vulnerable, gender, marginalised etc) are included in, or affected by the project in different ways, this should be reflected in the TOC.</p> <p>Where the project results as stated in the project design documents (or formal revisions of the project design) are not an accurate reflection of the project's intentions or do not follow UNEP's definitions of different results levels, project results may need to be re-phrased or reformulated. In such cases, a summary of the project's results hierarchy should be presented for: a) the results as stated in the approved/revised Prodoc logframe/TOC and b) as formulated in the TOC at Review. <i>The two results hierarchies should be presented as a two column table to show clearly that, although wording and placement may have changed, the results 'goal posts' have not been 'moved'.</i> This table may have initially been presented in the Inception Report and should appear somewhere in the Main Review report.</p>	<p>has taken what action.</p> <p>It is not clear whether this is the TOC that was presented in the project document or whether any adjustments needed to be made to allow for an effective assessment of the project's performance.</p>	
<p>V. Key Findings</p> <p>A. Strategic relevance:</p> <p>This section should include an assessment of the project's relevance in relation to UNEP's mandate and its alignment with UNEP's policies and strategies at the time of project approval. An assessment of the complementarity of the project at design (or during inception/mobilisation²³) with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups should be included. Consider the extent to which all four elements have been addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v. Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and Strategic Priorities vi. Alignment to Donor/Partner Strategic Priorities vii. Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities viii. Complementarity with Existing Interventions 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Nothing is reported on the complementarity of this project with other existing interventions.</p>	4
<p>B. Quality of Project Design</p> <p>To what extent are the strength and weaknesses of the project design effectively <u>summarized</u>?</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>It is noted that in paras 67 and 68 the review consultant identifies the commitments made by the project, at design stage, to address the needs and rights of the poor, all human rights and the differentiated concerns of women and men.</p>	4

²² During the Inception Phase of the review process a *TOC at Design* is created based on the information contained in the approved project documents (these may include either logical framework or a TOC or narrative descriptions). During the review process this TOC is revised based on changes made during project intervention and becomes the *TOC at Review*.

²³ A project's inception or mobilization period is understood as the time between project approval and first disbursement. Complementarity during project implementation is considered under Efficiency, see below.

<p>C. Nature of the External Context For projects where this is appropriate, key external features of the project's implementing context that may have been reasonably expected to limit the project's performance (e.g. conflict, natural disaster, political upheaval²⁴) and how they have affected performance, should be described.</p>	<p>Final report: Adequately covered</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>D. Effectiveness (i) Outputs and Project Outcomes: How well does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the a) availability of outputs, and b) achievement of project outcomes? How convincing is the discussion of attribution and contribution, as well as the constraints to attributing effects to the intervention. The effects of the intervention on differentiated groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation, should be discussed explicitly.</p>	<p>Final report: No detail is provided on the training output, which is central to the TOC. The mercury inventory using the toolkit is a central output. This report notes that the output was evaluated independently and only assesses its completion and timely delivery. A summary of the findings from the independent evaluation would have enriched this Review. No detail is provided at the level of Achievement of Outcomes. This section lacks detail and/or evidence to support learning and to justify the ratings.</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>(ii) Likelihood of Impact: How well does the report present an integrated analysis, guided by the causal pathways represented by the TOC, of all evidence relating to likelihood of impact? How well are change processes explained and the roles of key actors, as well as drivers and assumptions, explicitly discussed? Any unintended negative effects of the project should be discussed under Effectiveness, especially negative effects on disadvantaged groups.</p>	<p>Final report: This section stands on the discussion of the achievement of outcomes, which, in itself, lacks detail and strong justification.</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>E. Financial Management This section should contain an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under financial management and include a completed 'financial management' table. Consider how well the report addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>adherence</i> to UNEP's financial policies and procedures • <i>completeness</i> of financial information, including the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used • <i>communication</i> between financial and project management staff 	<p>Final report: <i>(if this section is rated poorly as a result of limited financial information from the project, this is not a reflection on the consultant per se, but will affect the quality of the review report)</i> A table detailing the assessment under these sub-categories is in Annex C</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>F. Efficiency To what extent, and how well, does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of efficiency under the primary categories of cost-effectiveness and timeliness including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implications of delays and no cost extensions 	<p>Final report: Minimal section. Remaining project funds are noted in the Efficiency section but no further information is provided on this under Financial Management.</p>	<p>2</p>

²⁴ Note that 'political upheaval' does not include regular national election cycles, but unanticipated unrest or prolonged disruption. The potential delays or changes in political support that are often associated with the regular national election cycle should be part of the project's design and addressed through adaptive management of the project team.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe Discussion of making use during project implementation of/building on pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. The extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint. 		
G. Monitoring and Reporting How well does the report assess: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring design and budgeting (<i>including SMART results with measurable indicators, resources for MTE/R etc.</i>) Monitoring of project implementation (<i>including use of monitoring data for adaptive management</i>) Project reporting (<i>e.g. PIMS and donor reports</i>) 	Final report: Weak section – insufficient detail provided to justify the rating and findings.	2
H. Sustainability How well does the review identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of achieved project outcomes including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socio-political Sustainability Financial Sustainability Institutional Sustainability (<i>including issues of partnerships</i>) 	Final report: Adequate section.	3
I. Factors Affecting Performance These factors are <u>not</u> discussed in stand-alone sections but are integrated in criteria A-H as appropriate . Note that these are described in the Evaluation Criteria Ratings Matrix. To what extent, and how well, does the review report cover the following cross-cutting themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation and readiness Quality of project management and supervision²⁵ Stakeholder participation and co-operation Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity Environmental and social safeguards Country ownership and driven-ness Communication and public awareness 	Final report: Some of the issues raised under these Factors are not discussed in the rest of the report and are addressed here in insufficient detail to contribute strongly to learning (e.g. Human Rights and Gender and Communication and Public Awareness). Nothing is discussed on Safeguards even though the project had identified 'at risk' populations.	3
VI. Conclusions and Recommendations Quality of the conclusions: The key strategic questions should be clearly and succinctly addressed within the conclusions section. This includes providing the answers to the questions on Core Indicator Targets, stakeholder engagement, gender responsiveness, safeguards and knowledge management, required for the GEF portal.	Final report: Adequate section	4

²⁵ In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the Executing Agency and the overall supervision/technical backstopping provided by UNEP, as the Implementing Agency. Comments and a rating should be provided for both types of supervision and the overall rating for this sub-category established as a simple average of the two.

It is expected that the conclusions will highlight the main strengths and weaknesses of the project, and connect them in a compelling story line. Human rights and gender dimensions of the intervention (e.g. how these dimensions were considered, addressed or impacted on) should be discussed explicitly. Conclusions, as well as lessons and recommendations, should be consistent with the evidence presented in the main body of the report.		
ii) Quality and utility of the lessons: Both positive and negative lessons are expected and duplication with recommendations should be avoided. Based on explicit review findings, lessons should be rooted in real project experiences or derived from problems encountered and mistakes made that should be avoided in the future. Lessons are intended to be adopted any time they are deemed to be relevant in the future and must have the potential for wider application (replication and generalization) and use and should briefly describe the context from which they are derived and those contexts in which they may be useful.	Final report: Adequate section	4
iii) Quality and utility of the recommendations: To what extent are the recommendations proposals for specific action to be taken by identified people/position-holders to resolve concrete problems affecting the project or the sustainability of its results? They should be feasible to implement within the timeframe and resources available (including local capacities) and specific in terms of who would do what and when. At least one recommendation relating to strengthening the human rights and gender dimensions of UNEP interventions, should be given. Recommendations should represent a measurable performance target in order that the Evaluation Office can monitor and assess compliance with the recommendations. In cases where the recommendation is addressed to a third party, compliance can only be monitored and assessed where a contractual/legal agreement remains in place. Without such an agreement, the recommendation should be formulated to say that UNEP project staff should pass on the recommendation to the relevant third party in an effective or substantive manner. The effective transmission by UNEP of the recommendation will then be monitored for compliance. Where a new project phase is already under discussion or in preparation with the same third party, a recommendation can be made to address the issue in the next phase.	Final report: The recommendations do not lend themselves to specific action and read more like lessons.	4
VII. Report Structure and Presentation Quality		
i) Structure and completeness of the report: To what extent does the report follow the Evaluation Office guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included and complete, including a gender disaggregation total for respondents.	Final report: The Annexes are complete.	4
ii) Quality of writing and formatting:	Final report:	3

Consider whether the report is well written (clear English language and grammar) with language that is adequate in quality and tone for an official document? Do visual aids, such as maps and graphs convey key information? Does the report follow UNEP Evaluation Office formatting guidelines?	The writing is acceptable although the report generally lacks detail.	
OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING		3.5

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1. The overall quality of the review report is calculated by taking the mean score of all rated quality criteria.