

**Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF project
“Building the Resilience of Kune-Vaini Lagoon
through Ecosystem-Based Adaptation (EbA)” Project
(GEF ID: 5386)**



February 2023

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ACRONYMS

CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DMRD	Drini-Mati River Deltas
DTA	District Technical Advisor
EbA	Ecosystem-based Adaptation
EIA	Environmental impact assessments
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IWGCC	Inter-ministerial Working Group on Climate Change
KSQ	Key Strategic Questions
KVLS	Kune-Vaini lagoon system
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MTE	Ministry of Tourism and Environment
MTR	Midterm Review
MTS	Medium Term Strategy
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NAPA	National Agency on Protected Areas
PCC	Project Coordination Committee
PD	Project Director
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PM	Project Manager
PMU	Project Management Unit
PoW	Programme of Work
ProDoc	Project Document
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PSO	Private Sector Organizations
RAPA	Regional Agency on Protected Areas
REC	Regional Environment Centre
SCCF	Special Climate Change Fund
TM	Task Manager
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TWGCC	Technical Working Group on Climate Change
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION TABLE

Identification Table	GEF ID.: 5386	Umoja no.:S1-32CCL-000012
Project Title	<i>Nr 5386 or CCL-5060-2724-4E36: Building the Resilience of Kune-Vaini Lagoon through Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA)</i>	
Duration months	<i>Planned</i>	36
	<i>Extension(s)</i>	<i>June 2020 -12 months added</i> <i>June 2021 – 12 months</i>
Division(s) Implementing the project	<i>Ecosystems Division, Climate Change Adaptation Unit,</i>	
Name of co-implementing Agency	<i>n/a</i>	
Executing Agency(ies)	<i>Government of Albania, Ministry of Tourism and Environment</i>	
Names of Other Project Partners	<i>Ministry of Agriculture Regional Agency Protected Area National Agency Protected Area Municipality of Lezhe University of Natural Sciences</i>	
Project Type	<i>Medium Size Project</i>	
Project Scope	<i>National</i>	
Region	<i>Europe</i>	
Countries	<i>Albania</i>	
Programme of Work	<i>Climate Change Adaptation</i>	
GEF Focal Area(s)	<i>Climate Change</i>	
UNSDCF / UNDAF linkages	<i>Programme of Cooperation for Sustainable Development 2017-2021 Priority IV. Environment and Climate Change Outcome 4. Government and non-government actors adopt and implement innovative, gender-sensitive national and local actions for environmental sustainability, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and disaster risk reduction.</i>	
Link to relevant SDG target(s) and SDG indicator(s)	<i>SDG 13 –Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts: 13.1.3 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies 13.3.1 Number of countries that have integrated mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning into primary, secondary and tertiary curricula SDG 15 – Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss: 15.3.1 Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area</i>	
GEF financing amount	<i>\$1,903,000</i>	
Co-financing amount	<i>Realized: \$2,425,800</i>	
Date of CEO Endorsement	<i>March 2015</i>	

Start of Implementation	<i>6th January 2016</i>	
Date of first disbursement	<i>June 2016</i>	
Total disbursement as of 30 June 2021	\$1,843,927	
Total expenditure as of 30 June 2021	\$1,696,750	
Expected Mid-Term Review Date	<i>December 2018/ Mid-term completed May 2019</i>	
Completion Date	<i>Planned</i>	<i>30 June 2019</i>
	<i>Revised</i>	<i>30 December 2020</i>
Expected Terminal Evaluation Date	<i>September 2021</i>	
Expected Financial Closure Date	<i>December 2021</i>	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project “Building the resilience of Kune-Vaini Lagoon through Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA)” in Albania was funded by the Global Environment Facility/ Special Climate Change Fund (GEF/SCCF). It was launched in January 2016, for an initial duration of 36 months, and extended twice. The technical completion of the project was on June 30, 2021. The project was implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and executed by the Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MTE) of Albania. It received a USD 1.9M grant from the SCCF, of which 96,4% had been executed as of April 2022.

The Kune-Vaini lagoon system (KVLS) is located in the Drini-Mati River Delta in the Lezha region of Albania and includes several key ecosystems that provide goods and services to the population living nearby. In addition to being highly degraded, the protected area is vulnerable to the effects of climate change, in particular to erosion, loss of habitats, floods and storm surges. The UNEP Kune-Vaini project aimed to increase the capacity of government and local communities living nearby the KVLS to adapt to climate change using an integrated suite of adaptation interventions, including EbA, through three main outcomes:

- **Outcome 1:** Increased national/local technical and institutional capacity to address climate change risks in coastal areas through Adaptation interventions including EbA
- **Outcome 2:** Reduced vulnerability of communities living nearby the Kune-Vaini lagoon system to climate change-induced extreme events through pilot adaptation interventions including EbA
- **Outcome 3:** Increased awareness of local and national stakeholders to climate change risks and the potential of EbA to increase the resilience of local communities to climate change.

The Terminal Evaluation used a mixed methods approach and both secondary and primary data, which was triangulated to come up with an evidence-based assessment. In addition to document review and online interviews, a one-week field mission to Albania allowed the evaluator to meet with national and local level stakeholders, a few community members and visit the KVLS.

Strategic relevance

Strategic relevance is satisfactory because the focus of the project is aligned with UNEP’s Medium-Term Strategy 2018-2021 and 2014-2015 Programme of Work (POW), especially under the Climate Change Subprogramme 1. It is still relevant to the POW 2022-23. The project is aligned with GEF-6 focal area/SCCF strategies, objectives and outcomes, especially CCA-1, Outcome 1.1, and CCA-2, Outcome 2.3.

The project is well aligned with Albania’s global priorities such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2030, in particular SDG 13 and 15, Albania’s Second National Communication (2009), the first Biennial Update Report (2021) and the 2019 National Adaptation Plan (NAP) which explicitly mentions the project. The concept of EbA is highly relevant to the climate change challenges faced in the area, and in line with national interests to improve management of protected areas while considering adaptation needs. As the concept was relatively new in the country, the project responded to a need to generate knowledge and evidence tailored to the country’s context. The vulnerability of communities around the KVLS was assessed as high, and the project was expected to bring opportunities for new initiatives in the area.

The adaptation rationale was clearly developed and incorporated in all project activities. While the primary interest of several stakeholders in the initiative was about restoration, interventions were really designed to address climate change risks.

The UNEP Kune-Vaini project built on the findings of the United Nations Development Programme-GEF project which identified adaptation measures in the KVLS. It did not establish formal collaboration mechanisms with other projects in the area, and only one of the baseline projects yielded co-finance. Nonetheless, through informal communications, no overlaps with other projects were identified.

Quality of project design

The design of the project was rated highly satisfactory, with most issues being around stakeholder consultations, analysis and engagement plan, in particular with regards to gender (no gender analysis or action plan was developed) or other minority stakeholders. The project's intended results and causality, as well as the initial results framework, were logical and realistic, and the institutional arrangements for project management were comprehensive, clear, and appropriate. Knowledge management was included in all three project components, and the planned budget seemed realistic, with its largest proportion allocated to EbA interventions. The project document included a detailed risk analysis, which did not address delays related to the 2017 parliamentary elections. It included an environmental and social safeguards checklist that identified the need to conduct environmental impact assessments and hydrologic studies for several measures. The project's exit strategy was implicit in the sustainability strategy.

Nature of external context

The external context was unfavorable to the project. It faced several external challenges during its implementation. The 2017 elections delayed implementation by several months but did not significantly affect the project results. Key structures for the implementation of the project, namely the project coordination directorate and the Inter-ministerial working group on climate change (IWGCC) were abolished during a restructuring of the MTE. . Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions caused additional implementation delays.

Effectiveness

Overall, the effectiveness of the project is rated as satisfactory.

Outputs

The delivery of outputs is satisfactory. Despite a slow start, almost all outputs were delivered, and output delivery is therefore satisfactory. **Component 1** trainings were delivered to national and local governments, technical guidelines were produced and an upscaling strategy for EbA was developed and disseminated. The Technical Working Group on Climate Change was established but is not fully operational due to the absence of the IWGCC to which it was supposed to report. Under **Component 2**, EbA interventions were delivered, with varying levels of success. Seven hectares of forests were reforested with relatively high survival rates. They are currently progressing towards rehabilitation. Trees were planted on two thousand meters of dunes to stabilize them, but survival rates were low.. A long-term strategy for research and monitoring was developed and is being implemented, and several technical reports were produced by university students on the environmental health of the KVLS. Targets in terms of trainings for local communities on climate change, EbA and additional livelihoods were achieved. The project delivered all the outputs planned for **Component 3** on awareness raising and knowledge about EbA, including a communication plan, several awareness-raising activities at the national and local levels, the publication of a scientific paper and the establishment of a website to share project documentation. Several MSc students were supported fully or partially in their thesis.

Outcomes

The delivery of outcomes is satisfactory.

Outcome 1: Increased national/local technical and institutional capacity to address climate change risks in coastal areas through adaptation interventions including EbA. Technical capacity was increased for the regional/local institutions in Lezha and for some national institutions (the MTE and the National Agency for Protected Areas) but did not cover all relevant national institutions. In terms of institutional capacities, the expected outcome was not achieved largely because of the restructuring of the MTE. The upscaling strategy was endorsed by the MTE.

Outcome 2: Reduced vulnerability of communities living nearby the Kune-Vaini lagoon system to climate change-induced extreme events through pilot adaptation interventions including EbA. Ecosystem rehabilitation of the KVLS enhanced the resilience of neighbouring communities by contributing to maintain and restore ecosystem services (although some are not yet fully established) and enhancing the fishing and tourism opportunities of the area. There is no evidence that the trainings on additional livelihoods have yielded additional incomes for the trainees, including women who were included in trainings but not specifically targeted. However, trained community members are more aware about climate risks and are able to implement small scale EbA measures.

Outcome 3: Increased awareness of local and national stakeholders to climate change risks and the potential of EbA to increase the resilience of local communities to climate change. The project increased awareness about climate change risks and EbA among local stakeholders as well as national institutions. While it is not possible to objectively measure the effect of communication measures targeting the public, these measures likely provided information to a wide public.

Likelihood of impacts

The likelihood of impacts is satisfactory, as the complementary effects of restoration of the Kune-Vain area along with increased awareness about climate risks and capacity to implement small-scale EbA measures by communities around the KVLS are likely to increase the adaptive capacity of local communities. The impacts of restoration within the lagoon are the strongest, as they preserve and enhance ecosystem services provided by the lagoon, while the impacts of community activities will be more marginal.

There are some uncertainties with regards to the assumptions and drivers identified in the theory of change for outcomes to lead to impacts. Institutionally, the re-establishment of the IWGCC, which is scheduled, would be favourable. The extent to which EbA and climate change considerations would be integrated in plans to improve protected area management and enhance tourism is unclear.

Unintended negative effects

The Environmental and Social Safeguards Checklist did not identify significant risks with the project but highlighted the vulnerability of the KVSL ecosystem. Environmental impact assessments and other studies allowed informed risk management by the project management unit and the steering committee.

Financial Management

Project disbursements were very low during the first two years of the project, but picked up in 2018 and the extensions allowed full disbursement to be achieved. The financial documentation is complete and consistent, and supported by audit reports. Documented budget variances illustrate the ability of the project team to adapt to changing conditions. Mobilized co-finance corresponded to only 21% of what had been planned, with contributions only from one of the baseline projects and from the Government of Albania, which provided cash co-finance for project activities. Financial management is thus rated as highly satisfactory.

Efficiency

The overall efficiency of the project was satisfactory. Although some budget lines increased significantly (e.g., forex), efforts were made early on to generate savings by merging some of the consulting positions. The realization of studies before undertaking activities was cost-effective as it allowed for more accurate decision-making, and investing in a detailed sedimentation study early on would have been beneficial. The cost effectiveness of some of the most expensive activities of the project was good.

Monitoring and reporting

Overall, the project monitoring and reporting is satisfactory. The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan included in the ProDoc was adequate. The project undertook extensive monitoring activities, complementing the M&E activities with the monitoring and research plan developed by the University of Tirana. The methodology for the baseline was relatively strong, but perhaps more complex than the project required, which brings into question the choice of an indicator involving a vulnerability index at community stage for a project with relatively limited community-level interventions. The methodology for measuring some of these indicators did not always inform the indicators, especially gender-related indicators, and the vulnerability assessment included many perception-based indicators which are unreliable. Furthermore, the final monitoring report did not always apply the same methodology as the baseline report, thus limiting the usefulness of the data collected. Project reporting was consistent and thorough, but output indicators were insufficiently updated throughout the project, between the baseline and final report.

Sustainability (MU)

The project built several sustainability measures into its key activities, such as the Upscaling strategy and the monitoring and research plan. The **socio-political sustainability** of achievements is relatively likely, as most field interventions can be maintained in the medium term and EbA is being integrated into national policies, but it is uncertain whether it will be appropriately integrated into tourism development strategies. Students involved in the project will continue sharing knowledge beyond the life of the project. Social-political sustainability is thus satisfactory. The results of the project either do not depend on additional funding, or funding has been secured in the MTE budget. **Financial sustainability** is therefore rated as highly satisfactory. **Institutionally**, conditions at the end of the project were not favourable to the maintenance of the Technical Working Group on Climate Change created by the project, which is the custodian of the tools and products developed by the project. There is no mechanism to share the findings of the monitoring and research work with a wide range of stakeholders. Institutional sustainability is rated as moderately unsatisfactory.

Key strategic questions

To what extent did the project advance adaptation and what benefits did it generate in respect of which climate impacts?

The KVSL is under high threat from climate change and is a key buffer for the entire Lezha region. The project interventions were designed to address adaptation needs. The reopening of the tidal channel and reforestation are contributing contribute to drain floods and stabilize land, but dune stabilization efforts through reforestation were less successful. The restoration of this ecosystem is helping maintain the buffer, while increasing livelihood opportunities related to fishing and tourism. The extent to which communities can diversify their sources of income is unclear, but several of its members can implement small scale EbA measures. Overall, the project activities are a valuable contribution to adaptation, but are not sufficient to address the extent of the needs.

To what extent has the project implemented an effective knowledge management and dissemination strategy?

The knowledge management strategy was effective and incorporated through various elements across the project. The generation of knowledge products was consistent with the pilot nature of the project, but some of the research products could have been more closely aligned with the intent to build evidence on EbA. The awareness raising campaign was reached a diversity of publics with diverse methods. Dissemination to development agencies could have been more consistent.

To what extent did the project enable the country to integrate climate change adaptation measures into national strategies?

The project was considered among the key actions of the 2019 National Adaptation Plan and presented as a success story. This helped make the case for inclusion of EbA in national strategies, but was not an enabling factor in its inclusion in the sense that it did not have direct and decisive influence on the decision to include EbA.

To what extent, and with what success, were the recommendations from the mid-term assessment taken up in the latter part of the project’s implementation?

Out of five recommendations, two were fully taken up with successful results, namely Recommendation 3 on the modalities for maintenance of the tidal channel and Recommendation 5 the speeding up of implementation of some activities. Recommendation 4 “Mobilize a Technical Working Group on Climate Change and Ecosystem-based Adaptation” was taken up and achieved, but not sustained. Recommendation 1 on project monitoring activities was partly taken up, with the development of the long-term research and monitoring strategy, but no additional collection of output level information. Recommendation 2 “Explore further baseline and on-going initiatives to seek out synergies” was not taken up, as no new baseline projects were identified, although the project team maintained contact with other projects.

Project ratings table

Criterion	Rating
A. Strategic Relevance	S
<i>1. Alignment to MTS and POW and the GEF strategic priorities</i>	HS
<i>2. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities</i>	S
<i>3. Complementary with other interventions</i>	MS
B. Effectiveness	S
<i>1. Delivery of outputs</i>	S
<i>2. Achievement of direct outcomes</i>	S
<i>3. Likelihood of impact</i>	S
C. Financial Management	HS
<i>1. Rate of spend</i>	S
<i>2. Quality and consistency of financial reporting</i>	HS
D. Efficiency	S
F. Monitoring and Reporting	S
<i>1. Monitoring design and budgeting</i>	S

Criterion	Rating
2. <i>Monitoring of project results</i>	S
3. <i>Project reporting</i>	S
G. Sustainability	MU
1. Socio-political sustainability	S
2. Financial sustainability	HS
3. Institutional sustainability	MU
H. Factors Affecting Performance	S
1. <i>Preparation and readiness</i>	S
2. <i>Quality of project management and supervision</i>	HS
3. <i>Stakeholders participation and cooperation</i>	MS
4. <i>Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity</i>	MU
5. <i>Country ownership and driven-ness</i>	MS
6. <i>Communication and public awareness</i>	S
Overall project rating	S

Lessons

Strategic relevance: Establishing a specific coordination committee was not a practical approach, especially in the context of restructuring of the MTE, but more structured informal communications with other projects can be sufficient to ensure coordination. Active efforts are required to identify alternative-sources of co-finance

Effectiveness

- Smaller projects may not have enough traction to mobilize large committees like the Technical Working Group on Climate Change.
- Awareness raising and capacity building activities are not sufficient to build strong community support for a project.
- The effectiveness of reforestation efforts is influenced by multiple variables, however insufficient information was collected for a detailed understanding of the success factors that apply to coastal Albania.
- The project demonstrated both the benefits and limitations of EbA approaches. EbA solutions may be threatened by climate change, and require support from infrastructure to reach maturity.
- Conducting detailed studies and planning (EIAs, EbA protocols...) was instrumental to the success of the interventions, to manage risks, and to build knowledge on effective EbA practices.
- Specific measures need to be taken to effectively address gender in a purposeful manner.
- A non-prescriptive Upscaling strategy and the incorporation of experiences of other protected areas is a valuable output to provide options for the uptake of EbA nationally or locally.
- Integrating knowledge management across the project, through various means, and in particular by using scientific approaches and academics to collect evidence is highly valuable, but should be more closely related to the specific EbA interventions and factors influencing success. Alternative means of dissemination, and especially continued availability and use of knowledge products could help ensure knowledge is not lost.

Financial management: Careful financial management was helpful to identify cost saving opportunities and deliver additional benefits.

Efficiency: Conducting EIAs and other studies was also valuable to prevent inefficiencies.

Monitoring and reporting: Thorough monitoring has a great value added in terms not only of accountability but also in terms of potential for knowledge generation, as part of a knowledge management strategy that enhances project sustainability. However, attention must be paid to the quality and consistency of the methodology, and to the alignment of the methods with the project's pathways of change.

Sustainability: Considering the sustainability of each activity and output from the onset is a good practice. The engagement of students has long term effects, well beyond the life of the project.

Recommendations

Recommendations for project closure:

- Develop and disseminate key guidelines to incorporate EbA into a sustainable tourism development plan
- Lessons learned exercise on reforestation and dune stabilization efforts in the KVLS
- Final dissemination event of the findings, knowledge and tools
- Develop a short concept note for a future EbA project in the KVLS
- Final restitution event in Lezha involving communities to showcase the project results

Recommendation for future EbA projects in Albania:

Recommendation 1. Build on efforts to identify best EbA practices and detailed EbA protocols relevant for Albanian coastal areas

Recommendation 2. Build stronger understanding and engagement of communities around targeted protected areas

General recommendations for UNEP:

Recommendation 1. Include a review and update of the list of baseline projects or projects to coordinate with during the inception phase of a project.

Recommendation 2. Consider the full range of climate risks in project planning analysis.

Recommendation 3. Incorporate more thorough and proactive gender planning

MAIN REPORT



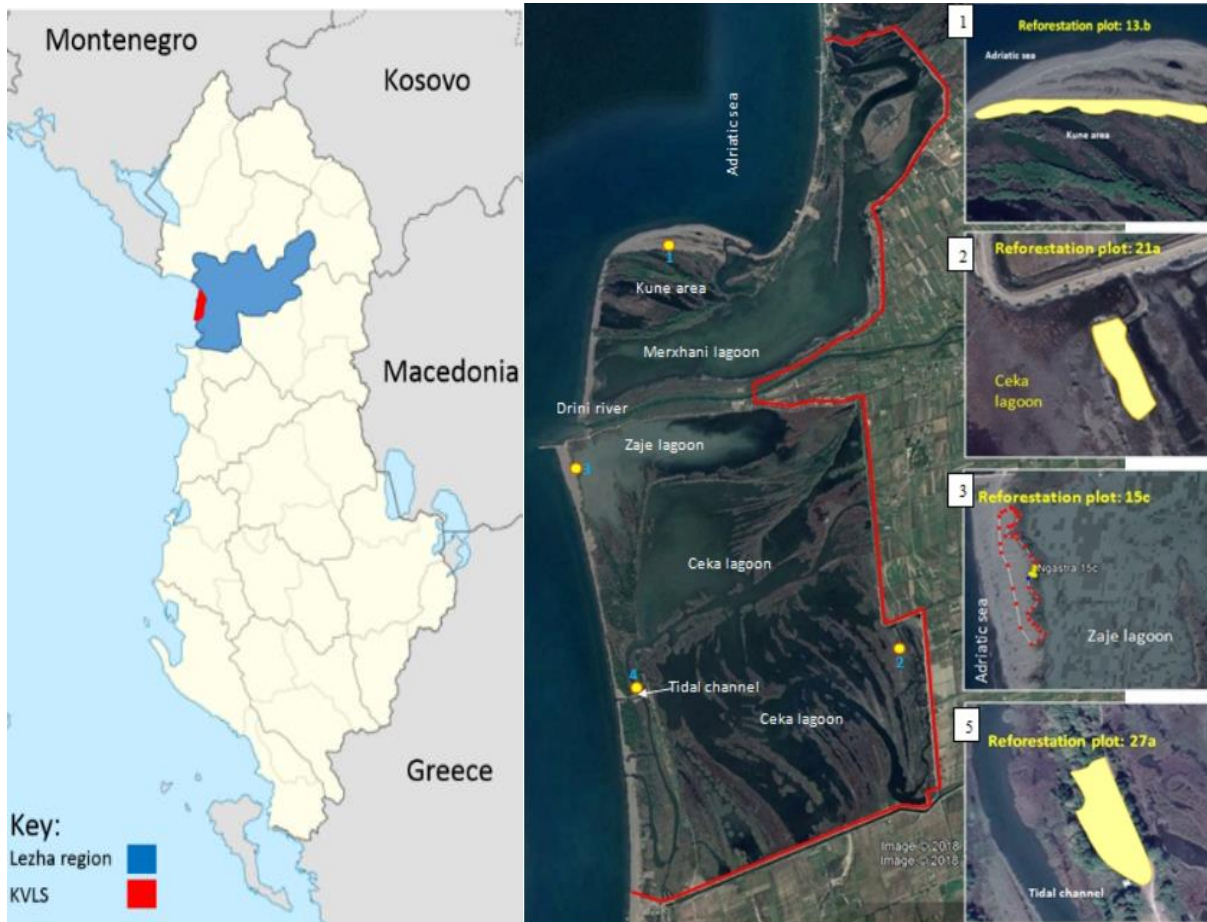
I. PROJECT PRESENTATION

Context

1. The project “Building the resilience of Kune-Vaini Lagoon through Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA)” in Albania was funded by the Global Environment Facility/ Special Climate Change Fund (GEF/SCCF), and launched in January 2016, for an initial duration of 36 months, which has been extended twice (two one-year extensions), postponing the technical completion of the project to 30th June 2021 and the expiry date of the agreement to 30th June 2022. The project was executed by the Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MTE) of Albania and implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
2. Albania is suffering from the effects of extreme weather events such as flooding, droughts and heat waves. Since 2010, floods have devastated regions and cities such as Shkodër, Tiranë, Vlorë and Fieri and posed a significant threat to Albania’s economy, ecosystems and people’s health. Between 1997 and 2017, recurring floods directly affected more than 550,000 inhabitants and caused USD 218 million in damage¹.
3. The Kune-Vaini lagoon system (KVLS) is located in the Drini-Mati River Delta in the Lezhe region of Albania and includes several key ecosystems that provide goods and services to the population living nearby. Their income and livelihoods rely mostly on fishing and agriculture in the surrounding areas. However, the KVLS is confronted by a rapidly growing population density and widespread poverty which led to unplanned settlements in the buffer zones. This situation led to an overexploitation of KVLS natural resources and is threatening the vital ecosystem goods and services that the KVLS is providing. These challenges are likely to be further exacerbated by climate change effects through an increase of temperature and evapotranspiration, reduction of precipitation and increase in water salinity as well as the accelerated sea-level rise resulting in increased erosion, loss of habitats and more frequent floods and storm surges. Overall, climate change is hindering the capacity of the KVLS to provide ecosystem goods and services that are crucial for local communities.
4. The figures below show the geographical location of the Lezhe region, the KVLS, and more precisely the location of reforestation activities.

¹Source: Striving to Adapt to Climate Change: Lessons from Albania by Laureta Dibra, Lindita Tafaj and Alexandre Borde. NAP Global Network. October 29, 2019.

Figure 1: Geographic location of the KVLS Figure 2: Location of reforestation activities



Source: Maintenance report

Project objectives and components

5. The SCCF-financed project aimed to increase the capacity of government and local communities living nearby the KVLS to adapt to climate change using an integrated suite of adaptation interventions, including EbA.
6. Three components were used to achieve this objective:
 - Component 1: Technical and institutional capacity to address climate change risks through EbA;
 - Component 2: Climate resilience through demonstration of best practices and concrete EbA and other adaptation interventions in the Kune-Vaini lagoon system; and
 - Component 3: Awareness and knowledge on effective EbA.
7. The three outcomes with their associated outputs are described below:

Table 1: Outcomes with their associated outputs

Outcome	Output
Outcome 1: Increased national/local technical and institutional capacity to address climate change risks in coastal areas through Adaptation interventions including EbA	<u>Output 1.1.</u> Training conducted for national and local government representatives on EbA.
	<u>Output 1.2.</u> Technical guidelines produced on implementation of climate change adaptation actions using EbA, and training conducted on the application of these guidelines.
	<u>Output 1.3.</u> A technical working group on climate change and EbA established to facilitate national dialogue on coastal adaptation through EbA and mobilize funds for the implementation of EbA at the national level.
	<u>Output 1.4.</u> Technical support provided for the development of a strategy to upscale, sustain and replicate climate-resilient development using EbA.
Outcome 2: Reduced vulnerability of communities living nearby the Kune-Vaini lagoon system to climate change-induced extreme events through pilot adaptation interventions including EbA	<u>Output 2.1.</u> An integrated suite of adaptation interventions including EbA implemented in the Kune-Vaini lagoon system.
	<u>Output 2.2.</u> Long-term strategy for: i) monitoring EbA interventions developed; and ii) technical reports produced.
	<u>Output 2.3.</u> Training of local communities on EbA and additional livelihoods including ecotourism.
Outcome 3: Increased awareness of local and national stakeholders to climate change risks and the potential of EbA to increase the resilience of local communities to climate change.	<u>Output 3.1.</u> Knowledge management plan developed to capture and share information on climate change impacts and lessons learned to inform future EbA interventions.
	<u>Output 3.2.</u> Awareness-raising campaign conducted on the advantages of EbA to increase resilience to climate change impacts.
	<u>Output 3.3.</u> Scientific reports produced on the performance of implemented EbA interventions and research projects underway.
	<u>Output 3.4.</u> A web-based platform established to share information and provide access to project products.

Source: Project Implementation Report (PIR) 2020-21

Project stakeholders

8. The project was national in scale. The target groups were government agencies, regional and local agencies as well as research institutions, civil society organizations (CSO) and communities.

Specific stakeholders included:

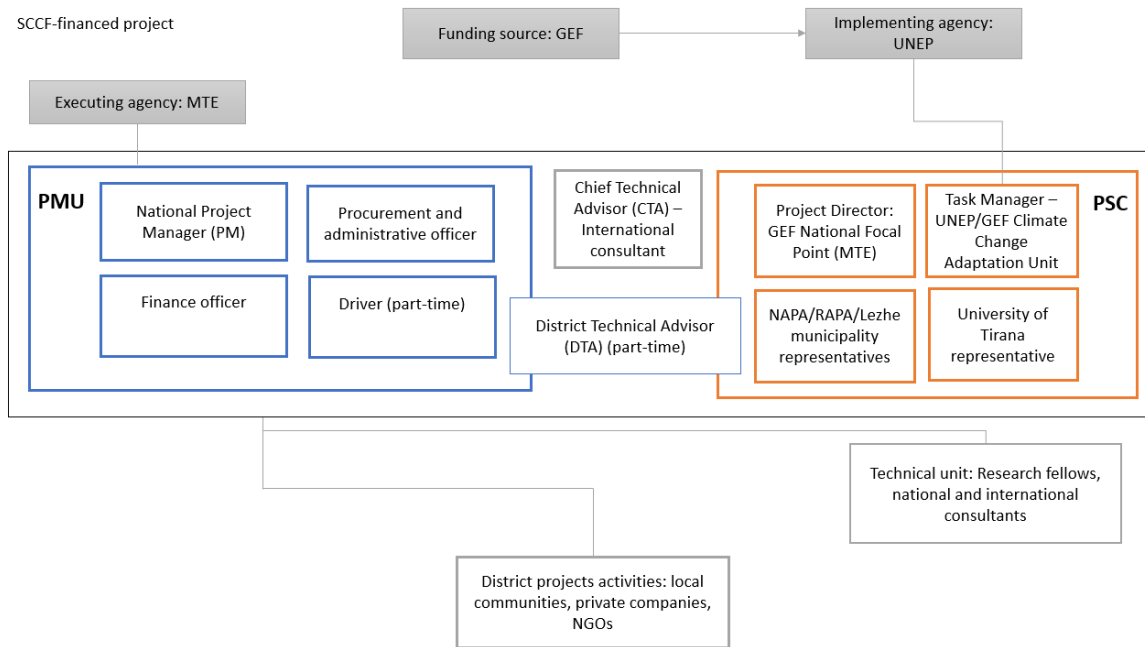
- Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MTE)
- Technical Working Group on Climate Change (TWGCC)
- Biodiversity Department
- National Agency on Protected Areas (NAPA)
- National Coastal Agency
- Regional Agency on Protected Areas (RAPA)
- Lezhe Region
- Lezhe municipality
- Shenkolli, Shengjin and Barbulloje communes
- University of Tirana/Academy of science
- Communities (fishermen, farmers, women)
- GIZ Albania and European Commission (other donors)

- Regional Environment Center (REC) Albania.

Project implementation structure and institutional context

9. The project was implemented by UNEP and executed by the Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MTE) of Albania. Initially the executing agency was the Ministry of Environment, but the department joined that of tourism forming MTE after national elections and changes in the Albanian Government in September 2017.
10. The management structure of the SCCF-financed project comprised:
 - A Project Steering Committee (PSC), in charge of providing project oversight and support, particularly through implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan, and meeting yearly;
 - A Project Director from the executing agency (MTE), which was the designated focal point within the ministry (s/he changed several times during the project);
 - A Project Management Unit (PMU) that was established in June 2016 to execute the project. It comprised 4 staff (National Project Manager (PM), Procurement Officer, Finance Officer and Driver) as well as a part-time District Technical Advisor (DTA). Moreover, the PM served as a liaison between the PMU, the technical experts and the Government staff involved in project activities;
 - National and International experts to provide technical support for tasks that cannot be conducted by government staff; and
 - A part-time Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) who worked closely with the PM to assist management of the SCCF-financed project activities.
11. A Project Coordination Committee (PCC) was expected to ensure communication between the SCCF-financed project and the baseline projects but was never established. This is related to the fact that the project was going to be placed within a project coordination directorate but then the government was restructured and the directorate no longer existed.

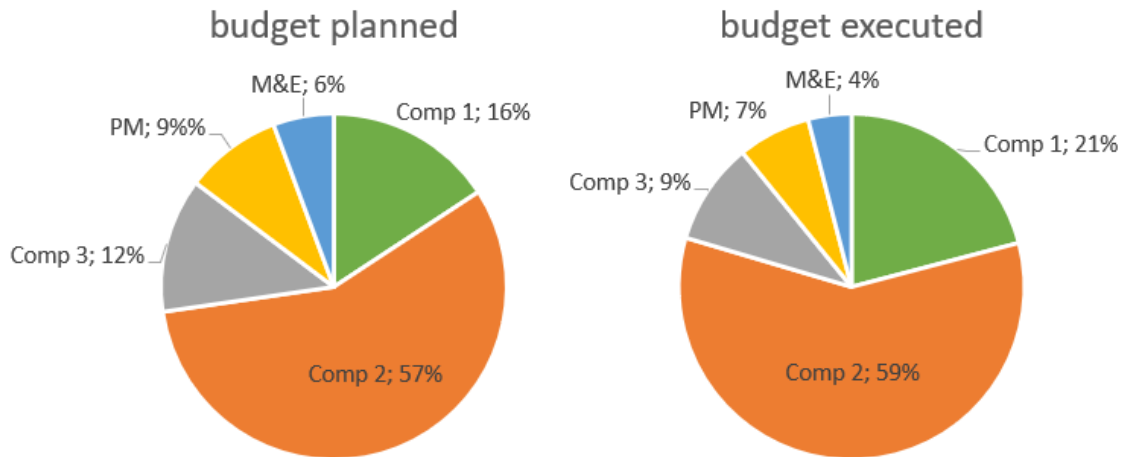
Figure 3: Implementation structure



Project financing

12. The project was funded by the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) through a USD1.9M grant. Despite a very slow budget execution at the beginning of the project, 96,4% of the budget has been executed (USD 1 835 750) as of April 2022.
13. The original budget by component was as follows:
 - Component 1: USD 300 000 (15,7% of the total budget)
 - Component 2: USD 1 083 500 (56,9%)
 - Component 3: USD 239 000 (12,5%)
 - Project Management: USD 172 500 (9%)
 - M&E: USD 108 000 (5,7%)
14. The budget executed for component 1 represents 20,9% of the total budget, which is slightly higher than expected. The budget executed for component 2 and 3 is almost equal to what was planned, and the budget executed for Project Management and Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) is a little lower than expected.

Figure 4: Budget planned vs budget executed by component (in percentage)



II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

15. The terminal evaluation of the project “Building the Resilience of Kune-Vaini Lagoon through EbA” has been conducted using the best practices in evaluation. It sought to be credible, independent, impartial, and useful. The evaluation uses a mixed methods approach and both secondary and primary data, which has been triangulated to come up with an evidence-based assessment. The approach has been participatory in that it has engaged a broad range of stakeholders during the process in order to build its credibility.

Evaluation process

Data collection phase

➤ Document review

16. The evaluator reviewed all project-related documentation and extracted information relevant to each of the evaluation questions and indicators. Reviewed documents included project design documents, baseline report, final monitoring report, annual work plans, budgets and cash advances, progress reports (including PIRs, half-yearly reports and financial reports), PSC meeting minutes, the MTR, and the activity reports, technical studies and deliverables produced by the project. All the data collected through the literature review were compiled in a data collection matrix following the structure of the review matrix (Annex C: Evaluation matrix). The list of documentation reviewed during the evaluation is presented in Annex (Annex E: List of documents consulted).

➤ Interviews and field mission

17. The evaluator collected first-hand information by conducting interviews and through direct observation.

The evaluator conducted a field mission to Albania from May 9th to 13th, 2022. The mission aimed to: (i) meet and interview key project stakeholders; (ii) meet with communities; and (iii) conduct field visits in the KVLS.

The interviews with stakeholders were conducted based on semi-structured interview. These interviews aimed to collect information on stakeholders' perception of the project intervention, and as such were tailored to the specific context of each interviewee. The size of the project intervention area (the KVLS covers an area of 2.3 km²) and distance from Tirana allowed the evaluator to cover most of it during its mission, but not all project sites could be covered. Field visits allowed additional data collection through direct observation and interviews. During these field visits, the evaluator adopted a gender-sensitive approach, making sure the situation and point of view of women is duly heard and taken into consideration.

Interviews were also conducted online with the task manager at UNEP, the CTA, members of the PMU and some other stakeholders involved either before or after the mission. These interviews were conducted according to dedicated interview protocols.

18. Throughout the field mission, the following stakeholders were interviewed²:

- Four representatives of the Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MTE), including three PSC members and the GEF focal point (Project Director)
- Representatives of the National Agency of Protected Areas (NAPA)
- Collaborators: CEIA and Regional Environment Center (REC) Albania
- Representatives of other agencies active in the KVLS: UNDP, GIZ
- District Technical Advisor (DTA)
- Head of Policy Development Sector at the Regional Council
- Representative of the Lezha Prefecture
- Small business expert
- Representatives of the Regional Agency of Protected Areas (RAPA)
- Monitoring strategy consultant from the University of Tirana
- One fisherman
- Two women living in the area

Other stakeholders were interviewed online:

- UNEP Task Manager (TM)
- Consultant having provided services for the project (EbA specialist)
- National government partners (incl. person responsible for the NAP) / TWGCC members (incl. PSC members)
- PMU
 - Project Manager (PM)
 - Finance Officer
- CTA
- University of Tirana representative

The Annex D: Mission Plan is included in Annex D: Mission Plan of this report.

As for the literature review, all the information collected during the field mission and interviews were compiled in a data collection matrix.

² The representatives interviewed were the ones engaged during project implementation, except for the GEF focal point who was in place since October 2021. The UNDP/GIZ representatives interviewed were not necessarily the most relevant because the relevant people were not available.

➤ Presentation of preliminary findings

19. On the last day of the field mission, the evaluator organized a working session with the PMU to discuss preliminary findings. This ensured that the evaluator had a correct understanding of the situation. It also gave a chance to the PMU to provide feedback on the preliminary findings of the evaluation.

Following the field mission, a Teams meeting was organized together with UNEP Task Manager, the Project Manager, the CTA and the Finance Officer on May 25 to present the evaluation preliminary findings. This approach ensured that the project team was actively associated to the data collection process and analysis, which enriched the analysis and allowed the development of more valuable lessons and recommendations.

Reporting phase

20. The evaluator carefully reviewed, triangulated and analyzed all data collected for this evaluation in order to generate evidence-based answers to the evaluation questions. The analysis not only used information on the project achievements for each of the project components, but also on the context, on the role of the implementation partners, and on the institutional and political changes brought about by the project. As this is a terminal evaluation, particular attention was given to learning from the experience. The evaluator went beyond the assessment of “what” the project performance was and sought to provide a deeper understanding of “why” the performance was as it was, and what lessons can be drawn from the project.

The evaluator ensured validation and triangulation of data and findings to have robust, credible and useful conclusions, lessons and recommendations.

In addition to the evaluation questions provided in the review matrix, the evaluation also sought to answer the additional key strategic questions (KSQs) provided in the ToR, namely:

- To what extent did the project advance adaptation and what benefits did it generate in respect of which climate impacts?
- To what extent has the project implemented an effective knowledge management and dissemination strategy?
- To what extent did the project enable the country to integrate climate change adaptation measures into national strategies?
- To what extent, and with what success, were the recommendations from the mid-term assessment taken up in the latter part of the project’s implementation?

The evaluator prepared this draft evaluation report in English to be shared with UNEP Task Manager, the CTA and the PM, and will then review and address comments received before finalizing the report. The executive summary will be provided with the final version of the report.

Limits to the evaluation

21. The evaluation was successful at collecting data that would permit an effective assessment of the project across the evaluation criteria and key evaluation questions, but despite its success, the field mission was not without some limitations. The field mission allowed to meet only two women (who worked for RAPA), and only one fisherman (who was no longer fishing in the area). Even though the need for focus groups with communities was expressed during the inception phase, the project team which planned the agenda could not or did not organize these focus groups. These small numbers do not provide a representative sample of community stakeholders of the project and may have limited the evaluator’s understanding of community perceptions. Also, no representative of the Lezha municipality could be met. However, the

evaluator had access to community survey data and photo's/monitoring reports which allowed at least a subjective evaluation. The last limitation to the evaluation is that the evaluator could not visit all the intervention sites, as park staff were not on site and not available during the mission.

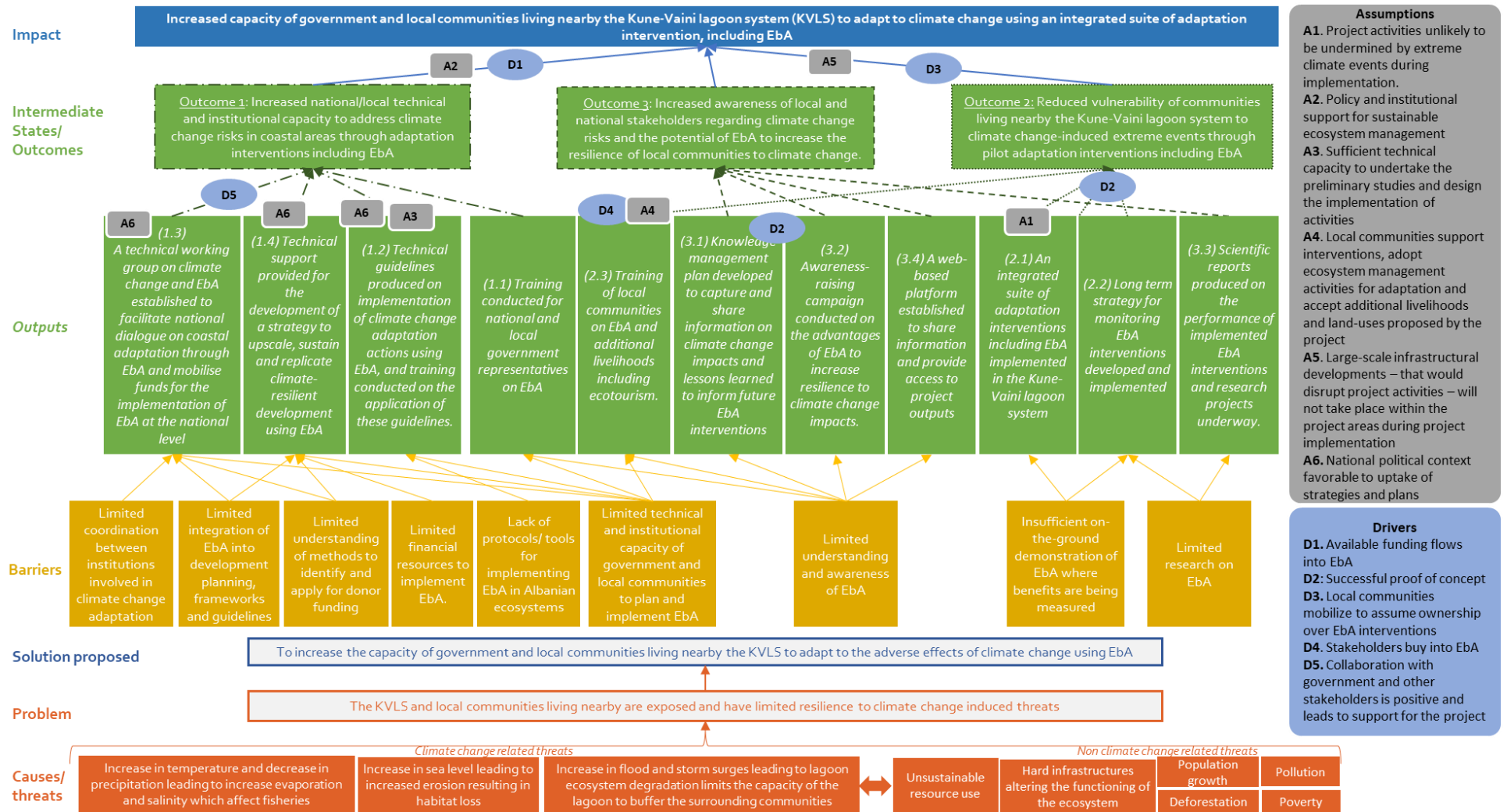
Ethics and human rights

All individuals interviewed for the evaluation were informed of the confidential nature of their contributions, and no PMU representatives were present in the room during interviews of other stakeholders.

III. RECONSTRUCTED THEORY OF CHANGE

22. The ProDoc includes problem and solution trees and theories of change (TOC) for each of the three project components. It also details the problem the project seeks to address, barriers and assumptions, as well as proposed solutions. The TOC presented in the ProDoc, along with their problem and solution trees appear largely logical, but exclude some useful contextual information, such as the overall problem that the project seeks to address, and how the three components are interrelated.
23. A more condensed visual representation of the TOC is proposed in Figure 3, building on the TOC developed for the MTR. This version of the TOC includes two main modifications from the version in the MTR. First, it includes a statement of the solution that the project brings to the table in response to the problem, providing a pathway for achieving the desired impacts through the interventions. And second, a sixth assumption was added stating that the national political context should be favorable to the uptake of climate strategies and plans for activities from component 1 to lead to outcome 1. As discussed in the PIRs and the MTR, political changes have hindered progress of project activities during the first half of the project, and could potentially have also affected the uptake of some of the more recent outputs (e.g., the upscaling strategy).
24. The causal relationships presented in the TOC seem logical, and the distance between each level of results seem realistic. The results framework further specifies expectations for the national and local level interventions. This TOC was used as a reference for the analysis of project performance across the evaluation.

Figure 5. Project reconstructed theory of change



IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS

1. Strategic relevance

i) Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS), Programme of Work, and GEF strategic priorities

25. The project aims to increase the capacity of government and local communities living nearby the KVLS to adapt to climate change using an integrated suite of adaptation interventions, including EbA. This is in line with the priority issues of UNEP's MTS for 2018-2021, which aims to "help the planet become more resilient to climate change by adopting sustainable forest management, combating desertification, addressing land degradation, halting biodiversity loss, and more broadly protecting and restoring terrestrial ecosystems by promoting their sustainable use." Strategic priorities under the 2022-2025 MTS are Climate action, Nature action and Pollution and Chemicals action which are still in line with the project objective to adapt to climate change.
26. The project was also designed to contribute to the expected outcome of UNEP's Programme of Work (POW) 2014-2015 which was in application when the project was designed, by building capacity, undertaking pilot initiatives through EbA approaches, fostering climate change outreach and awareness raising. These are areas of work under the Climate Change Subprogramme 1 of the POW 2014-2015. The project mainly contributed to the first Expected Accomplishment (EA1): "Ecosystem-based and supporting adaptation approaches are implemented and integrated into key sectoral and national development strategies to reduce vulnerability and strengthen resilience to climate change impacts". The project is still in line with the POW 2022-2023, particularly the climate stability subprogramme which states "decision makers at all levels adopt decarbonization, dematerialization and resilience pathways", and "countries and stakeholders have increased capacity, finance and access to technologies to deliver on the adaptation and mitigation goals of the Paris Agreement".
27. The project is also anchored in the GEF strategic priorities on climate change adaptation. Specifically, the project is aligned with the following GEF-6 focal area/SCCF strategies, objectives and outcomes:
 - CCA-1, Outcome 1.1: Vulnerability of physical assets and natural systems reduced.
This outcome is aligned with the second component of the project, which focused on the implementation of climate change adaptation options, including EbA interventions, in the KVLS to reduce the vulnerability of natural systems and local communities.
 - CCA-2, Outcome 2.3: Institutional and technical capacities and human skills strengthened to identify, prioritize, implement, monitor and evaluate adaptation strategies and measures.
This is in line with the first component of the project, which aimed to produce technical guidelines for climate change adaptation actions, develop a plan to mobilize funds for the large-scale implementation of EbA and, together with Component 3, strengthen the capacity of local and national government to identify, implement and upscale adaptation in the Lezha region and in Albania as a whole.

ii) Relevance to national, regional, sub-regional and local priorities

28. The project is well aligned with global priorities such as the SDGs and Agenda 2030. Particularly, the project is linked to SDG 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts) and SDG 15 (Protect,

restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss).

In terms of national and regional priorities, the project is also aligned with a number of national plans and strategies. It is indeed mentioned in the following plans and strategies:

- Albania’s Second National Communication (2009), in which the Kune Vain protected area is mentioned as an important bird area, and Albania’s Third National Communication (2016), in which the project is mentioned in activities related to biodiversity;
- The First Biennial Update report (July 2021), which indicates that the project is part of the cross-sector strategic actions;
- National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2019 which introduces the project in their priority action (number 15); the revised NAP is currently being drafted for approval in 2024. The EbA approach will be a focus in this NAP process as they consider it to be a very successful measure and would like more projects with this approach.

Climate change adaptation or EbA is mentioned as a priority in the following documents:

- Albania’s revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) (2021), in which main topics on adaptation measures include the adoption of EbA approaches or nature-based solutions;
- Albania’s National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI) (2015–2020) which under pillar 4 (ensuring growth through connectivity, the sustainable use of resources and territorial development) aims to strengthen measures on adaptation to climate change and flood protection;
- Albania’s National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) (2012-2020), which states that “to prevent or limit severe damages to the environment, society and economies, adaptation strategies for affected systems must be developed at national, regional and local level”;
- Albania’s Strategic Plan for Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (SPMCPAs) (2013), which states that “the need to deliver resilience and adaptation to climate change should be addressed”.

29. The project design dates back to 2014. Considering the delay between the initial design and the implementation of the project (eight years between the project design and the end of the project), the relevance remains very satisfactory. One of the key problems identified in the ProDoc is that the awareness and understanding of EbA amongst government staff in Albania was very limited at the beginning of the project. The knowledge on the costs and benefits of EbA, EbA best practices and how to tailor EbA for coastal and lagoon ecosystems was very limited. On-going projects on ecosystem management and restoration activities were implemented in an *ad hoc* manner and did not take climate change into account. At the regional level, multiple interviews confirmed that RAPA staff did not have the basic knowledge and know how to perform on climate change adaptation, and the municipality did not see the value of protecting the lagoon. Being able to create knowledge, a good sustainable development model and then multiply it through the country is therefore very relevant.
30. EbA is a relatively new concept in Albania and there was an important need to learn from it, to generate knowledge and evidence about EbA and to develop a framework for implementing EbA across the country. This project was considered as a pilot for EbA in Albania, as it was the first example of a project trying to integrate climate change and biodiversity in Albania, that could eventually be replicated. It is therefore very strategically relevant at a national level in terms of moving Albania forwards on climate change adaptation, and in particular for national parks. Improving the management of protected areas is also a priority for the government of Albania (this priority is identified in the NBSAP to be in line with 2020 targets), and this can be done jointly with climate change interventions.

31. Kune Vaini is one of the most important protected areas of the country and protecting it was described as a priority by several MTE officials. Adaptation was an entry point to protect it, and the EbA approach was relevant to address climate change while helping to protect the area. The KVLS was selected since the impacts of climate change are estimated to be more likely due to its geographic position and other features of the area, exacerbating ongoing degradation of the area³. At the beginning of the project, the lagoon was highly degraded, with a lot of dead fishes and seaweeds growing. According to the baseline report, the community was aware of unusual flooding and noticed sudden changes in temperature that were not usual before, while not linking them to climate change. The baseline report assessed the vulnerability of communities neighboring the protected areas and concluded that their overall vulnerability was high. The score for sensitivity was 3.89/14, which included an indicator for livelihood sources, but no specific analysis of threats to livelihoods. However, considering their overall vulnerability, building resilience to the Kune-Vain ecosystem area and trying to increase awareness raising of local people on climate change adaptation and EbA approach was also an opportunity for the development of new initiatives in the area, like tourism (ecotourism, agrotourism, birdwatching, etc.).
32. In terms of adaptation rationale, the EbA approach and all the trainings organized were clearly developed to face climate change. The EbA tools were designed in consideration of climate and adaptation. When asked whether they considered the project to be more of an adaptation or a restoration initiative, some respondents pointed out that it is not possible to do adaptation without doing restoration. Moreover, most measures like dune stabilization were really designed to deal with climate related problems and not only environmental degradation. The EIA conducted at the beginning of the project clearly links the intervention benefits to specific climate risks.

iii) Complementarity with existing interventions

33. This project is built on the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-GEF project “Identification and Implementation of Adaptation Response Measures in the Drini Mati River Delta (DMRD)” which was implemented from 2008 to 2013. This project produced some strategies to integrate climate change into national policies and plans and identified potential climate change adaptation interventions to be implemented in the KVLS, including dune rehabilitation, reforestation and the opening of the tidal channel. This SCCF project is therefore based on the strong analysis of local priorities and needs made during this former GEF UNDP project.
34. Concerning other projects, the ProDoc prescribed a Project Coordination Committee (PCC) to ensure communication between the SCCF project and the baseline projects, but it has never been established. As discussed in *Section 3. Nature of external context*, the changing institutional context limited the capacity to establish such a structure. The mid-term review recommended for the PMU to try to gather additional information on projects that were identified as baseline during project design (namely the EcoSea project, World Bank Water Resources and Irrigation (WRI) project) to see whether some results or achievements could be relevant and used by the current project. However, several of these projects were already finished, and limited coordination could be achieved. Most of the co-financing commitments initially pledged during the design phase have not materialized. No other baseline projects were identified for co-financing. However, there does not seem to have been any duplication between the projects.

Of the three baseline projects identified in the ProDoc, the only (in-kind) co-financing contribution was from the Water Resources and Irrigation (WRI) project funded by the World Bank (2012-2018). The project benefited from a strategic framework for water resource management in an area that includes the KVLS.

³ This information was validated by the baseline study.

However, interviews reported that communication with the WRI project was limited to sharing a co-funding letter, and obtaining documents about the project on their website. This project focused on the restoration of river banks and embankments and was active in the Drini-Buna and Semani River basins, so it was a good fit with the present project and it could have been interesting to share respective experiences.

35. Other interventions in the country (not identified as co-financing initiatives) focused on water management, including flood risk management. The UNEP-KVLS project communicated informally with the GIZ project “Adaptation to climate change through transboundary flood risk management in the Western Balkans”. This GIZ project focused in the Drin River Basin and the objective was to prevent floods and implement interventions needed in the regulation of the Drin River Basin, and the potential of using EbA approaches as part of these strategies was discussed.
36. The project was not particularly in coordination with the UNDP project “Enhancing financial sustainability of the Protected Areas System in Albania” neither, but they kept contact. They were working with the same stakeholders and could see some synergies between the project activities without overlapping. The project had two main pillars: (i) build the financial management capacities of the agency responsible for administering the system of protected areas; and (ii) demonstrate the efficacy of different financing strategies in a sub-set of individual protected areas.
37. Communication with the project in charge of developing the NAP was also not very strong. Identifying the person responsible for the NAP was complicated, but contact was made with a person in the ministry working on a new UNDP project for advancing medium- and long-term NAP. Little evidence of communication was demonstrated however.
38. The representatives from other projects were involved in the final project workshop and are aware of the existence of the tools and deliverables generated by the project as well as of the existence of the website, although they are not always certain to have had access to the most final versions of the documents. However, there is high interest in these projects to use these tools and build on the achievements of the SCCF project.
39. Overall, despite the fact that the initial recommendations from the GEF⁴ and those from the MTR⁵ were not fully implemented, no overlaps between projects have been identified. However, coordination seems insufficient and should have been strengthened, in order to share lessons learned and create more synergies.

2. Quality of project design

40. The quality of project design was reviewed following the UNEP template to this end. Results are presented in Annex (
41. Annex B: Assessment of the quality of project design).
42. The overall ratings for the project design are satisfactory and highly satisfactory. Most issues identified were around the stakeholder consultations, analysis, and engagement plan. Indeed, gender and other minority stakeholders were not clearly targeted for consultation during project design, and no specific role was

⁴The GEF recommended an active collaboration with the baseline projects through a Project Coordination Committee (PCC).

⁵ The MTR recommended to gather additional information on projects that were identified as baseline during project design, and to identify the institutions in charge of these projects to explore potential synergies and assess whether some in-kind cofinancing could materialize.

attributed to them during project implementation. The ProDoc does not include an assessment of the capacity and interests of each stakeholder or type of stakeholders. While the stakeholder participation plan was presented by outcome, it did not differentiate between the different roles of actors.

43. The ProDoc clearly identifies the alignment of the project with UNEP’s PoW, GEF focal area objectives, as well as with a number of national, regional and local policies and strategies. In addition, the project document identifies a number of baseline projects on which the project intervention should build upon. It built in particular on the GEF-UNDP DMRD project. Following a comment by the GEF, the project incorporated a PCC in its management structure, to ensure communication between the SCCF-financed project and the baseline projects, but this committee was not implemented.
44. The project intended results and causality, as well as the initial results framework, are logical and realistic. The results framework does not include midterm/intermediary targets as it was expected to be completed within three years. However, the existence of output indicators facilitated monitoring of progress. The monitoring plan focuses on the MTR and the TE, but not on regular monitoring. Furthermore, the responsibilities with regards to M&E activities are not clearly stated, and no budget is allocated for regular monitoring of progress, rather it was to be planned within annual work plans.
45. The institutional arrangements for project management were comprehensive, clear, and appropriate.
46. The knowledge management strategy of the project was included in all three components of the project, but in particular in component 3. Furthermore, the ProDoc described how it will use different medium to raise awareness about climate change and EbA, and target different groups. A mention was made about consulting women to ensure that awareness-campaigns and information materials are available to them, but there is no evidence that this was done.
47. The budget as planned appeared realistic, with the largest proportion of the budget allocated to EbA interventions under component 2. The timing and sequence of activities also seemed coherent and realistic, even though a few activities could not be implemented as planned. The project considered efficiency in its design, by building on the GEF-UNDP DMRD project which identified EbA measures for the KVLS. The ProDoc also presented EbA as being “cost-effective versus technical solutions in long term and known to generate socio-economic benefits for the environment, citizens, and the local economy”.
48. The ProDoc included a detailed risk analysis with mitigation measures. These risks were adequately incorporated into the theory of change. This assessment however did not include risks and assumptions related to political stability, which delayed project implementation as noted in the PIR 2017-2018: “the procurement procedure was delayed from June 2017 until September 2017 because of parliamentary elections in Albania. During this election time all government procurement was put on hold, and this negatively impacted the project procurement processes, which delayed project implementation that year”. With regards to environmental and social safeguards, the ProDoc included a checklist in annex. It identified the need to conduct Environmental impact assessments (EIAs) and hydrologic studies for several measures that were planned, but no adverse social impacts were foreseen given the participatory approach to be adopted by the project.
49. The ProDoc also included a sustainability strategy that built on the following elements:
 - Promotion of participatory approach to help stakeholders build ownership;
 - Provide capacity building and training;
 - Develop a strategy to mobilize funds for the large-scale implementation of EbA;
 - Establish a Technical working group in EbA to plan and implement future EbA projects;
 - Launch a national awareness campaign;

- Demonstration of on the ground adaptation intervention;
- Development of a long-term maintenance strategy (with KVPA, and Lezhe municipality); and
- Promotion of EbA mainstreaming within existing strategy to ensure long term EbA planning and implementation.

50. The exit strategy for the project was implicit into this sustainability strategy. The development of an upscaling strategy covering socio-political, financial, institutional and environmental sustainability issues was also planned and was achieved in 2020.

3. Nature of external context

51. At design stage, no potentially challenging operational factors such as conflict or natural disaster were foreseen, so the external context of the project seemed rather favourable. However, the project document failed to identify the likelihood of risks related to the change in the national government, and the 2017 elections did lead to some changes in the government and delayed the implementation of the project (PIR 1 July 2017 was delayed to 30 June 2018). Even though the MTR indicated that the elections did not impact the project in a significant way, it could have been identified as a risk in the project document.
52. In addition, subsequent changes in government and the restructuring of the ministry have led to a reshuffling of positions and people, as well as a loss of institutional memory. These subsequent changes meant that the new ministry, the MTE, no longer had a department responsible for climate change. This created a loss of institutional memory and was a challenge for the establishment of a technical working group on climate change and EbA foreseen in the ProDoc, as the Interministerial working group on climate change (IWGCC) was no longer operational. It also affected the ability to coordinate the project with other initiatives, as information sharing platforms were no longer in place. Parliamentary elections took place again in May 2021 but did not result in government change, only in cabinet reshuffle.
53. One of the most important external challenges of this project was the COVID-19 pandemic. Since early 2020, there have been restrictions on gatherings and travels which impacted the project implementation. Meetings with more than 10 people were not allowed so PSC meetings were organized virtually. All these restrictions have led to delays in the implementation of activities and the project has been extended for an additional year. Workplans also had to be revised to take these delays and extension into account.

4. Effectiveness

i) Delivery of outputs

54. The start of the project was very slow, but despite the delays at the beginning of the project, almost all outputs were delivered. The baseline report was delivered in November 2017 and the final monitoring report in December 2020.

The midterm review already reported progress on several activities, and the PIR 2021 and monitoring report confirmed the delivery of almost all outputs. The tables below compile this information with the information gathered during the documentation review and interviews.

A color code is used for the final status: green for delivered outputs, orange for partially delivered outputs and red for not delivered outputs.

Component 1: Technical and institutional capacity to address climate change risks through EbA

Table 2: Outputs delivered and status for component 1

Outputs	Achievement	Final status
<u>Output 1.1.</u> Training conducted for national and local government representatives on EbA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four trainings delivered • More than 60 government staff from relevant ministries and local government institutions trained to identify, prioritise, implement, monitor and evaluate EbA strategies and measures. • 45% of attendees were women (including government staff and university students) • Post training assessment indicated that trainings were well received 	Output delivered, but only 30% of government staff trained were women (target was 50%)
<u>Output 1.2.</u> Technical guidelines produced on implementation of climate change adaptation actions using EbA, and training conducted on the application of these guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical guidelines produced and training conducted on the applications of these guidelines on implementation of the adaptation actions using EbA. • 18 staff from central government, 32 staff from local government trained during 2018 and 2019. • 30% of people trained among the government staff were women 	Output delivered, but only 30% of government staff trained were women (target was 50%)
<u>Output 1.3.</u> A technical working group on climate change and EbA established to facilitate national dialogue on coastal adaptation through EbA and mobilise funds for the implementation of EbA at the national level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Working Group on Climate Change (TWGCC) established as part of the implementation of the EbA upscaling strategy, staff trained • The ToR for the TWGCC state that the TWGCC will provide information to the Interministerial Working Group on Climate Change (IWGCC), but it could not be established under the IWGCC as this group has not been operational since 2017 • The TWGCC is not currently active and has not developed a strategy for mobilizing funds • TWGCC members are aligned (except for members of associations and prefecture of Lezhe who do not seem to be present in the group) with the ToR • 70% of women in the TWGCC 	Output partially delivered: TWGCC established but not fully operational, it did not generate a plan to mobilise funds for EbA
<u>Output 1.4.</u> Technical support provided for the development of a strategy to upscale, sustain and replicate climate-resilient development using EbA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EbA upscaling strategy developed (incl. financing options) and presented in training events to central and local governments institutions during May and September 2019 trainings events. 	Output delivered

55. Capacity building is considered as an important element of the project. Trainings have been delivered at the national level for national policy makers and then in the field to engage communities (four trainings in total). Post-training assessments indicated that the trainings were well received. In total, more than 60 government staff were trained to identify, prioritize, implement, monitor and evaluate EbA strategies and measures, but only 45% of the trainees were women. Women were more represented among the university students.
56. Technical guidelines were produced on implementation of climate change adaptation actions using EbA, and a training was conducted on the application of these guidelines. Again, women were underrepresented during the trainings.
57. The establishment of the Technical Working Group on Climate Change (TWGCC) was delayed because of government restructuring but it was established through an order of the minister signed in July 2019. The group is composed of:

- representatives of the MTE, Department of Biodiversity and Protected areas and Department of Tourism;
 - a representative of the Mining Environment, Department of Forests and Pasture;
 - a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration Department;
 - a representative of Agriculture University, Department of Environment and Land
 - a representative of LezheMunicipality;
 - a representative of LezheRegional Council;
 - RAPA staff
58. The group is composed 70% of women, but contrary to what was written in the terms of reference of the TWGCC, there does not seem to be members of associations and representatives of the prefecture of Lezhe in the TWGCC. The composition of the group may be questionable, as it may not be appropriate to include representatives from only one region in a ministerial group whose scope of work is national, and which does not include specific tasks around the lagoon. It might have been interesting to look at including other regions in the composition of this group. The group is not currently active and has not developed any strategy for mobilizing funds. It should be used to advise the department on technical issues related to EbA. However, this group was supposed to provide information to the Interministerial Working Group on Climate Change (IWGCC) but the IWGCC is not operational so it could not be established.
59. An EbA upscaling strategy was developed in April 2020 by an international consultant. The strategy was well-developed and included financing options. It was then presented in training events to central and local government institutions. The TWGCC reviewed and validated the upscaling strategy.

Component 2: Climate resilience through demonstration of best practice and concrete EbA and other adaptation interventions in the Kune-Vaini lagoon system

Table 3: Outputs delivered and status for component 2

Outputs	Achievements	Final status
<u>Output 2.1.</u> An integrated suite of adaptation interventions including EbA implemented in the Kune-Vain lagoon system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 hectares of degraded forest in Vain and Kune reforested and with relatively high survival rates by the end of the project. • New functional tidal inlet channel constructed, and dredger in function. • 2000m of dune rehabilitation completed. However, saplings survival rate was estimated between 40% and 50%. 	Output delivered, with varying levels of success in terms of reforestation
<u>Output 2.2.</u> Long term strategy for: i) monitoring EbA interventions developed; and ii) technical reports produced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term research strategy for monitoring EbA interventions in the Kune-Vain lagoon system developed and being implemented; • Technical reports produced by university students on phytoplankton and zooplankton monitoring, aquatic plants, physic and chemical parameters and nutrientsprofile in Vaine Lagoon, and socio-economic environment in response to project interventions. 	Output delivered

<p><u>Output 2.3.</u> Training of local communities on EbA and additional livelihoods including ecotourism.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two trainings conducted for local stakeholders (November 2018 and May 2019), with a specific session on how to apply EbA to local businesses. • 25 members of local community in all trainings, of which 13 females (52%). Majority of women were teachers and students. There were also 3 fishermen and one doing business. • VET school “KolinGjoka”, Tourism Branch, in Lezha (17 students and 5 teachers) supported with the development of the extra module on “Interpret Nature”. Two training courses held by the VET students on developing nature guide skills and nature entrepreneurship-based activities (15 students and teachers). RAPA staff also participated. • 3 sets of outdoor equipment provided, aiming at self-running the courses in the coming years. • 15 community members attended a one-week course on “climate change adaptation awareness and the advantages of EbA approach to the KVL” 	Output delivered Trainings incorporated training of trainers (teachers and RAPA staff) and materials for awareness raising within the PA.
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60. Adaptation interventions have all been delivered, with varying degrees of success. During its implementation, several of the restoration measures planned in the KVLS had to be adjusted. The artesian wells planned were deemed not technically feasible during an EIA early into the project. Some of the selected species for reforestation did not survive and selection had to be adjusted. Finally, the construction of the tidal channel did not adequately take into account sediment flow, including changes in the flow of sediments from upstream, so it became blocked. Despite the fact that the tidal channel remained blocked, the design relied on engineering studies and the project had to trade-off both cost and environmental friendliness when selecting the final design. The PSC and the PMU addressed these issues in a timely manner to help the project adapt. This includes the analysis and decision to purchase a dredger to keep the tidal channel open.
61. Seven hectares of degraded forest in Vain and Kune were reforested, but survival rates were very different depending on the plots. The table below illustrates the different plots with their survival rates. An afforestation study that took into account climate-related variables was undertaken to design the reforestation intervention, and recommended mostly the planning of pine and oak species, but pointed out the absence of studies on the resilience of specific species.

Table 4: Plots and survival rates

Plot	Hectares	Species	Survival rate	Species	Survival rate	Fenced or not
Reforestation						
21a	0.5	<i>Tamarixsp.</i>	>95%	<i>Pinus sp.</i>	<25%	Yes
27a	0.4	<i>Quercus robur</i> (Oak)	<2%	<i>Pinus sp.</i>	>95%	Yes
15c (21b & 21c)	3	<i>Tamarixsp.</i>	50-75%	<i>Pinus sp.</i>	70-85%	No
13b/8c	3.1	<i>Tamarixsp.</i>	50-75%	<i>Pinus sp.</i>	70-85%	Yes
Dune stabilization						
13b	2000m	<i>Tamarixsp.</i>	40-50%			

Source: Final monitoring report

62. Reforestation with Tamarisk worked very well, with more than 95% of sapling surviving on plot 21a, which is the most inland. On the other hand, reforestation with oak on plot 27a almost failed, as the survival rate

of saplings was less than 2%, but it represented less than 0,4 hectare (as there are two species by plot) out of the 7 hectares reforested, and it was then replanted with Tamarisk. On the same site, Pine had a survival rate above 95%. Survival rates for Pine were also quite high (between 70 and 85%) on plots 15c and 13b/8c, but below 25% on plot 21a. 2000m of dune rehabilitation was completed with Tamarisk, but the survival rate was between 40 and 50%, due to regular flooding, a survival rate lower than for other plots with Tamarisk. Survival rates may have been affected by the sites locations and their exposure to various elements (wind, flood, human presence), by the choice of species (or even by the combination of species), and of course by the nature of the soils and available nutrients. However, there is no detailed monitoring information that would allow clear conclusions on this. Beyond survival rates, it is important to note that there are important differences in growth of the trees, which may also have been influenced by these factors. In plots near the sea, shrubs are barely 30-50 cm high and thin, whereas on plots inland they are much taller, often over 1.5 m and with stems of several centimeters (Figure 6). Monitoring and reporting data on key variables that would help measure success in rehabilitation is not available. The size and diversity of species on Plot 21a indicate a clear success in rehabilitation (0.4h), while Plot 15c is progressing in that direction but still vulnerable. The other two plots were not visited, but success rates also indicate a likely progress towards rehabilitation. Survival rates on dune stabilization are lower, making success in stabilizing the dune uncertain.

Figure 6. Reforestation activities (coastal area vs. inland)



63. The tidal inlet channel was blocked by sediments before the project implementation. A new functional tidal inlet channel was then constructed by the project. The development of plan for the maintenance of the tidal channel was delayed, but it was then developed with three alternative options. The dredger was selected as the most cost-effective option to ensure the long-term functionality of the tidal inlet channel. It was then purchased, and it is now in function.
64. A long-term strategy for monitoring EbA interventions in the Kune-Vain lagoon system was developed by the end of 2018 and it started its implementation in 2019. This strategy included the topics for the MSc research. Six MSc scholarships were funded, and four other MSc theses were partially financed and defended, which was higher than expected. The topics of the six thesis funded were the following:

- Assessment of the trophic state of KVLS during the period September 2018-July 2019
 - Physico-chemical characteristics and quality evaluation of the KVLS waters
 - Microscopic algae and ecologic state of the KVL complex
 - Assessment of aquatic macrophytes in the lagoon system of Kune-Vain, Lezha
 - Socio-economic and environmental development in the protected area “Kune-Vain” under the view of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goal indicators
 - Zooplankton monitoring in KVLS, Lezha
65. Final reports summarizing all research and providing updated measures of project indicators were delivered in November 2020. This deliverable also produced the final monitoring report of the project, which included updated vulnerability assessment. The monitoring and research plan extends in the long term, beyond the life of the project. The studies undertaken by the students are generally relevant to assess the quality of the lagoon waters, but they focus mostly on water and do not cover many of the variables relevant to EbA and to the project results, such as progress in reforestation.
66. As mentioned above in output 1.1, trainings were conducted at national and local levels. A training was conducted in November 2018 for local stakeholders and another one was conducted in May 2019 on how to apply EbA to local businesses. An analysis was conducted to target the businesses most likely to be affected by climate change. Trainings focused more on raising awareness about climate change, climate risks and EbA. The additional livelihoods discussion involved proposing approaches to develop small business options that would be resilient to climate change and focused especially on eco-tourism. The trainings were delivered by an international consultant, and despite language constraints, the project team ensured that documents were always printed and translated in both languages to ensure an effective communication with communities. Post-training assessments indicated that the trainings were well received. The VET school students held two training courses (which brought together 15 students and teachers) on developing nature guide skills and nature entrepreneurship-based activities. RAPA staff was also involved and participated. The training of local communities to take advantage of ecotourism business opportunities provided a means for community members to increase their income. The school also supported three sets of outdoor equipment aiming at self-running the courses in the coming years. Covid-19 impacted this activity, as it has limited the project capacities on promoting the new skills of students at touristic agencies, and did not favor any involvement into development of ecotourism packages.

Component 3: Awareness and knowledge on effective EbA

Table 5: Outputs delivered and status for component 3

Outcomes and outputs	Achievement	Final status
<u>Output 3.1.</u> Knowledge management plan developed to capture and share information on climate change impacts and lessons learned to inform future EbA interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project communication and visibility plan finalized in March 2018 	Output delivered
<u>Output 3.2.</u> Awareness-raising campaign conducted on the advantages of EbA to increase resilience to climate change impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of awareness raising activities conducted through a contract with the REC of Albania in 2018-2019 (Celebration of World Wetland Day with schools, printing of promotion materials, Earth Day, Celebration of World biodiversity Day with schools, Bird Watching activities, European Parks Day, etc.) 	Output delivered

<p><u>Output 3.3.</u> Scientific reports produced on the performance of implemented EbA interventions and research projects underway.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One scientific paper published • 6 MSc scholarships and thesis funded, and 4 other MSc theses partially financed and defended. In total, 10 MSc students undertook and defended their MSc thesis. The thesis could perhaps have been more focused on EbA. 	<p>Output delivered</p>
<p><u>Output 3.4.</u> A web-based platform established to share information and provide access to project products.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A website established and operational. Several documents uploaded onto the platform. 	<p>Output delivered</p>

67. A communication and visibility plan was finalized in March 2018. This plan presents a list of communication activities as well as a detailed activity workplan. A number of awareness raising activities have been conducted by the Regional Environment Center (REC) of Albania. It included, among others, eight TV appearances at national TV channels, a travelling exhibition activity with 30 flagship species pictures of KVLS, the organization of bird watching activities, the printing of promotion materials, the celebration of World Wetland Day, Earth Day and World Biodiversity Day with schools nearby the KVLS, and the development and feed up of the website of the project. Publications on project activities were made on the Facebook accounts of REC and of RAPA.
68. Interviews and questionnaires with project stakeholders showed that awareness raising activities were well received. However, the final monitoring report notes that “experience-sharing days on EbA should have been designed as processes during the whole course of the project implementation”.
69. One scientific paper was published in the Bul.Nat.Sciences, UT titled: Climate change adaption interventions of the Kune-Vaini lagoon system - ecological approach.”⁶The project over-delivered in terms of MSc students and reports produced. Indeed, ten MSc students undertook and defended their MSc thesis on the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the implemented EbA interventions in Kune-Vaini lagoon system, as described earlier. However, analyses focused primarily on the water, bird, and social sectors, leaving out the forest and vegetation sectors.
70. Finally, a website to share information on EbA was developed and is operational. Several documents were uploaded onto the platform: EbA guidelines, EbA protocols, EbA trainings, manuals, etc., as well as pictures, videos and blog articles. According to the final PIR (2021), from July 2020 to March 2021, the number of downloads has been over 350, and the new users over 800, representing a bounce rate of 80%.

ii) Achievement of project outcomes

71. Progress in delivering the project’s outcomes was monitored through eight indicators which were informed by the baseline and the final monitoring report. Tables 6, 7 and 8 below summarize the progress measured.

Outcome 1: Increased national/local technical and institutional capacity to address climate change risks in coastal areas through adaptation interventions including EbA

⁶ Miho A., Vasjari M., Vallja L., Kashta L., Qirjo M. (2019): Climate change adaption interventions of the Kune-Vaini lagoon system - ecological approach. Buletini I Shkenave Natyrore (BShN), Faculty of Natural Sciences, University of Tirana: Vol. 27: 116-121.

Table 6: Baseline and end-of-project status for Outcome 1

Outcome	Indicator	Target	Baseline (as in baseline study)	End-of-project status (as in Final monitoring report)
Outcome 1. Increased national/local technical and institutional capacity to address climate change risks in coastal areas through adaptation interventions including EbA.	Change in the capacity score assessment framework for each targeted institution.	Each targeted institution (MTE - national government, Lezhe commune council - local government, RAPA) has progressed by a minimum of 1 step in their capacity score assessment framework	Total score: 2 (out of 8)	Total score: 4 ⁷ (out of 8)
	A nation-wide EbA upscaling strategy document endorsed by key government officials.	At least 10 government officials at Director level or above endorse the nation-wide EbA upscaling strategy.	No such strategy endorsed	Main national stakeholders acknowledge strategy, MTE has formally endorsed it.

Source: Baseline report and monitoring report

72. In **Error! Reference source not found.**, the end of project score for Indicator 1.1 comes from the PIR, as the final monitoring report did not use the same methodology as the baseline to assess this indicator. The PIR 2021, which uses the methodology established in the ProDoc, suggests that the capacity score has increased because of improvements in criteria 3 “Are those arrangements supported by adequate budget allocations” and criteria 4 “Do those arrangements include broad stakeholder participation across relevant, climate-sensitive sectors?”. Based on a qualitative assessment, the monitoring report on the other hand considers this target as “partially achieved” as only a few agencies have acquired the expected capacities. With regards to Indicator 1.2, both the PIR 2021 and the monitoring report concur that the Upscaling strategy has been acknowledged by multiple stakeholders, that the MTE has endorsed it and several local organizations have expressed supporting it.
73. It should be noted that Outcome 1 has a relatively wide scope in that it does not specifically target capacity to implement EbA, but rather overall capacity to address climate risks in coastal areas, including through EbA. The baseline study noted that awareness about climate risks was already high at the beginning of the project, but that the institutional arrangements were lacking. As discussed in the Relevance section, when the project started, EbA was considered a new topic, even within the MTE.
74. The progress made in raising the technical capacities of national and regional institutions with regards to EbA is undeniable. Interviewees from both the national and local levels express a strong understanding of the EbA concepts and are familiar with the tools developed by the project to apply them. At the national level, this appears to be largely limited to the MTE and NAPA, and potentially the Ministry of Agriculture, but does not extend to other ministries, as they were not significantly involved in activities. Regional institutions in Lezha also expressed understanding and interest for the concept of EbA. On several occasions, both at the national and local level, interest in EbA was driven by interest in advancing biodiversity conservation while accessing funds earmarked for climate change adaptation.
75. The project’s achievements in terms of institutional capacities have been hindered by the changes in institutional context in the country, in particular the elimination of the climate change directorate and of the IWGCC, and the division of climate-related responsibilities across several ministries. Personnel rotation

⁷As per PIR 2021. The final monitoring report did not use the same methodology as the baseline study to assess this outcome, for this reason data from the PIR is used here.

has also been an issue, as “up to 40% of governmental officials involved initially into project activities have changed positions in the period 2018-2020.”⁸ The weakening and fragmentation of climate-related responsibilities and the limited involvement of other ministries in the project have limited a broader uptake of EbA and climate change adaptation.

76. In particular, the absence of the IWGCC has left the TWGCC in limbo. Even though it was created and met a few times, the TWGCC does not have a clear work plan or strategy, and is more reactive than proactive when it comes to advancing EbA, including for developing proposals based on the Upscaling strategy. Several MTE representatives consider that the group, or at least its members, will be called upon for technical advice regarding EbA when necessary. Two interviewees involved in project implementation mentioned that the project itself may have been too small and localized to effectively promote this entity at the national level.
77. Nonetheless, as the first EbA project in the country, it did attract some attention from the policy-making point of view. As mentioned in the Relevance section, the project was specifically referred to in policy documents developed at the same time as the project was prepared, including the NAP,⁹ while EbA was identified as a priority action in the revised NDC approved in 2021. In recent years, interest for adaptation and EbA has grown within the MTE, and EbA is an important focus in the revised NAP process that recently started, according to MTE staff. While this evolution cannot be attributed to the SCCF project alone, interviewees confirm that the success of the intervention in Kune-Vain will support this trend, and the tools developed will be useful in supporting the uptake of EbA.
78. In the Lezha area, key institutions like RAPA and the regional council have clearly benefitted from the training sessions, but also from the direct experience of EbA. By adopting an EbA maintenance plan for the lagoon and a tidal inlet maintenance plan, RAPA is taking over the responsibility to continue implementing EbA, although their motivation is more to conserve the protected area and its ecosystem services than to adapt to climate change. An interviewee reported that the municipal midterm development plan now mentions the need to take climate change into account, while another mentioned that the regional council intends to use the project tools in future strategic documents and to apply for future projects.

Outcome 2: Reduced vulnerability of communities living nearby the Kune-Vaini lagoon system to climate change-induced extreme events through pilot adaptation interventions including EbA

Table 7: Baseline and end-of-project status for Outcome 2

Outcome	Indicator	Target	Baseline (as in baseline study)	End-of-project status (as in Final monitoring report)
Outcome 2. Reduced vulnerability of communities living nearby the Kune-	Percentage change in climate change vulnerability index scores.	At least a 10% reduction in vulnerability of people living near the project sites.	Climate change vulnerability score for communities is: 15.07 ¹⁰	Climate change vulnerability score is: 17.45
	Number of community	At least 30 community members	None of community members have increased	Approx. 20 students and teachers are

⁸Monitoring Report

⁹ It was approved in 2019 but had been developed in 2015

¹⁰ The final monitoring report did not use the same methodology as the baseline report, but the data from the baseline report was used for both 2017 and 2020 values in the final monitoring report. The final monitoring report data is used for this indicator to enable comparison.

Vaini lagoon system to climate change-induced extreme events through pilot adaptation interventions including EbA.	members who have increased their income through additional livelihood initiatives.	have increased their income through additional livelihood options initiated by the project, including ecotourism.	their income through additional livelihood initiatives.	trained to develop and be engaged in ecotourism activities, through training for Nature Interpreter Guides.
	Percentage of women among the community members who have increased their income through additional livelihood initiatives.	50% increase of the community members who have increased their income through additional livelihood initiatives are women.	There is no woman among the community members that have increased their income through additional livelihood initiatives.	The number of involved women in business activities remains low.

Source: Baseline report and monitoring report

79. Although this outcome and its related indicators focus on the vulnerability of communities, it is essential to consider the effects of the intervention on ecosystems as well as on communities. It should be noted that the final monitoring report data for the second indicator does not respond to that indicator, which is about increases in income related to additional livelihoods, and not about the delivery of trainings.
80. With regards to the KVLS ecosystem, some of the intervention's benefits are very clear and visible, while others may be less direct or take more time to materialize. The effects of the construction of the tidal channel are the most mentioned by interviewees from all categories, as it directly benefitted the overall health of the lagoon, controlling eutrophication processes and increasing the availability of fish (and, as some expressed, its quality and taste), thus favorably impacting the livelihoods of local fishermen and the income of the fishing company that employs them. This was confirmed by the research of a student from the Department of Chemistry of the University of Tirana working on monitoring and research on the project "Maintaining the water exchange is necessary with the sea or the Drini River (for Zaje) as a necessity for the nutrient circulation, oxygen saturation (DO%) and reduction of biological oxygen demand".¹¹ Most interviewees, including from the protected areas management institutions, stated that in addition to the increase in fish, an increase in the presence and diversity of birds had been observed. With the use of a dredger, the tidal channel is open and allows circulation of water between the sea and the lagoon.
81. As mentioned in the previous section, reforestation/afforestation operations have been undertaken with different levels of success. Some of the areas which are close to the sea are not yet well established and are still vulnerable to winds and waves from the sea, which may compromise the effectiveness of dune stabilization efforts. Several stakeholders were not very optimistic about the chances of survival of this vegetation. On the other hand, sites more inland have grown better and are well established. In both types of sites, additional vegetation not planted by the project has started growing, and more time is necessary to let all sites become fully established.
82. The effectiveness of these measures was affected by limits in the project planning processes. On the one hand, the measures had been identified through studies undertaken by the UNDP DMRD project which had ended in 2013- that is five years before this project started – and prioritized in 2014. This may have affected some of the baseline data (e.g. extent of erosion or eutrophication) on which the interventions were identified and prioritized, although the design studies for project activities and EIAs allowed the design of relevant interventions. The project was also affected by the lack of more specific, localized data on climate

¹¹ Final Technical Report on Research and Monitoring, November 2020, research by MSc. Student Denisa Muçaj "Physic-chemical characteristics and water quality of the Kune-Vaini lagoon complex"

change impacts in the area, including a good understanding of the vulnerability of community livelihoods, which would have helped design the interventions more accurately from the beginning.

83. The key assumption behind the project's intervention logic is that by improving the health of the KVLS ecosystem, the vulnerability of the neighboring population will decrease. However, the vulnerability assessments conducted as part of the project monitoring indicate that vulnerability has increased, both for the neighbouring communities and for targeted stakeholders (mostly business owners and fishermen of the area), as detailed in Table 8. What this means for the project's outcomes is not straightforward as this result may have been influenced by several factors including the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected the economy of the country and in particular the tourism sector. Some interviewees pointed out that the perceived exposure may have been increased by an increased awareness about climate risks, which may have influenced the responses to some questions, a challenge inherent to perception-based indexes. Some responses may have been influenced by memories of the respondent or by the change in its knowledge about climate change. Finally, it is unclear whether the respondent's sample in the baseline and monitoring reports is representative of the communities and the proportion of respondents that were directly involved in project activities.
84. Even if the monitoring report hints at some changes in the livelihoods to increase resilience, it is unlikely that these are the result of project activities. The focus of the training activities with communities was more on EbA itself, and included awareness raising on livelihoods, but there is no evidence that community members – including women – decided to take on new income-generating activities as a result of these trainings. The inclusion of EbA in the training for nature interpreters is a valuable achievement with potential to increase the attractiveness of the services provided to tourists and ultimately increase tourism. The improvement in the livelihoods of fishermen is likely the main achievement on this topic. Furthermore, RAPA has increased the size of its team in recent years, possibly as a result of project support and increased interest in the Kune-Vain area.

Table 8: Changes in the vulnerability index of communities and stakeholders during project implementation

Index	Communities			Stakeholders		
	2017	2020	Change	2017	2020	Change
Exposure index	3.54	4.62	+1.08 (or +32%)	2.35	2.42	+0.42 (or +17.9%)
Sensitivity index	4.45	4.25	-0.20 (or -4.5%)	2.79	3.73	+0.94 (or +33.7%)
Adaptive capacity index	0.68	2.19	+1.51(or +31.9)	0.76	1.35	+0.54 (or + 71%)
Vulnerability index	15.07	17.45	+2.0(or +15.8%)	5.79	7.68	+1.89 (or +32.6%)

85. On the other hand, a report produced by the Small Business Expert “Assessing economic and social impact and effectiveness of the project” based on interviews with national and local authorities and with communities concluded that “vulnerability has been reduced as a result of the adaptation measures implemented under the project”.Most findings regarding community vulnerability could not be triangulated during the field visit as explained in Section II.
86. However, looking at the details of the community responses to the final monitoring report, it is visible that there is an increased awareness about climate change, along with more discussions on the topic. The understanding about the ongoing long-term changes and their causes has increased, and although they are not yet fully able to describe how they will be affected by climate change, they can link their own observations to the global trends. The proportion of respondents who have never heard about EbA has decreased by 61%, and 33% of respondents have a good understanding of the concept. The report also indicates that more people are taking measures to adapt their agricultural practices by planting different

products and/or at a different time of the year. However, most people feel that they do not have the financial capacity to prepare for flooding events.

87. Some of the elements of the monitoring report could be validated during the field visit. Interviews indicate that the local fishermen have benefitted the most from the increase in the presence of fish in the area. A survey conducted by a university student in 2019 indicates that 36% of the respondents derived income from fishing and 41% from tourism. The protected area itself is benefitting from an increased interest of tourists and local communities for the area, thanks not only to the improved environment but also to the equipment provided to make it more attractive. Some interviewees mentioned that local communities would now come into the park to take a walk in the evenings. This increased local interest in the area is a valuable achievement for the protected area but also for the well-being of local communities.
88. Interviews with local-level project stakeholders also confirm that people involved in the project activities are now able to apply some EbA measures themselves, like planting small parcels of forest or building natural barriers to prevent flooding, but that they feel that larger interventions depend on the government. There is a general feeling across stakeholders interviewed that EbA measures are not sufficient, and that some grey infrastructure is needed, at least in the short/medium term to address crucial issues like sea-level rise and leave an opportunity for ecosystems to recover sufficiently. Several respondents believe that the sea will eventually flood the whole area, putting at risk the whole region of Lezha for which the lagoon currently acts as a buffer.
89. The effects of the project on women of the communities are unclear. Although a report mentions that women benefitted significantly from the project in terms of increased adaptive capacity¹², and despite the fact that women were part of several of the trainings, there is little evidence that the project effectively benefitted them in terms of livelihoods resilience, or even in terms of acquiring a better understanding of their own vulnerability to climate change. The baseline report mentions that reaching out to women is difficult for cultural reasons, yet no measures were put in place to incorporate them into project activities. No gender specialist was involved in designing activities and no gender action plan was developed to ensure purposeful engagement of women in the activities.

Outcome 3: Increased awareness of local and national stakeholders to climate change risks and the potential of EbA to increase the resilience of local communities to climate change.

Table 9: Baseline and end-of-project status for Outcome 3

Outcome	Indicator	Target	Baseline (as in baseline study)	End-of-project status (as in Final monitoring report)
Outcome 3. Increased awareness of local and national stakeholders to climate change risks and the potential of	Change in percentage of people at a national level that are aware of climate change risks and the potential of EbA to increase the	The percentage of people at a national level aware of climate change risks and the potential of EbA to increase the resilience of local communities'	More than 95% of the representatives of government officials are aware on climate change risks. About 10 % of the government official staff are aware on the EbA, (based on consultation with representatives from local government officials).	The collected data shows that 94.3% had information and knew about EbA project in Kune Vaini lagoon system, out of which 83% judged themselves as having a lot or

¹² Etleva Cico, Assessing economic and social impact and effectiveness of the project "BUILDING THE RESILIENCE OF KUNE-VAINI LAGOON THROUGH ECOSYSTEM-BASED ADAPTATION (EbA)"

EbA to increase the resilience of local communities to climate change.	resilience of local communities.	increases by 2 percentage points.	The average climate change index for general public interviewed (30 interviews) in Tirana is 40%.	sufficient information on it.
	Change in percentage of people within the Lezha region that are aware of climate change risks and the potential of EbA to increase the resilience of local communities.	The percentage of people within the Lezha region aware of climate change risks and the potential of EbA to increase the resilience of local communities' increases by 5 percentage points.	95% of local government officials staff consulted are aware on climate change risks, but just 2% of them are aware on the potential of EbA Awareness about climate change in Lezhe villages ranges between 33 and 49%, "Limited understanding of EbA" ranges between 0% and 21.4 %. In Lezha 8,5% of respondents understand the concept of EbA	The Awareness Index shows a significant increase in the values for 2020 compared to 2017 (from 0.35 to 0.62 or +77% increase).
	Number of scientific reports/papers on the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the implemented EbA interventions published in an academic journal.	At least one scientific paper on an aspect of the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the implemented EbA interventions has been published in an academic journal (Target: 1).	0	One scientific paper was published in the Bulletin of Natural Sciences, FNS, University of Tirana (Miho et al, 2019).

Source: Baseline report and monitoring report

90. This outcome has different dimensions, covering both the national and the local level, as well as the institutional and the community publics. The activities undertaken by REC targeted a wide variety of publics, including people with no relationship to the project. However, given the scale of the project (and therefore of communications resources allocated to this activity), it is not realistic to expect a change in overall national awareness. Given the variety of communications activities undertaken, it is likely that a numerous and diverse public was reached. The survey conducted during the final monitoring report, although biased by design as it was sent to an existing list of contacts related to the project, indicates a high level of awareness about the project, biodiversity, climate change and EbA as "the best way to manage ecosystems". Among its respondents, 79.1% considered having a lot or sufficient information about biodiversity and 89.0% about climate change. In the PIR 2021, this is interpreted as a 49.9% increase, but again, the difference in methodologies between the baseline and the final report limits the validity of this interpretation.¹³
91. Evidence mentioned in previous sections already provides indications about the change in awareness levels about climate change and about EbA on the other dimensions. At the national level, awareness about EbA was quite strong among interviewed MTE representatives, but likely not within other sectors of the ministry (the Tourism sector) or within other ministries as it was not even possible to meet them for an interview.
92. At the local level, awareness about EbA was also quite good among the different institutions met. The final vulnerability assessment also indicates that awareness of the communities and the stakeholders about EbA

¹³Final monitoring report

increased during the time of the project implementation (by 18 percentage points), likely as a result of the trainings and other activities undertaken locally.

93. The involvement of university students was highly valuable for visibility. In addition to the targeted publication, the students presented their studies at several events. At least two additional papers are available (as of May 2022) on *Research Gate* based on the research conducted during the project, one focusing on birds¹⁴ and one on ecological variables related to EbA.¹⁵

iii) Likelihood of impacts

94. Two assumptions were made in the TOC for outcomes to lead to impacts:
- Policy and institutional support for sustainable ecosystem management, and
 - Large-scale infrastructural developments – that would disrupt project activities – will not take place within the project areas during project implementation
95. The absence of the IWGCC is currently a problem for impact achievements, as there is no inter-ministerial coordination on climate action (especially important given that responsibilities are shared among several ministries) but more specifically for the future use of the tools developed by the project, which are currently under the responsibility of the TWGCC. However, interviews with MTE representatives indicate a relatively good level of support for the EbA approach, with interest in enhancing protected area management and also setting up institutions and policy to address climate change. An MTE representative was adamant that a decision will be made in the coming weeks regarding the re-instatement of the IWGCC. The contribution of the project to these changes is however limited to providing a “success story” and making available decision-making tools to the MTE, which is what can be expected from the project given its size.
96. There may be conflicting priorities within the MTE, as tourism development is also within its mandate. An official mentioned that the government is considering changing the mandate of RAPA and NAPA so that they become financially self-sustainable economic development agencies, leveraging the economic value of protected areas for the benefit of communities. The ministry is taking stock on all data produced concerning protected areas, including documentation produced by the project. Its vision is to promote sustainable development, therefore it is possible that some aspects of the EbA approach will be integrated, but whether this will encompass the entire ecosystem restoration and adaptation process is unclear.
97. With regards to the second assumption, this has not been an issue during the project, but future developments also depend on the approach taken by the government to the economic development of the area, and how effectively it integrates sustainable development and ecotourism approaches and enhances protection of the area. As a natural reserve, hunting and logging are prohibited, and only one fishing company is authorized to fish. As NAPA is responsible for implementing the 2017 Law on Protected Areas, its reform could affect its capacity to do so.
98. The two following drivers for impacts were also identified in the TOC:
- Available funding flows into EbA, and

¹⁴Selgjekaj, Ledi & Bego, Ferdinand. (2022). ON THE COLONIAL BREEDING WATERBIRDS IN THE LAGOONARY COMPLEX OF KUNE-VAINI. JNTS No.53. 227-232.

¹⁵Miho, Aleko & Vasjari, Majlinda & Vallja, Loreta & Duka, Sonila & Shehu, Alma & Broli, Nevila & Kashta, Lefter & Qirjo, Mihallaq & Osmani, Fundime & Bego, Ferdinand & Aliko, Valbona. (2021). AN ECOLOGICAL APPROACH FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF THE WETLAND COMPLEX OF KUNE-VAINI (LEZHA): MAIN OUTCOMES. JNTS No 53(2). 149-159 http://akad.gov.al/ash/images/2022/pdf/jnts2_2021.pdf.

- Local communities mobilize to assume ownership over EbA interventions.

99. The realization of those drivers is uncertain at this stage, as it is unclear whether inclusion of EbA in policies will come with additional funding. MTE officials stated that they are not considering seeking funding for EbA from the GCF as they do not consider such a project as large enough for the GCF. However they are contemplating developing a full-sized EbA project for GEF-8 that would target other protected areas, ones that may currently benefit from less visibility than Kune-Vain-Tale. The above-mentioned interest in making NAPA and RAPA financially self-sustainable may indicate that the government would be considering applying some of the funding options identified in the upscaling strategy, and encouraging a more decentralized management of financial benefits generated by protected areas. The interest seems to be more towards mobilizing funds for restoration (and tourism), than for adaptation, but EbA remains an entry point for such projects. According to interviews conducted, the Lezha district council is considering organizing a donor roundtable to present this project as a success story and request more funding for EbA activities. The fact that EbA was included in the revised NDC – which is accompanied by an action plan and should incorporate a budget – and its likely inclusion in the future NAP are also favorable to the mobilization of further funding for EbA.
100. With regards to community mobilization, the signs are positive as most stakeholders interviewed in the area, including from communities, seem to value the enhanced ecosystem services provided by the lagoon. There is therefore a good level of interest in the restoration aspects of the interventions, but not a lot of faith that the interventions in the protected area will help them face climate risks. Despite being able to implement some measures themselves, communities will rely on government interventions to address larger scale risks. To date, the main benefits to communities are limited to the fishermen, and more specifically those working for the fishing company and possibly the touristic industry – although the extent of touristic benefits could not be verified.
101. As discussed in earlier sections, some of the project achievements are still threatened by extreme climate events. Furthermore, the impacts of the project are, and will be, limited by external factors affecting the KVLS ecosystems beyond climate change. These come mostly from upstream, and are not within the control of the project. They include (i) hydroelectric dams preventing sediment flow, which exacerbates erosion issues in the lagoon, (ii) pollution which was observed during the field visit and also identified by the university students who pointed out the need to improve treatment of urban water and of fertilizer use. Furthermore, despite the fact that the project contributes to restore the fishing stocks, RAPA has no control over the amounts fished and relies on self-reporting by the fishing company to assess their current condition.

iv) Unintended negative effects

102. The ProDoc included an “Environmental and Social Safeguards Checklist” which was the required safeguards analysis at the time of the project approval. No significant risks were identified, but the vulnerability and environmental significance of the project area were highlighted (e.g., its Protected Area – UICN Category IV status and its recognition as an Important Bird Area). Risk management measures included the realization of EIAs and consultations for the design of activities. The GEF and UNEP policies in place at the time did not require the monitoring of Environmental and Social Sustainability (ESS) safeguards until 2019 and the project first reported on them in 2020. Until that, environmental and social risks are reported on as part of the project risk management, but only from the perspective of risks to the project (and not risks from the project). Reporting on ESS indicates that risk management measures involved primarily the realization of EIAs and close engagement with communities – as planned in the ProDoc. No evidence was found of the implementation of a grievance mechanism or of the existence of an

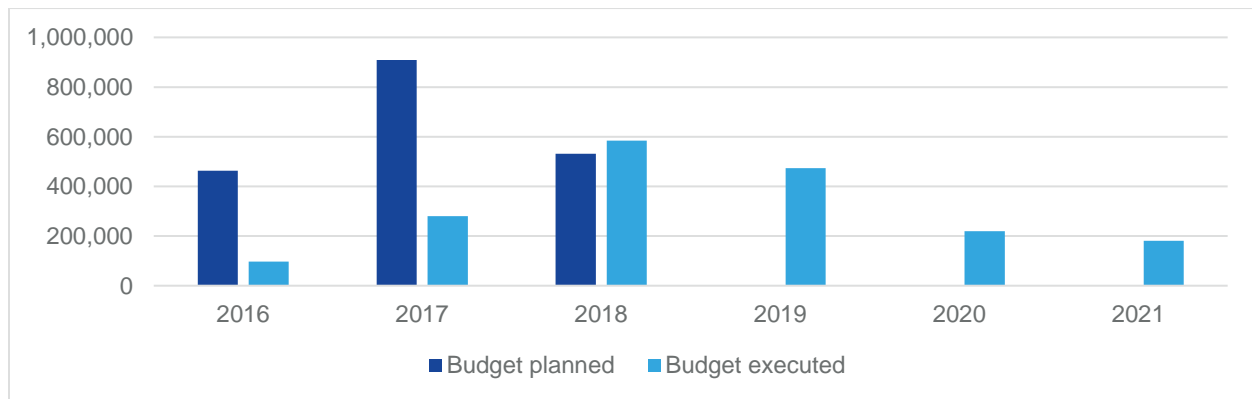
ESS management plan, and neither was evidence that this was requested from the project by UNEP or the GEF (e.g., through modified reporting templates).

103. The evaluation found no evidence of negative unintended effects from the project. There were several environmental risks involved in the project, but they were successfully mitigated during project implementation or have not yet materialized. The EIA allowed to map out these risks, and which led to the cancellation of the artesian wells activity, which was not deemed feasible. The EIA also identified risks related to the construction of the tidal channel, which were considered by the PSC and accepted. It included the risk of increased sedimentation of the lagoon resulting from re-opening access to the sea. It should be noted that local stakeholders are particularly wary of maladaptation measures, as some breakwaters have been constructed in the past that resulted in more erosion on one side of the breakwaters. A more detailed sedimentation study may have helped improve the design of the channel to avoid it being blocked. It was eventually conducted at the end of the project to help plan the channel maintenance activities. Despite the EIA, it is clear that some data gaps remained when the activities were designed (e.g., more detailed sedimentation study and more information about specific species that would be resilient to projected climate changes).

5. Financial Management

104. Project expenditures as of April 2022 totaled USD 1 835 750, representing a 96% implementation rate of the total planned budget of USD 1 903 000. The budget execution was very slow at the beginning of the project, with only 20,9% of the planned budget executed in 2016 and 19.8% of the total project budget executed by the end of the second year (out of three), as illustrated in Figure 7. As discussed in the MTR, delays in the early stages of the project were in part due to slow decision-making regarding the procurement procedure to use, but also to the 2017 general elections which first paralyzed the country and then led to substantial institutional changes that put the project on hold. Fortunately, project activities picked up in 2018 and 2019.

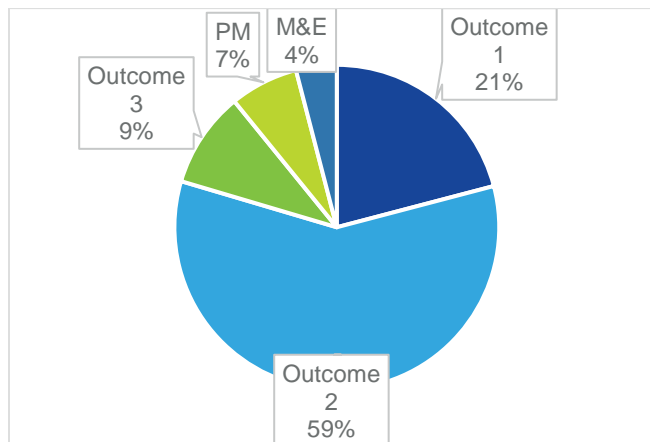
Figure 7. Budget executed vs budget planned by year



Source: Project Financial Officer and budget documents

105. According to data provided by the Finance Officer, in April 2022, component 2 represents the largest portion of the budget (59% of the total budget spent). The remainder of the budget is divided between Component 1 (20,9%), Component 3 (9,5%), project management costs (6,8%) and monitoring and evaluation (4%).¹⁶

Figure 8. Budget expenditures per outcome



Source: Project Financial Officer and budget documents

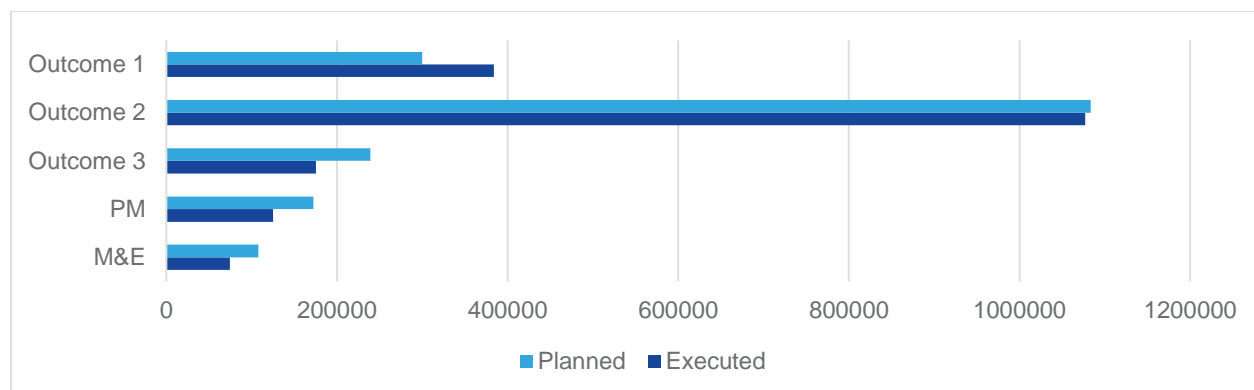
106. The financial documentation is complete and consistent, with quarterly expenditure reports available for all project years as well as audit reports, cash advance reports (except for the 1st and 2nd one). The audit reports confirm the project compliance with sound financial reporting practices. It does point out challenges faced with reporting on exchange rate losses due mostly to the salary of key staff being paid in USD.

107. Budget variances are documented from year to year, with clear justification of changes made and indications of where the funds were reallocated. These documents indicate that the project management team was able to respond and adapt to changing conditions, as will be further discussed in the Efficiency section.

108. Overall, no significant reallocation of funds took place between project components (Figure 9). The expenditures for Component 1 were 28% higher than planned, while those for Component 3 were 27% less than planned. The project management (PM) costs were less than planned even though the project duration doubled. This was possible because the cost some PMU staff, the CTA and the DTA were partially allocated to project components from the beginning.

Figure 9. Budget planned vs. budget executed by outcome

¹⁶ The M&E expenses do not include the cost of the Terminal Evaluation



Source: Project Financial Officer and budget documents

109. The project had planned for a total of USD 11,528,872 in co-financing from other projects in the area. As of June 2021, only USD 2,425,800 or 21% of what had been planned had been mobilized. Most of this is in-kind contribution from the World Bank WRI project from which the project benefitted as it established a strategic framework for water resource management in an area that includes the KVSL. In practice however, the SCCF project only benefitted from accessing some of the outputs from the WRI project available online. The other projects that were expected to contribute to co-finance were complete or nearing completion by the time that this project began implementation. However, the Government of Albania stepped in with USD 541,905 of cash co-financing. This included USD 109,000 that was part of the original agreement, which became USD 218,183 because of FOREX changes and was allocated to the tidal channel activity. An additional USD 323,723 was allocated by the Government and paid as VAT for several of the project's local service contracts.¹⁷

6. Efficiency

110. The project implementation spread over six years (five to technical completion) instead of the three years initially planned. As discussed above, some of the early delays were due to the procurement processes and also to political changes which the project cannot realistically have fully foreseen, but that are still recurrent issues faced by UNEP projects that could be better considered in risk management.
111. The second extension resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic and could not have been avoided, although a short additional extension may still have been required to finalize activities. Fortunately, a significant proportion of the field activities, including trainings, construction activities and research activities had been conducted in 2018-2019, which limited the adverse effects of the pandemic-related restrictions on travel and group meetings. According to the PIR 2020, the PMU rapidly sought “alternative methods for delivering project outputs” and requested an extension to the PSC. The opening of the visitor center, the finalization and restitution of the Upscaling strategy and the final workshop were affected by these restrictions and had to be done online with a small in-person gathering, which is not optimal but still effective. According to the project team, the COVID restrictions generated some issues with some of the maintenance activities.
112. As already noted in the MTR, some budget lines were merged early on in the project implementation (e.g. the national and the international policy experts were merged into one position, as were the international EbA expert and the national ecosystem economics expert positions), resulting from a recommendation of the PSC during its first meeting. This lightened the effort required for procurement without compromising

¹⁷ PIR 2021 and Co-finance reports

quality. Some technical expert positions were also cancelled as related inputs obtained during the PPG phase were deemed sufficient.

113. Even though this is not reflected by an increase in the project management component of the budget, the project extensions generated significant cost increases. Overall, the PMU, CTA and DTA budget lines increased by 53% throughout project implementation, from USD273,000 to USD416,000. This is still less than proportional to the duration of the project extensions.
114. Cost increases are also related to important currency fluctuation. The sundry and forex budget lines jointly cumulate USD 51,468 of unplanned expenses. The savings from merging some of the technical expert positions went largely to cover these costs, which is not the most efficient way to spend the budget, but at least it does not affect project results.
115. Among the budget lines that increased was that related to the tourist information centre (BL 2302) which increased from USD10,000 to USD42,852 through successive increases to support small equipment such as information signs, rental bicycles and the repair of bridges.
116. The realization of an EIA, a baseline study and the development of EbA protocols allowed for more accurate planning of the activities, for example discarding the artesian wells activity, and reallocating funds to other activities. The budget line for the tidal channel was initially decreased and reallocated to other activities when the work estimate were produced. However, given the need to invest in reopening the mouth of the channel, USD74,900 had to be found to purchase the dredger. Conducting a more detailed sedimentation study early on would have helped better design the channel.
117. The budget lines that decreased were related to the funding for students and savings on forest rehabilitation activities. In addition to merging some positions, the project also saved on costs by combining trainings with communities with trainings of regional authorities. Hiring REC to conduct awareness raising activities was also considered cost-effective as opposed to hiring a single communication expert. REC was able to deliver more complete strategies, relying on more resources, a more diverse skill set, and deeper experience.
118. The largest expense was for the tidal channel opening and maintenance (dredger included), which represented 18% (USD 349,650) of the overall project budget, an investment that was significant but also cost-effective in regards of its benefits for the health of the lagoon and the results of the project. The second largest expense was for reforestation, which required 16% (USD 302,000) of the budget in addition to 7% (USD 136,000) for dune rehabilitation. Given the relatively good survival rates for most species, cost-effectiveness is also quite good.

7. Monitoring and reporting

i) Monitoring design and budgeting

119. The project document included a complete monitoring and evaluation plan (M&E) with a baseline study, a MTR and a terminal evaluation, along with regular reporting (PIR, progress reports), PSC meetings, an inception and a closure workshop, and results verification activities. The budget allocated for these activities totaled USD93,000. It mentions the stakeholders responsible for each tasks and specifies the periodicity. The M&E plan is supported by a results framework with indicators and final (tentative) targets, but no midterm targets, as the project was only supposed to last three years. Additional monitoring activities were integrated as part of Output 2.2.

ii) Monitoring of project implementation

120. A baseline study was conducted in mid-2017 by two consultants who analyzed the results framework, made recommendations for its update, and provided baseline values. This involved in particular conducting a climate vulnerability assessment with communities, for which a detailed methodology was implemented and applied. Although the methodology was quite strong, it could be further strengthened to incorporate actual climate risks rather than perceptions which tend to evolve over time. A total of 50 stakeholders were interviewed from the three neighboring villages, and it is unclear whether these are a representative sample of the population and of project beneficiaries.
121. A final monitoring report was conducted towards the end of the project (December 2020), updating the results framework and the vulnerability assessment. Although efforts were made to target the same respondents as during the baseline study, only half of them could be reached, and in the absence of a detailed sampling methodology, a similar sample could not be replicated. Furthermore, even though the questionnaires were the same for the vulnerability assessment, the indexes were not calculated in the same manner. The same is true for the results framework (as informed in the final monitoring report) which does not always use the same indicators or methods as the baseline report, making comparison difficult, which significantly hindered its value added. The reasons for this are unclear. The initial methodology used was stronger, but more time consuming. The budget for the baseline report was USD 30,000 but that for the final monitoring report was covered under the budget line for the academic supervision which totals USD 14,250 (of which only USD 11,500 was spent), which may explain the difference. Furthermore, while the authors of the baseline study were clearly environmental assessment specialists, while the academics conducting the final monitoring report were conservation specialists.
122. While it is highly valuable to have such detailed vulnerability assessments, this tool is quite complex and expensive to apply. While its application was focused on the three villages near KVSL, the nature of the project activities and the level of intensity of community involvement in the project may not be the most appropriate to expect direct, short-term, visible evolution of the vulnerability levels. As an example, while the project provided trainings on livelihood adaptations, it did not actively engage significant proportions of the communities in adopting these livelihoods. Attribution of any changes thus becomes difficult.
123. Some other challenges regarding monitoring include the fact that some indicators that were planned to be disaggregated by gender or by type of institutions are not used this way, making it difficult to differentiate progress between different types of stakeholders. Dedicated gender indicators are useful but these were not used as an incentive to apply specific methods to reach out to women.

iii) Project reporting

124. Project reporting was consistent and thorough, with detailed descriptions of activities and achievements. All PIR and HYPR are available. The templates are well informed, even though, as reported in the MTR, they do not support an ongoing reporting on the output indicators. None of the actors from the PMU, UNEP or the PSC identified having specific challenges with the reporting process. The progress reports did not generate a lot of feedback. On the other hand, the PSC was quite engaged and useful. PSC minutes confirm that members held strategic discussions which led to important consensus on moving forward with the project, even with regards to complex decisions like on the best approach to keep the tidal channel open.

8. Sustainability

125. There are several dimensions on which the project results can be more or less sustainable. It varies according to the different levels (regional/national) and stakeholders involved, but also in terms of which achievements are being sustained. The sustainability of results is also closely tied to impacts, as to a large extent, impacts will be realized by maintaining benefits of the project over time.

126. The project has taken several measures to build this sustainability, and it has been considered early on in discussions during PSC meetings. This includes:

- Upscaling strategy: summarizes lessons from the project and proposes a framework to replicate it, including with recommendations for financial resource mobilization
- The property of project deliverables and in particular the EbA protocols has been transferred to the MTE. The website is expected to be hosted under the NAPA website, but this is not yet the case
- A maintenance strategy for interventions on the lagoon has been elaborated along with a specific plan for maintenance of the tidal channel
- A long-term monitoring and research strategy with involvement of students has been adopted.

127. Socio-political sustainability

128. The achievements in terms of awareness raising, and to some extent in terms of capacity building are likely to be sustained, especially at the local level, within Lezha institutions as well as RAPA. At the national level, NAPA and MTE staff are also likely to retain what they learned. Whether they will continue to actively implement and promote EbA is less clear:

- As discussed in the effectiveness section, the MTE has been incorporating EbA in its policy documents. In protected areas, they may continue applying EbA concepts partially or totally, so long as they can be integrated in their vision for tourism and economic development. There is a stronger interest in using restoration activities to enhance touristic attractiveness than to promote adaptation.
- MTE staff is familiar with EbA, but rotation of personnel remains high within the Ministry
- NAPA, RAPA and local authorities are also keen on EbA, but in large part for its restoration aspect, as they believe hard infrastructure necessary to address main climate risks.

129. The fact that the Kune-Vain-Tale protected area is an important site for tourism development is both an asset and a risk. RAPA has expressed interest in continuing to build on the benefits of the project, using the equipment acquired and the improved environment to attract more tourists. However, the integration of EbA in local planning may not be sufficient to ensure that it guides tourism development.

130. In the Lezha region, there is strong personal ownership of the results of the project. Along with renewed appreciation by the community about the value of their lagoon and increased understanding of climate-related risks and adaptation options, this is favorable to the continuation of some key EbA practices. With local teachers and rangers trained-to-train on EbA, they may continue sharing their knowledge in the community. The involvement of school children by RAPA in cleanup activities and the use of the park's facilities for community activities is also a favorable element.

131. With regards to the physical interventions, RAPA now appears to have the capacity to maintain them. The maintenance strategy includes a long-term maintenance plan specifying the maintenance activities required, their frequency, responsibility and budget sources. Some are to be performed directly by RAPA and others by contracted specialists. However, some of the reforestation operations are still at threat from extreme storms that are increasingly frequent. One of the challenges identified by local actors is that the dredger, while it is useful for regular maintenance to keep the channel open, may not have the capacity to face these increasingly strong storms that hit the area.

132. A potential risk to sustainability may be the tense relationship with the fishing company, which may under-report its fishing, and with whom it was not possible to come to an agreement regarding the maintenance of the dredger.

133. Other development agencies present in Albania are interested in using the EbA protocols and tools and the EbA strategy in the context of future interventions.
134. Finally, a significant asset for sustainability is the involvement of university students to monitor and conduct research on the biophysical features of the lagoon. These will provide useful information for management decisions by RAPA, but also contribute to the long-term evidence base for EbA. Furthermore, it will continue raising awareness among students – future environmental scientists – about climate change and EbA. They will in turn continue writing papers and making presentations, continuing to raise awareness beyond the life of the project, as is already the case.

135. Financial sustainability

136. Financial sustainability risks are mitigated by the interest of several actors to continue the efforts, and also by the fact that the interventions are completed and each of them does not require significant additional funding to be continued.
137. The maintenance for EbA measures in the Kune-Vain protected area has been included in the budget allocated by the MTE for RAPA, as is the operation and maintenance budget for the dredger. As mentioned in the maintenance strategy “Using a portion of the project budget for the maintenance of the channels by RAPA will increase the responsibility of this latter as the direct administrator of this area.” The dredger, which represented a significant investment, is expected to be operational for at least 10 to 15 years, which in theory leaves some time to RAPA to identify alternative solutions or budget for a replacement one.
138. Some investments were made in the Kune-Vain protected area on equipment, which has a limited lifespan. It can be expected that this equipment serves somehow as seed funding to attract more tourists, which would then allow for equipment maintenance and replacement over time. Whether it has been budgeted this way by RAPA is unknown.
139. As discussed above, the highly valuable work of university students is expected to continue but the source of additional funding for this research – and its durability - is unknown.

140. Institutional sustainability

141. EbA is increasingly being integrated in national policies, as well as in regional planning. However, at this point, the TWGCC established by the project is not sustainable in time. The fact that the IWGCC was eliminated prevented its institutionalization. While the IWGCC is expected to be reinstated soon, the timing may be too tight to create the necessary linkages between the two groups.
142. It seems unlikely that the MTE, without the TWGCC, will continue to promote and use the EbA tools developed by the project, except perhaps for some segments of the Upscaling strategy, as there is no particular sense of ownership for these tools. As custodians of these documents, an active group engaged in promoting EbA across stakeholders would have made good use of these valuable tools, but the group’s absence poses a risk for their future use in other protected areas.
143. While the students are expected to continue their research and communicate it to RAPA, there is no mechanism in place to ensure it is also shared with other stakeholders, like the MTE, regional authorities in Lezhe, other protected areas, and other development partners. The communication plan beyond the life of the project focuses on sharing information with NAPA and RAPA and the general public. However, other stakeholders may have a much more direct interest in learning from the evidence and lessons on applying EbA to apply it to future initiatives.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Responses to key strategic questions

To what extent did the project advance adaptation and what benefits did it generate in respect of which climate impacts?

144. The KVLS is under high threat from climate change – especially erosion, floods, and general loss of ecosystem services resulting from sea-level rise, temperature and precipitation changes, storm surges and drought. The fact that it has been heavily degraded adds to this vulnerability. The lagoon is not only a source of livelihoods for fishermen, its presence also acts as a buffer for the entire Lezhe region.
145. The interventions in the lagoon area were designed in consideration of adaptation needs, although with sometimes limited specific data on climate change. The tidal channel aimed not only at reopening the channel to improve the current water circulation, but also at allowing drainage during floods. Reforestation is also contributing to stabilize land, absorb water from storms and overall rehabilitation of the ecosystem services. Less successful interventions in dune rehabilitation may not succeed at containing erosion.
146. Restoration of ecosystems, and in particular circulation of water between the lagoon and the sea have increased fish production, and thus enhanced the livelihoods of local fishermen. The restored ecosystem makes the protected area more attractive to tourists, and thanks to support provide to RAPA to improve its facilities, the Kune-Vain-Tale park has been receiving more tourists, local and international, thus providing an avenue for the development of tourism – and more specifically eco-tourism – in the area.
147. The capacity-building sessions promoted eco-tourism as an additional livelihood to local communities, although the extent to which their current livelihoods would be under threat from climate change is not fully understood. The most relevant sectors to target were selected through a study before conducting the training events. It is also important to generate community support for the protection of the KVLS. Capacity-building also taught communities about small EbA measures that they can apply locally.
148. Restoration activities are an important contribution to adaptation in the area, but they may not be sufficient, as sea-level continues to rise and reforestation along the shore becomes more difficult and insufficient to face the wind and storms.

To what extent has the project implemented an effective knowledge management and dissemination strategy?

149. The knowledge management strategy was effective. It was planned from the beginning and built on several solid bases including:
- Research from university students
 - Development of tools and protocols for EbA as well as an upscaling strategy
 - Baseline and monitoring of project indicators
 - An online platform to store and share information
 - Trainings of multiple stakeholders (national and regional authorities and communities)
150. Several knowledge products were generated, consolidating the project's position as a pilot project. Their quality was good, although some of the university papers were highly technical. A research paper was published, and students presented their research at several events. The focus of research could have been

more closely aligned with the project results and the overall intent to build evidence on EbA, such as monitoring the effectiveness of reforestation.

151. REC Albania was also effective at promoting EbA and disseminating information about the project to a variety of publics within Lezhe, in Tirana and nationally. At the local level, this included printed materials that are still in the hands of key stakeholders in Lezha and Nature Interpreter trainings (including EbA) for schoolteachers, students at a vocational school and park rangers. More efforts could have been made to reach out to women or develop knowledge products targeting specifically issues relevant to them. Efforts were made to incorporate the university students and professors in the trainings to vulgarize their research. As part of the upscaling strategy, the tour to other protected areas in the country was also important in terms of raising awareness and disseminating lessons from the project.
152. Dissemination to development agencies could also have been more consistent, to facilitate the likelihood of uptake of the knowledge products, and make it less dependent on the MTE. Dissemination could also have been an opportunity to involve other ministries and build their engagement. Despite these gaps, knowledge management was a strong feature in all three project components, and effectively covered both knowledge generation and dissemination. The continued availability of knowledge products is however uncertain, as the website has not yet been added to the NAPA website.

To what extent did the project enable the country to integrate climate change adaptation measures into national strategies?

153. The project contributed to awareness within the MTE and also to provide evidence for EbA, but the process to integrate adaptation and EbA into national strategies was independent from the project. It was considered as a key action in the first NAP and as a “success story” (as described by several stakeholders), and therefore it will help make the case for an integrated approach to restoration and adaptation in national strategies. However, said process is not dependent on – and was not “enabled” by the SCCF project.

To what extent, and with what success, were the recommendations from the mid-term assessment taken up in the latter part of the project’s implementation?

154. Recommendation 1 on monitoring of project activities was in large part taken up, as the project developed the long-term research and monitoring strategy, which delivered several reports, including a midterm report in 2020 and a final report in 2021, yielding valuable biophysical information on the lagoon, but also providing information on indicators for the results framework. The use of pre- and post- training surveys was not taken up, and adding up basic output-level information remained a challenge during the TE as day to day information was mostly available in a qualitative form.
155. Recommendation 2 “Explore further baseline and on-going initiatives to seek out synergies” was not really implemented. Baseline projects came to an end early during project implementation. The PM was in touch with GIZ and UNDP in an informal manner, to keep each other in the loop, but no specific effort to collaborate or built synergies was made. Nonetheless, these actors were part of the final project workshop and are still aware of the project, enough to be interested in using tools developed for their future interventions.
156. Recommendation 3 on the modalities for maintenance of the tidal channel was fully implemented, with a study that proposed three options and final decision by the PSC that led to the purchase of the dredger. This was completed by a sedimentation study and a maintenance plan for the dredger. The budget was allocated to RAPA by the MTE for the maintenance and operation of the dredger.
157. Recommendation 4 to “Mobilize a Technical Working Group on Climate Change and Ecosystem-based Adaptation” was achieved. The TWGCC was effectively created by a decision, its members were nominated

and trained, and the group met a couple of times. These were all necessary actions to establish the TWGCC, but not sufficient as mobilization did not continue.

158. Recommendation 5 to “speed up implementation of some activities while strengthening community engagement for remaining activities” was effectively taken up, as the budget was fully disbursed, and a significant proportion of the activities planned were achieved.

Ratings

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
A. Strategic Relevance		S
<i>1. Alignment to MTS and POW and the GEF strategic priorities</i>	The project was very well aligned with the MTS, the POW and the GEF strategic priorities.	HS
<i>2. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities</i>	The project was aligned and mentioned in several national and subnational development plans. It was well aligned with national and regional priorities but the relevance regarding local communities could have been stronger. In project planning “communities” are considered as a whole, with references to the agriculture and the fishing sector, whereas during project implementation, businesses were targeted, prioritized according to their vulnerability. The link is thus unclear between the community members targeted and climate risks addressed.	S
<i>3. Complementary with other interventions</i>	Limited, informal coordination could be observed with other interventions in the area, with a lack of synergies. However, no overlap was reported.	MS
B. Quality of Project Design	The overall ratings for the project design are satisfactory and highly satisfactory.	HS
C. Nature of external context	In addition to changes in government and restructuring of the ministry, the project faced challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic	U
D. Effectiveness¹⁸		S
<i>1. Delivery of outputs</i>	Three of the four outputs under component 1 have been delivered, with qualitative trainings conducted for national and local governments and technical guidelines produced. The TWGCC is established but not fully operational. Concerning the outputs of component 2, adaptation interventions have been delivered, and trainings have been conducted to local communities, but some targets concerning the gender of trainees have not been met. Finally, the four outputs under component 3 have been fully delivered, with a number of awareness raising activities conducted, a web-based platform established and 10 theses defended.	S

¹⁸ Where a project is rated, through the assessment of Project Design Quality template during the evaluation inception stage, as facing either an Unfavourable or Highly Unfavourable external operating context, the overall rating for Effectiveness may be increased at the discretion of the Evaluation Consultant and Evaluation Manager together.

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
<i>2. Achievement of direct outcomes</i>	<p>Outcome 1: Technical capacity was increased for the regional institutions and for some national institutions, but did not cover all relevant national institutions. In terms of institutional capacities, the expected outcome was not achieved largely for reasons beyond the control of the project.</p> <p>Outcome 2: Ecosystem rehabilitation of the KVLS enhanced the resilience of neighbouring communities by contributing to maintain/restore ecosystem services (although some are not yet fully established) and enhancing the fishing and touristic opportunities. Community members involved in the project are more capable of implementing small scale EbA measures, and communities are more aware about climate risks, but whether this extends to a large proportion of communities is unclear.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Awareness about climate change risks and EbA was definitely increased among local stakeholders as well as national institutions. While it is not possible to objectively measure the effect of communication measures targeting the general public, these measures likely provided information to a wide public.</p>	S
<i>3. Likelihood of impact</i>	<p>The complementary effects of restoration of the Kune-Vain area along with increased awareness about climate risks and capacity to implement small-scale EbA measures by communities around the KVLS are likely to increase the adaptive capacity of local communities. The impacts of restoration within the lagoon are the strongest, as they preserve and enhance ecosystem services provided by the lagoon, while the impacts of community activities will be more marginal.</p> <p>With regards to the national government, the project's support to technical capacity on EbA is contributing to broader processes supporting its uptake to an extent commensurate with the project's size. Whether and to what extent the national government will integrate and fund future EbA initiatives is uncertain. Its support for improving protected area management may contribute to protecting crucial ecosystem services, but integration of climate considerations in these measures could be incomplete.</p>	S
E. Financial Management		HS
<i>1. Rate of spend</i>	<p>Project expenditures were slow to get started, and would not have been achieved without the no-cost extensions. However, ultimately, almost all funds will have been spent at the project's financial closure in June 2021. Budget revisions have efficiently reallocated available funds to cover unexpected expenses (e.g. additional salaries due to extensions, cost of the dredger, FOREX costs) and to deliver additional support.</p>	S
<i>2. Quality and consistency of financial reporting</i>	<p>Financial reporting is clear and detailed, and all documentation is available, complete and consistent, including audit reports. Budget variances are documented from year to year.</p>	HS
F. Efficiency	<p>Overall efficiency of the project was satisfactory. Although some budget lines increased significantly (mentioned above), efforts were made early on to generate savings by merging some of the consulting positions. The realization of studies before undertaking activities was cost-effective as it allowed for more accurate decision-making, and investing in a sedimentation study early on would have been beneficial.</p> <p>The cost effectiveness of some of the most expensive activities of the project was good.</p>	S
G. Monitoring and Reporting		S
<i>1. Monitoring design and budgeting</i>	<p>The M&E plan included in the ProDoc was adequate. It included baseline, MTR and a terminal evaluation, along with other reporting activities, with allocated budget and responsibilities.</p>	S

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
<i>2. Monitoring of project results</i>	The project undertook very complete monitoring activities, complementing the M&E activities with the monitoring and research plan developed by the University of Tirana. The methodology for the baseline was relatively strong, but perhaps more complex than the project required, which brings into question the choice of an indicator involving a vulnerability index at community stage for a project with relatively limited community-level interventions. The methodology for measuring some of these indicators, especially for the final monitoring report, did not always inform the indicators or did not align with that used in the baseline report.	S
<i>3. Project reporting</i>	Project reporting was consistent and thorough, but output indicators were insufficiently updated throughout the project (between the baseline and final report).	S
H. Sustainability		MU¹⁹
1. Socio-political sustainability	Socio-political sustainability of the project's achievements will be driven by local institutions, in particular RAPA, and supported by communities. There is a relatively high likelihood that most field interventions can be maintained in the medium term, with continued management by RAPA. Political support at the national level for EbA is competing with the development of a vision for tourism and economic development. At the national level, while it could be expected that the integration of EbA in national policies would also drive support for its application in protected areas, it is currently unclear whether it will be mainstreamed in the new vision for tourism and economic development in protected areas.	S
2. Financial sustainability	The sustainability of the different project outputs and outcomes does not rely significantly on additional funding. However, it would assume that's budget RAPA increases proportionately to tourism to the protected area, and that funds are carefully managed to plan maintenance and replacement of the equipment obtained through the project.	HS
3. Institutional sustainability	Institutional sustainability is quite low, as the sustainability of the TWGCC is unlikely. The knowledge acquired through this project and the tools developed may be lost without a clear custodian. There is no mechanism to share the findings of the monitoring and research work with a wide range of stakeholders.	MU
I. Factors Affecting Performance²⁰		S
<i>1. Preparation and readiness</i>	The quality of project design was good. Studies early on in the process were very important and instrumental to the project's success. Some more studies would have been necessary. Overall lack of complete and accurate data on climate change was a challenge.	S
<i>2. Quality of project</i>	Project management was highly satisfactory. There was a good collaboration between UNEP, CTA, and the PMU. The PM was effective at coordinating activities, ensuring leadership for project achievement and maintaining communication and collaboration with implementation partners The PSC was very involved and useful. It was effective in debating and building consensus over key project decisions.	HS

¹⁹The overall rating for Sustainability will be the lowest rating among the three sub-categories

²⁰While ratings are required for each of these factors individually, they should be discussed within the Main Evaluation Report as cross-cutting issues as they relate to other criteria. Note that catalytic role, replication and scaling up are expected to be discussed under effectiveness if they are a relevant part of the TOC.

Criterion	Summary Assessment	Rating
<i>management and supervision</i> ²¹		
3. <i>Stakeholders participation and cooperation</i>	Stakeholders engaged in project implementation were very active and motivated, in particular RAPA, but also the University of Tirana and REC. Maintaining engagement with communities was difficult, and perhaps a weakness in the project, as they were targeted for some trainings but not sufficiently involved during the entire project. Engaging with ministries beyond the MTE was also an important limitation.	MS
4. <i>Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity</i>	There were few measures to target women specifically, with specific indicators regarding their involvement in key project activities. Besides their majority position in the TWGCC, the targets were not reached for training events. The general perception, as expressed by several respondents, is that gender is not an issue in Albania, yet when asked about limited women engagement in activities the response is that the local customs don't favour their involvement in such activities.	MU
5. <i>Country ownership and driven-ness</i>	Country ownership and driven-ness are moderately satisfactory. While the project receives support from national institutions, engagement towards it is limited. A member of the PMU suggested that the fact that the project offices were located outside of the Ministry's building hindered ownership for the project, creating a disconnect.	MS
6. <i>Communication and public awareness</i>	The actual effectiveness of communication and public awareness campaigns cannot be fully assessed, but the measures implemented were diverse and targeted different populations from the national level to the local level. The responsibility for the website developed is being transferred to the MTE, to be integrated in the NAPA website.	S
Overall project rating		S

VI. LESSONS

Strategic relevance

159. Creating a specific coordination committee was not a practical approach to ensure coordination between projects operating in the same area as being part of such a committee may not be a priority for other projects, although it may have been relevant when a project coordination unit existed within the Ministry or with the oversight of the Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Climate Change. Even irregular, informal communications can be sufficient, but they should be planned by the PMU. The time that had elapsed in the process of preparing the project meant that some of the baseline projects were no longer relevant, yet no active effort was made to identify alternative sources of co-finance (beyond the support from the MTE).

Effectiveness

²¹ 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 technical backstopping provided by UNEP, as the implementing agency.

160. While it is necessary to anchor interventions into an institutional framework, as the TWGCC aimed to achieve, smaller projects may not always have sufficient traction to achieve this in a sustainable way.
161. The project was effective at raising awareness and at building capacity of communities, but overall collective engagement in support of the project appears to have been weak. Some foundations have been laid – e.g. nature interpreter trainings, increased community visits to the protected areas – but there is no overall support for the project within the community, as it has not been consistently engaged throughout its implementation.
162. The differences in survival rates and growth among species and sites indicates that the effectiveness of reforestation efforts is influenced by multiple variables, including the biophysical conditions of the site, but also its exposure to elements (mostly winds and floods), and the selection and combination of species. Survival rates for pine species on more exposed plots like beaches were very high, while on the more inland site, Tamarisk proved very successful.
163. While this project allowed to demonstrate the benefits and effectiveness of using nature-based solutions to address climate risks, it has also showed its limitations. Some EbA solutions like reforestation take a few years to become effective, and in the meantime are themselves exposed to climate extremes and general degradation. The digging of the tidal channel incorporated some infrastructure features that were instrumental to leveraging the full benefits of ecosystem services in the area by re-establishing the connection between the sea and the lagoon.
164. The realization of EIAs but also the EbA reports, protocols and tools were instrumental in ensuring the success of the interventions. The afforestation report prepared to plan the reforestation interventions included consideration of climate change and other variables influencing the effectiveness of this intervention, but it could have been clearer and more detailed. It also noted the absence of information about the resilience of specific species. Even if not all information was available, there reports and studies succeeded at minimizing and managing risks for interventions in such a highly vulnerable environment. However, more detailed monitoring of activities, and in particular of the specific project interventions, especially around reforestation, dune stabilization, and sedimentation of the tidal channel, would have helped increasing the understanding of the specific needs and success factors for applying EbA in coastal Albania.
165. The intent in the ProDoc to address gender in a purposeful manner did not materialize at the community level, as no specific measures were taken to specifically engage women or consider their perspective in the training events and no budget was allocated to this end.
166. The Upscaling Strategy came out as a useful output that links the experience in Kune-Vain with opportunities in other regions and at the national scale. The fact that it is not a prescriptive plan but rather offers different options to be taken up by different stakeholders is also an asset. Incorporating exchanges with other protected areas of the country to raise awareness about EbA and share experiences may also contribute to the uptake of the concept locally.
167. Integrating knowledge management across the project, through various means, and in particular by using scientific approaches and academics to collect evidence is highly valuable. It helps build awareness and sustainability, but also provides evidence for future projects and even projects in other countries. The contributions of the scientific teams could have been more carefully structured around EbA factors (e.g. evolution of vegetation, of fish population, or effects of salinization, etc.) to contribute more directly to the evidence base. Alternative means of dissemination, and especially continued availability and use of knowledge products – such as online knowledge sharing platforms – could help ensure knowledge is not lost.

Financial management

168. Expenses and budget changes were clearly monitored and reviewed every year. Such careful financial management is useful to identify cost saving opportunities and reallocate funds to deliver additional benefits through the project.

Efficiency

169. Doing all the required studies and collecting data before intervening in a fragile environment is not only a way to mitigate risks, It is also a way to prevent inefficiencies.

Monitoring and reporting

170. Thorough monitoring has a great value added in terms not only of accountability but also in terms of potential for knowledge generation, as part of a knowledge management strategy that enhances project sustainability. Monitoring approaches should however be consistent over time (same methodology at baseline, midterm and final) and aligned with the specific activities and priorities of the project to be more effective. In this case, the final monitoring report did not use the same methods as the baseline study, which made comparison difficult. Ensuring that the final monitoring report could be conducted in similar conditions as the baseline report, especially in terms of budget and expertise, would help ensure consistency. The use of an outcome indicator in terms of “change in vulnerability” and the subsequent use of vulnerability assessments to measure the achievement of this outcome should be considered carefully, in light of the causal pathways of the project and the likelihood that changes in vulnerability could eventually be linked to the project. To this end, a rigorous methodology based on a representative sample would be necessary. Perception indicators may not be relevant for this type of study, as responses will become biased by repetition of the questionnaire and increased awareness of stakeholders about climate change, in part as a result of the project itself. When the use of change in vulnerability indicator is relevant, a vulnerability study provides highly valuable information not only for the evaluation but to guide project implementation.

Sustainability

171. Considering the sustainability of each activity and output from the beginning is a good practice
172. The engagement of students is not only an efficient way to generate knowledge and visibility, it also has long term effects, well beyond the life of the project.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for project closure

Given that there is a small budget left for the project to spend before it closes on June 30th, the following interventions could be considered in the short term to enhance effectiveness and sustainability.

- **Develop and disseminate key guidelines to incorporate EbA into a sustainable tourism development plan:** With the likely evolution of the mandate of NAPA and RAPA, there are uncertainties related to their capacity to keep incorporating climate change in the future vision for sustainable economic development / tourism development. It would be interesting to be able to provide them with some guidance as to the best way to navigate this transition while continuing to integrate climate change in their planning processes. This could build on the upscaling strategy.

This may not be feasible for several reasons such as the lack of clarity of plans for NAPA, the timing or simply it may not be needed, but it could be considered as there is a risk that upcoming changes will dilute the adaptation considerations into a broader tourism development plan.

- **Lessons learned exercise on reforestation and dune stabilization efforts in the KVLS:** The success of these operations was not clearly monitored, and various factors influenced the evolution of each plot. There are valuable insights to gain from analyzing which factors determined success or failure of each plot for future EbA interventions.
- **Final dissemination event of the findings, knowledge and tools** generated by the project, with a focus on engaging stakeholders beyond the MTE, including other ministries and cooperation agencies. This could help ensure that more people have the final documents at hand and strengthen sustainability, in particular the team developing the NAP as well as donors currently developing other projects in the area.
- **Develop a short concept note for a future EbA project in the KVLS.** This future project could consider replicating locally the reforestation measures that have now been tested. It could also further engage communities around sustainable tourism practices and EbA, in preparation for the upcoming strategy.
- **Final restitution event in Lezha involving communities to showcase the project results.** As one of the challenges of promoting EbA during the project was that its results were not quite visible yet, this may be a good timing to showcase the achievements and link them to EbA practices. It would act as a final reminder, but also as an opportunity to build community support for the protection of the KVLS. This could potentially be merged with the final dissemination event or with the donor roundtable that the Lezha district council is organizing.

Recommendation for future EbA projects in Albania

Recommendation 1. Build on efforts to identify best EbA practices and detailed EbA protocols relevant for Albanian coastal areas

This project incorporated valuable features in terms of planning and knowledge management that should be built on and improved for future EbA projects. This includes undertaking detailed studies before initiating interventions and ensuring these studies consider climate change projections as well as external factors (e.g. upstream sediment flows). This also includes monitoring efforts at various stages during the project, and on multiple variables. There is still a lot to be learned about effective restoration and in particular reforestation and dune stabilization measures, and detailed planning and monitoring of progress can help generate this knowledge. This will help improve the effectiveness of future interventions and build a knowledge base for EbA interventions in Albania.

Recommendation 2. Build stronger understanding and engagement of communities around targeted protected areas

It would be important for future projects to understand the level of dependence (or inter-dependence) of communities on protected areas, and consider this in planning adaptation activities. This would help strengthen the intervention logic and design community engagement activities that are complementary to the measures undertaken in protected areas. It would also help establish a baseline and monitor the effects of the project on communities.

General recommendations for UNEP

Recommendation 3. Include a review and update of the list of baseline projects or projects to coordinate with during the inception phase of a project.

To include as part of the inception phase activities an update of the mapping of baseline and other interventions with which the project is expected to coordinate, as well as a specific action plan identifying communication means (key contact points), overlap risks and synergy opportunities. When co-finance projects identified during the PPG are no longer relevant, the project should identify new sources of co-finance to replace the ones that have ended to keep the level of co-finance similar to what it was when the project was approved. This should also include identifying key policy development project managers, when the project seeks to promote the uptake of an approach or mechanism.

Recommendation 4. Consider the full range of climate risks in project planning analysis.

In the implementation of EbA projects, a clearer understanding is needed about the extent to which EbA can address the climate risks that the intervention site is facing, and whether there are other risks that the project is not able to address. This could take the form of a relatively simple climate risk analysis that would provide a broader understanding of climate risks to consider for the project area, and should be undertaken at project design so that complementary interventions (even baseline projects) may be identified. This may help manage expectations but also enhance coordination with other actors that may be able to provide complementary support. It may also be relevant to specifically consider the risks that the project cannot address in the project's risk analysis.

Recommendation 5. Incorporate more thorough and proactive gender planning

UNEP should ensure that a detailed gender analysis is conducted for all projects during the PPG phase, with identification of gender-related challenges in relation to the project. This was not requested at the time when the project was developed. This analysis should be evidence-based and target the different types of stakeholders involved in a project. It should be accompanied by a gender action plan supported by specific budget allocations for its implementation, e.g. for a gender specialist to be included to support the design of activities or monitor gender indicators.

ANNEXES

Annex A: Overview of project results framework

Legend:

- **Text in red:** Modifications made following recommendations of the baseline study
- **Text in green:** Modifications made following comments made in the MTR
- **Text in blue:** Elements on which the MTR suggested a change that was not modified in the results framework. See **Error! Reference source not found.**4 with the comments from the MTR.

Table 10: Project outcomes, outputs, indicators and targets (as in PIR 2020-21)

Outcomes/Outputs	Indicators	Targets
<i>Objective: To increase the capacity of government and local communities living nearby the KVLS to adapt to climate change using an integrated suite of adaptation interventions, including EbA.</i>	<i>Change in the capacities of regional, national and sub-national institutions to identify, prioritize, implement, monitor and evaluate EbA strategies and measures has been strengthened.</i>	<i>Score of 8. Regional, national and sub-national institutions have, to a large extent, developed the capacity to identify, prioritize, implement, monitor and evaluate EbA strategies and measures.</i>
Outcome 1. Increased national/local technical and institutional capacity to address climate change risks in coastal areas through adaptation interventions including EbA.	1.1 Change in the capacity score assessment framework for each targeted institution	Each targeted institution (Ministry of Environment - national government, Lezhe commune council - local government, Kune-Vain Tale Lagoon Protected Area Management - protected area management, etc.) has progressed by a minimum of 1 step in their capacity score assessment framework.
	1.2 A nation-wide EbA upscaling strategy document endorsed by key government officials.	At least 10 government officials at Director level or above endorse the nation-wide EbA upscaling strategy.
Output 1.1. Training conducted for national and local government representatives on EbA.	1.1.1 Number of government staff trained to identify, prioritize, implement, monitor and evaluate EbA strategies and measures.	At least 30 government staff from relevant ministries and local government institutions trained to identify, prioritize, implement, monitor and evaluate EbA strategies and measures.
	1.1.2 Percentage of women among government staff trained to identify, prioritize, implement, monitor and evaluate EbA strategies and measures.	50% of government staff trained to identify, prioritize, implement, monitor and evaluate EbA strategies and measures are women.
Output 1.2. Technical guidelines produced on implementation of climate change	1.2.1 Number of technical guidelines on implementing EbA produced.	At least 3 technical guidelines on implementing EbA have been produced.

adaptation actions using EbA, and training conducted on the application of these guidelines.	1.2.2 Number of government staff trained on the application of the technical guidelines for implementing EbA.	At least 40 national and local government staff trained on the use of technical guidelines for implementing EbA.
	1.2.3 Percentage of women among government staff trained on the application of the technical guidelines for implementing EbA.	50% of government staff trained on the application of the technical guidelines for implementing EbA are women.
Output 1.3. A technical working group on climate change and EbA established to facilitate national dialogue on coastal adaptation through EbA and mobilize funds for the implementation of EbA at the national level.	1.3.1 Technical working group on climate change and EbA established and operational under the inter-ministerial working group on climate change .	A technical working group on climate change and EbA is operational under the inter-ministerial working group on climate change (Target: 1).
	1.3.2 Percentage of women in the technical working group on climate change adaptation and EbA.	30% of the members of the technical working group on climate change adaptation and EbA should be women.
	1.3.3 A plan to mobilize funds for the large-scale implementation of EbA developed.	A plan to mobilize funds for the large-scale implementation of EbA has been developed.
Output 1.4. Technical support provided for the development of a strategy to upscale, sustain and replicate climate-resilient development using EbA.	1.4.1 Number of draft upscaling strategy documents produced to upscale, sustain and replicate climate-resilient development using EbA.	A nation-wide EbA upscaling strategy for Albania is developed (Target: 1).
Outcome 2. Reduced vulnerability of communities living nearby the Kune-Vaini lagoon system to climate change-induced extreme events through pilot adaptation interventions including EbA.	2.1 Percentage change in climate change vulnerability index scores.	At least a 10% reduction in vulnerability of people living near the project sites.
	2.2 Number of community members who have increased their income through additional livelihood initiatives.	At least 30 community members have increased their income through additional livelihood options initiated by the project, including ecotourism.
	2.3 Percentage of women among the community members who have increased their income through additional livelihood initiatives.	50% increase of the community members who have increased their income through additional livelihood initiatives are women.
Output 2.1. An integrated suite of adaptation interventions including EbA implemented in the Kune-Vain lagoon system.	2.1.1 Number of artesian wells functioning within the Ceka and Zaje sections of the Kune-Vaini lagoon system, and discharging freshwater into lagoon.	At least 10 artesian wells fully functional and discharging freshwater into the lagoon (6 artesian wells constructed, and 4 artesian wells rehabilitated, in the in the Ceka and Zaje sections of the Kune-Vaini lagoon system)
	2.1.2 Hectares of degraded riparian forest reforested with climate-resilient tree species according to technical protocols.	At least 40 7 hectares of degraded riparian forests on the outskirts of the Ceka lagoon reforested – the presence of saplings will be a proxy for forest establishment.
	2.1.3 Existence of a new, functional tidal inlet channel between the Ceka lagoon and the Adriatic Sea.	A new, functional tidal inlet channel (including two terminal groynes) between the Ceka lagoon and the Adriatic Sea constructed (Target: 1)

	2.1.4 Length (m) of coastal dunes rehabilitated with climate-resilient species according to technical protocols.	2000m of coastal dunes south of the new tidal inlet channel and adjacent to the Ceka lagoon adjacent to the Kune Vain lagoons rehabilitated with climate-resilient species according to technical protocols
Output 2.2. Long term strategy for: i) monitoring EbA interventions developed; and ii) technical reports produced.	2.2.1 A long-term strategy developed for monitoring EbA interventions in the Kune-Vain lagoon system.	A long-term strategy for monitoring EbA interventions in the Kune-Vaini lagoon system is developed by the end of the first year of the project (Target: 1).
	2.2.2 Number of technical reports detailing the findings of project monitoring activities produced.	At least 6 4 technical reports (two per year) detailing the findings of project monitoring activities produced.
Output 2.3. Training of local communities on EbA and additional livelihoods including ecotourism.	2.3.1 Number of local community members trained on EbA and additional livelihoods including ecotourism by the end of the project.	At least 250 50 local community members trained on EbA and additional livelihoods by the end of the project.
	2.3.2 Percentage of women among local community members trained on EbA and additional livelihoods including ecotourism.	50% of local community members trained on EbA and additional livelihoods including ecotourism are women.
	2.3.3 Number of local community members having attended training on establishing, financing and operating the potential ecotourism ventures.	At least 50 20 local community members attend workshops and receive targeted technical advice on establishing, financing and operating the potential ecotourism ventures.
Outcome 3. Increased awareness of local and national stakeholders to climate change risks and the potential of EbA to increase the resilience of local communities to climate change.	3.1 Change in percentage of people at a national level that are aware of climate change risks and the potential of EbA to increase the resilience of local communities.	The percentage of people at a national level aware of climate change risks and the potential of EbA to increase the resilience of local communities' increases by 2 percentage points.
	3.2 Change in percentage of people within the Lezhe region that are aware of climate change risks and the potential of EbA to increase the resilience of local communities.	The percentage of people at within the Lezhe region aware of climate change risks and the potential of EbA to increase the resilience of local communities' increases by 5 percentage points.
	3.3 Number of scientific reports/papers on the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the implemented EbA interventions published in an academic journal.	At least one scientific paper on an aspect of the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the implemented EbA interventions has been published in an academic journal.
	3.4 Number of downloaded documents from the web-based platform.	At least 80 downloads.
Output 3.1. Knowledge management plan developed to capture and share information on climate change impacts and lessons learned to inform future EbA interventions.	3.1.1 Development of a knowledge management plan and communication strategy.	A knowledge management plan and communication strategy developed by the end of the first year of the project (Target: 1).

Output 3.2. Awareness-raising campaign conducted on the advantages of EbA to increase resilience to climate change impacts.	3.2.1 Number of awareness-raising campaigns and experience-sharing days on EbA held.	At least: i) one awareness raising campaign; and iii ii) 2 experience-sharing days on EbA held.
Output 3.3. Scientific reports produced on the performance of implemented EbA interventions and research projects underway.	3.3.1 Number of scientific reports/papers on the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the implemented EbA interventions produced.	At least two scientific reports/papers on an aspect of the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the implemented EbA interventions have been submitted to peer-reviewed journals by the end of the project.
	3.3.2 Number of MSc and PhD students undertaking research on the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the implemented EbA interventions.	At least 4 MSc students (2 MSc and 2 PhD) have begun a research project on an aspect the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the implemented EbA interventions by the end of the project.
Output 3.4. A web-based platform established to share information and provide access to project products.	3.4.1 A web-based platform to share information on EbA established and operational.	A web-based platform to share information on EbA is operational.

Table 11: MTR comments on project's outcomes, outputs, indicators and targets

Current formulation	Evaluator's comment
Indicator 1.2. A nation-wide EbA upscaling strategy document endorsed by key government officials. Target 1.2: At least 10 government officials at Director level or above endorse the nation-wide EbA upscaling strategy	It would seem more accurate to reformulate the indicator as " <u>Evidence</u> of a nation-wide EbA upscaling strategy document endorsed by key government officials", with the following target "A nation-wide strategy is developed and endorsed by at least 10 government officials at Director level or above"
Indicator 1.3.1. Technical working group on climate change and EbA established and operational under the inter-ministerial working group on climate change.	As per the minutes of PSC meeting of June 29 th , 2018: "Because of changes in government structures, the Inter-ministerial Working Group on Environment and Climate Change (IWGECC) is currently not functioning. [...] Therefore, it is recommended that the project proceeds with the establishment of a technical working group on EbA that will function independently of the IWGECC for the time being". Given this evolution, the indicator could be reformulated as "Technical working group on climate change and EbA established and operational". This change could be reflected in the target as well.
Indicator 1.3.3. A plan to mobilize funds for the large-scale implementation of EbA developed.	A more appropriate SMART formulation could be: " <u>Existence</u> of a plan to mobilize funds for the large-scale implementation of EbA"
Indicator 2.3 target: "50% increase of the community members who have increased their income through additional livelihood initiatives are women"	This formulation is unclear. A more appropriate formulation could be: "50% increase of the community members who have increased their income through additional livelihood initiatives are women"
Output 2.2. Long term strategy for: i) monitoring EbA interventions developed; and ii) technical reports produced.	The separation of the elements is confusing. An alternative formulation could be "Long term strategy for monitoring EbA interventions developed and implemented"

Indicator 2.2.1 A long-term strategy developed for monitoring EbA interventions in the Kune-Vain lagoon system.	A more appropriate SMART formulation could be: “ <u>Existence</u> of a long-term strategy for monitoring EbA interventions in the Kune-Vain lagoon system”
Target 2.2.1: A long-term strategy for monitoring EbA interventions in the Kune-Vain lagoon system is developed by the end of the first year of the project	As per the latest Project Implementation Review (PIR 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018), the long-term monitoring strategy had not yet been developed. The target to have the strategy by the end of the first year was too optimistic and could be revised.
Indicator 2.3.1 Number of local community members trained on EbA and additional livelihoods including ecotourism by the end of the project. Indicator 2.3.3 Number of local community members having attended training on establishing, financing and operating the potential ecosystem ventures.	These two indicators appear somewhat similar and could be merged into one: “Number of local community members trained on EbA and additional livelihoods - including establishment, financing and operating the potential ecotourism ventures, by the end of the project
Outcome 3. Increased awareness of local and national stakeholders to climate change risks and the potential of EbA to increase the resilience of local communities to climate change.	The formulation of this outcome is unclear. An alternative formulation could be: “Increased awareness of local and national stakeholders regarding climate change risks and the potential of EbA to enhance the resilience of local communities to climate change”
Indicator 3.1.1 Development of a knowledge management plan and communication strategy.	A more appropriate SMART formulation could be: “ <u>Existence</u> of a knowledge management plan and communication strategy”
Indicator 3.3.2 Number of MSc and PhD students undertaking research on the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the implemented EbA interventions.	As explained and proposed by the baseline study (which was not reflected in the results framework approved by the PSC), the evaluator suggests to remove “and PhD”.
Indicator 3.4.1 A web-based platform to share information on EbA established and operational.	A more appropriate SMART formulation could be: “ <u>Existence</u> of an operational web-based platform to share information on EbA”

Annex B: Assessment of the quality of project design

A.	Nature of the External Context ²²	YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design <i>(e.g., questions, TOC assumptions and drivers, methods and approaches, key respondents etc)</i>	Section Rating: <i>(see footnotes 2 & 3) – Highly Unfavourable to Highly Favourable.</i>	
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		4
ii) Ongoing/high likelihood of natural disaster?		No	Probability of “Extreme climatic events and climate variability” risk is rated 2 (out of 5)		
iii) Ongoing/high likelihood of change in national government?		No	<i>Not identified but the 2017 election did impact the project “The procurement procedure was delayed from June 2017 until September 2017 because of parliamentary elections in Albania. During this election time all government procurement was put on hold, and this negatively impacted the project procurement processes, which delayed project implementation that year” (PIR 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018)</i>		
B.	Project Preparation	YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design	Section Rating: <i>(see footnote 2)</i>	
2	Does the project document entail a clear and adequate problem analysis?	Yes		5	
3	Does the project document entail a clear and adequate situation analysis?	Yes			
4	Does the project document include a clear and adequate stakeholder analysis, including by gender/minority groupings?	No	The prodoc includes a list of stakeholders consulted (mostly national government, local authorities and some civil society organizations), but no analysis of their respective interests. No specific women or other minority organizations are included in this analysis. The roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in the project are clearly introduced.		

²² 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)*

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, gendered groups and those who will potentially be negatively affected)			n/a	
6	Does the project document identify concerns with respect to human rights, including in relation to sustainable development?	i) Sustainable development in terms of integrated approach to human/natural systems	Yes	"All project interventions have been developed in accordance with internationally proclaimed human rights, in conformity with UN guidelines. In addition, all activities were developed together with various stakeholders to ensure that no rights or laws are infringed by the proposed activities."	
		ii) Gender	Yes	"Women's rights will be promoted in accordance with national legislation, appropriate strategies and UN guidelines for interaction within Albania. In addition, gender has been taken into account in the project document including through gender disaggregated indicators."	
		iii) Indigenous peoples	Yes	"All project implementation will be carried out after stakeholder consultation and in accordance with local belief systems. Livelihoods of people in project sites will be improved through the project activities."	
C	Strategic Relevance		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design	Section Rating:
7	Is the project document clear in terms of its alignment and relevance to:	i) UNEP MTS and PoW	Yes		6
		ii) UNEP /GEF/Donor strategic priorities (including Bali Strategic Plan and South-South Cooperation)	Yes	<p>GEF</p> <p>"The SCCF-financed project is aligned with the new GEF VI Focal Area/SCCF strategies. This conformity was taken into account in the design of the project's components.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCA-1, Outcome 1.1: • CCA-2, Outcome 2.3: 	
		iii) Regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities?	Yes	Yes. There is a list of national policies and priorities on p.59 of the ProDoc	
		iv. Complementarity with other interventions	Yes	Furthermore, following a comment by GEF, the project incorporated a Project Coordination Committee (PCC) in its management structure, to ensure communication between the SCCF-financed project and the baseline projects.	
D	Intended Results and Causality		YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design	Section Rating:

8	Is there a clearly presented Theory of Change?	Partially	The presentation of the TOC over 3 pages is confusing as it hides relationships between the components.	6
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 logframe or the TOC?	Yes	The causal pathway from project outputs through outcomes to impact seems logic based on the results framework.	
10	Are impact drivers and assumptions clearly described for each key causal pathway?	Yes	Assumptions are mentioned in the text and in the TOC while drivers are mentioned only in the TOC	
11	Are the roles of key actors and stakeholders, including gendered/minority groups, clearly described for each key causal pathway?	Yes	The results framework specifies which actors are involved, and specific indicators are used to establish gendered targets. A table presents the role of each stakeholder per output (but does not specify the role of women or women's organizations)	
12	Are the outcomes realistic with respect to the timeframe and scale of the intervention?	Yes	Outcomes seemed realistic for an 3-year implementation on a well-defined area. The project extension was asked based on the unforeseen government changes and the COVID-19 pandemic	
E	Logical Framework and Monitoring	YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design	Section Rating:
13	Does the logical framework ...	i)Capture the key elements of the Theory of Change/ intervention logic for the project?	Yes	4
		ii)Have 'SMART' indicators for outputs?	Yes	
		iii)Have 'SMART' indicators for outcomes?	Yes	
		iv)Reflect the project's scope of work and ambitions?	Yes	
14	Is there baseline information in relation to key performance indicators?	No	This was provided during a subsequent baseline study	
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	The results framework does not include midterm/intermediary targets. However, the existence of output indicators facilitates monitoring of progress.	
17	Have responsibilities for monitoring activities been made clear?	No	For each monitoring activities, several "responsible parties" have been identified, but their respective responsibilities are not stated.	

18	Has a budget been allocated for monitoring project progress?	No	A budget was to be determined as part of annual work plans	
19	Is the workplan clear, adequate and realistic? (e.g., Adequate time between capacity building and take up etc)	Yes		
F	Governance and Supervision Arrangements	YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design	Section Rating:
20	Is the project governance and supervision model comprehensive, clear and appropriate? (Steering Committee, partner consultations etc.)	Yes		6
21	Are roles and responsibilities within UNEP clearly defined?	Yes		
G	Partnerships	YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design	Section Rating:
22	Have the capacities of partners been adequately assessed?	No		4
23	Are the roles and responsibilities of external partners properly specified and appropriate to their capacities?	Partially	The stakeholder participation plan presents the responsibilities of each stakeholder per output/outcome but does not clearly differentiate between roles	
H	Learning, Communication and Outreach	YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design	Section Rating:
24	Does the project have a clear and adequate knowledge management approach?	Yes		6
25	Has the project identified appropriate methods for communication with key stakeholders, including gendered/minority groups, during the project life? If yes, do the plans build on an analysis of existing communication channels and networks used by key stakeholders?	Yes		
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		
I	Financial Planning / Budgeting	YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design	Section Rating:
27	Are the budgets / financial planning adequate at design stage? (Coherence of the budget, do figures add up etc.)	Yes		6
28	Is the resource mobilization strategy reasonable/realistic? (E.g., If the expectations are over-ambitious the delivery of the project outcomes may be undermined or if under-ambitious may lead to repeated no cost extensions)	Yes		
J	Efficiency	YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design	Section Rating:

29	Has the project been appropriately designed/adapted in relation to the duration and/or levels of secured funding?	Yes		6
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	UNDP project “Identification and Implementation of Adaptation Response Measures in the Drini-Mati River Deltas (DMRD)”	
31	Does the project document refer to any value for money strategies (i.e., increasing economy, efficiency and/or cost-effectiveness)?	Yes	The project mentions EbA as being “cost-effective versus technical solutions in long term and are known to generate socio-economic benefits for the environment, citizens, and the local economy”	
32	Has the project been extended beyond its original end date? <i>(If yes, explore the reasons for delays and no-cost extensions during the evaluation)</i>	Yes		
K	Risk identification and Social Safeguards	YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design	Section Rating:
33	Are risks appropriately identified in both the TOC/logic framework and the risk table? <i>(If no, include key assumptions in reconstructed TOC)</i>	Partially	Most risks were identified, but risks related to political changes were not considered	5
34	Are potentially negative environmental, economic and social impacts of the project identified and is the mitigation strategy adequate? <i>(Consider unintended impacts)</i>	Yes	EIAs and hydrologic studies were planned for some of the measures	
35	Does the project have adequate mechanisms to reduce its negative environmental footprint? <i>(Including in relation to project management)</i>	Unknown	Look into this during the TE	
L	Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic Effects	YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design	Section Rating:
36	Was there a credible sustainability strategy at design stage?	Yes		6
37	Does the project design include an appropriate exit strategy?	Yes	It is implicit within the sustainability strategy	
38	Does the project design present strategies to promote/support scaling up, replication and/or catalytic action?	Yes		
39	Did the design address any/all of the following: socio-political, financial, institutional and environmental sustainability issues?	Yes	The development of an upscaling strategy covering these topics was planned	
M	Identified Project Design Weaknesses/Gaps	YES/NO	Comments/Implications for the evaluation design	Section Rating:
40	Were recommendations made by the PRC adopted in the final project design? If no, what were the critical issues raised by PRC that were not addressed.	Yes		6
41	Were there any critical issues not flagged by PRC?	No		

N	Gender Marker Score	SCORE	Comments	No rating.
	<p>What is the Gender Marker Score applied by UN Environment during project approval? <i>(This applies for projects approved from 2017 onwards)</i></p> <p>UNEP Gender Scoring:</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 principal purpose of the project is to advance gender equality.</p> <p>n/a = gender is not 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.</p>	N/A		

Annex C: Evaluation matrix

Evaluation questions	Indicators	Information source	Data collection method
A. Strategic Relevance			
1) To what extent was the project aligned to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS), Programme of Work (POW) and the strategic priorities of UNEP, the GEF and the SCCF?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of alignment between the project and the MTS, the POW and the strategic priorities of UNEP in place when the project was approved and currently in place • Level of alignment between the project and the GEF /SCCF strategic priorities (GEF-6 and GEF-7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ProDoc and project planning documents • UNEP MTS, POW and GEF/SCCF strategic priorities • MTR • UNEP TM • GEF FP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews
2) To what extent was the project responding to the global, regional, sub-regional and national environmental needs and priorities? How strong is the project's adaptation rationale?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of alignment between the project and global priorities such as the SDGs and Agenda 2030 • Level of alignment between the project and national or sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, climate change strategies and other regional agreements. • Level of alignment between the project and local needs and priorities, including the needs of all beneficiary groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ProDoc and project planning documents, PIRs • National and sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, climate change strategies, other environmental agreements (e.g., NSDI-II, NCCP/NAP, revised NDC, etc.) • SDGs and Agenda 2030 • GEF FP, Government partners, regional/local authorities, TWGCC • UNEP TM, PD, PM, CTA • Communities, incl. women and marginalized groups • Universities, CSOs, PSOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews • Focus groups
3) To what extent was the project complementary to other interventions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of complementarity between the project and other existing initiatives addressing the needs of the same target groups, either at design stage or during the project inception or mobilization • Occurrences or overlap between the project and other existing initiatives during project implementation • Efforts made to optimize synergies with other initiatives and avoid duplication of effort during project implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ProDoc and project planning documents, progress reports • National and sub-national development plans • UNEP TM, PD, PM, CTA • GEF FP • Government partners, regional/local authorities • Communities, NGOs • Representatives of other projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews • Focus groups

Evaluation questions	Indicators	Information source	Data collection method
B. Effectiveness			
<p>4) <i>Delivery of outputs</i>: Has the project successfully delivered the programmed outputs and achieved milestones as per the project design? <i>Note: Formal modifications made during implementation will be considered part of the project design</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and type of outputs delivered against the results framework’s final targets • Timeliness of output delivery against the work plan • Quality of outputs delivered • Ownership by and usefulness of outputs to intended beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project planning documents (quarterly and annual work plans) • Progress reports and monitoring reports, MTR, PSC meeting minutes • Technical reports, workshop and training reports, communication materials • GEF FP and other PSC members • UNEP TM, PMU, CTA • National, regional and local governments • Consultants • Local stakeholders and communities • Universities, CSOs, PSOs • Direct observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews • Field visit
<p>5) <i>Achievement of direct outcomes</i>: To what extent have the project’s outcomes been achieved?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature and extent of changes in technical and institutional capacity to use EbA to address climate change risks in coastal areas for national, regional and local institutions resulting from the project • Extent of inclusion of adaptation measures in national strategies resulting from the project (KSQ3) • Nature and extent of changes in vulnerability (exposure, adaptive capacity) of communities and of the KVLS resulting from the project • Evolution of awareness of national institutions and communities in the Lezhe region about climate risks and EbA resulting from the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress reports, monitoring and reporting documents (baseline, and M&E report), MTR • PSC minutes • GEF FP and other PSC members • UNEP TM, PM, CTA • Local stakeholders and communities • Government stakeholders (all levels) • Consultants • Universities, CSOs, PSOs • Direct observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews • Focus groups • Field visit
<p>6) <i>Likelihood of impacts</i>: How likely is it that the project will achieve its desired impacts?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validity of assumptions and drivers identified between the outcome and the impact level of the TOC • Evidence and extent of additional barriers or enabling conditions toward achievement of impact indicators (not considered in the TOC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and reporting documents, MTR • PSC minutes • UNEP TM, PM, CTA • Government stakeholders (all levels) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews • Field visit

Evaluation questions	Indicators	Information source	Data collection method
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall likelihood of the project contributing significantly to increasing the capacity of government and local communities in KVLS to adapt to climate change using an integrated suite of adaptation interventions, including EbA, disaggregated by type of climate risk (KSQ1) • Evidence of promotion of scaling up and/or replications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local stakeholders • Universities, CSOs, PSOs • Direct observation 	
<p>7) Has the project led to or contributed to unintended negative effects (environmental, social and economic effects)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature and likelihood of adverse environmental, social and economic effects from the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and reporting documents (quarterly and annual work plans) • PSC minutes • UNEP TM, PM, CTA • Government stakeholders (all levels) • Local stakeholders • Communities • Universities, CSOs, PSOs • Direct observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews • Field visit
C. Financial Management			
<p>8) Has the rate of disbursement been consistent with the work plan and the outputs delivered? Has the financial management complied to UNEP’s financial policies, procedures and audit requirement?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget execution per year, component and output, against total budget • Evidence of application of proper financial management standards and adherence to UNEP’s management policies • Nature of financial issues that have affected the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance • Availability of audit reports for every year and absence of remarks in the reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and reporting documents (quarterly, annual reports), cash advance requests, updated budgets, audit reports, management letters • UNEP reporting requirements • UNEP TM, PMU (incl. Finance Officer) and CTA • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews
<p>9) Completeness of financial information: Has the project delivered comprehensive financial information and reporting?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion and types of standard financial documentation submitted a) correctly and b) on time • Quality of financial reporting/auditing materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial reporting/ auditing documents (quarterly, annual reports) • UNEP task manager, PMU Finance Officer and CTA • AF/UN Environment reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews

Evaluation questions	Indicators	Information source	Data collection method
D. Efficiency			
10) To what extent have the outputs been achieved in a cost-effective and timely manner? Could project extensions have been avoided?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of alignment between planned and incurred timeframes and costs and nature of divergences • Level of effectiveness of the sequence of activities • Evidence of cost or time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe • Evidence of the project building synergies with existing or previous initiatives, programmes or institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial reporting/ auditing documents (quarterly, annual reports) • Monitoring documents • UNEP TM and CTA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews
G) Monitoring and Reporting			
11) <i>Monitoring design and budgeting:</i> Was the monitoring plan well-conceived, and sufficient to monitor results and track progress toward achieving project outputs and direct outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of use of SMART indicators, disaggregated by gender, vulnerability or marginalisation • Quality of the design of the monitoring plan and funds allocated for its implementation • Quality of the methods used for tracking progress as part of results-based management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning documents • Monitoring and reporting documents • M&E specialist • UNEP TM and CTA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews
12) <i>Monitoring of project implementation:</i> Was the monitoring plan operational and effective to track results and progress towards objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of collection of relevant and quality baseline data • Evidence of collection of monitoring data from disaggregated groups (including gendered, vulnerable and marginalised groups) in activities • Quality of the information generated by the monitoring system and evidence of use of the information to adapt and improve project delivery, results achievement and sustainability • Proportion of executed monitoring budget against planned monitoring budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning documents • Planning meeting minutes/review procedures • Monitoring and reporting documents (quarterly, annual reports) • PMU, UNEP TM and CTA • Local implementing staff, partners • Direct observation • Technical staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Desk review • Field Visit
13) <i>Project reporting:</i> Did the project comply with the progress documentation and monitoring reporting requirements/ schedule, including quality and timeliness of reports?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types and quality of reporting materials submitted a) correctly and b) on time • Evidence of measures put in place to address identified risks and impacts • Evidence of effectiveness of such measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and reporting documents • UNEP TM, PM and CTA • UNEP reporting requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Desk review

Evaluation questions	Indicators	Information source	Data collection method
H) Sustainability			
14) <i>Social and political sustainability</i> : To what extent social or political factors support the continuation and further development of project outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of political and social conditions affecting the sustainability of direct outcomes (e.g., assumptions and risks from TOC at outcome level) • Level of ownership, interest and commitment among government and stakeholders to take the project achievements forward • Likelihood of individual capacity building efforts being sustained • Types and intensity of bio-physical conditions affecting the sustainability of direct outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project planning documents • Project monitoring and reporting docs/data (quarterly and annual reports) • PM, UNEP TM, and CTA • Government stakeholders (all levels) • Communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Desk review • Focus group • Field visit
15) <i>Financial sustainability</i> : To what extent are the project outcomes dependent on future funding?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of dependence of achievements on future funding for their sustainability and likely availability of such resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project monitoring and reporting docs/data (quarterly and annual reports) • PM, UNEP TM, and/or CTA • Local implementation partners • Local stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Desk review
16) <i>Institutional sustainability</i> : To what extent is the sustainability of project outcomes dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and type of organizational arrangements that support or hinder the continuation of project activities or results • Evidence of robust governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks • Likelihood of institutional capacity development efforts to be sustained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project monitoring and reporting docs/data (quarterly and annual reports) • PMU, UNEP TM, and CTA • Government stakeholders (all levels) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Desk review
I) Factors Affecting Project Performance			
17) <i>Preparation and readiness</i> : Did the project appropriately address any weaknesses in project design or any changes in the context or needs identified during the inception/ mobilization stage of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature and extent of weaknesses, change or needs identified during the inception/ mobilization, with regards to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Institutional, socio-economic, environmental or political context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring documents • Local implementing partners • Government stakeholders • PMU, UNEP manager, and/or CTA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews • Field visit

Evaluation questions	Indicators	Information source	Data collection method
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nature and quality of engagement with stakeholders ○ Capacity or partners ○ Development of partnership arrangements ○ Staffing and financing arrangements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number, quality and timeliness of adjustments made 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop/planning meeting minutes and action items, including PSC and TWGCC 	
<p>18) <i>Quality of project management and supervision:</i> How effective was the supervision and backstopping provided by UNEP and the project management performance by the project team, especially in the context of COVID-19?</p> <p>To what extent and with what success, were the recommendations from the MTR taken up in the latter part of the project's implementation? (KSQ4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived leadership towards achieving the planned outcomes • Perceived effectiveness in managing team structures and maintaining productive partner relationships • Evidence of re-adjustment of project strategy in response to changing external context, in particular the COVID-19 pandemic • Perceived communication and collaboration with UNEP colleagues • Extent of use of risk management tools • Perceived effectiveness of problem-solving methods • Evidence of consideration of the MTR recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting documents • PSC minutes • Local implementing partners • Government stakeholders • GEF FP • UNEP TM, PM, CTA • PCU, UNEP manager, and CTA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk Review • Interviews • Field Visit
<p>19) <i>Stakeholder participation and cooperation:</i> Were the stakeholder communication and consultation mechanisms effective and inclusive of differentiated groups? Were effective partnerships established with relevant stakeholders?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and type of stakeholder engagement activities • Evidence of participation from a representative range of stakeholder groups, including differentiated groups • Proportion of male/female participants to activities • Number and nature of partnerships established, disaggregated by type of stakeholders • Evidence of sharing of plans, pooling resources and exchanging learning and expertise • Evidence that issues and feedback provided by stakeholders were taken into consideration in project implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop/planning meeting minutes and action items, including PSC • Local implementing partners • Community members, groups • Government stakeholders, technical staff • Other local stakeholder groups (non-government) • PMU, UNEP TM, and/or CTA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews • Field Visit
<p>20) <i>Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity:</i> To what extent has the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of alignment between project design and implementation and the UN HRBA, the UN DRIP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review

Evaluation questions	Indicators	Information source	Data collection method
<p>project applied the UN Human rights-based approach, the UN Declaration on the rights of Indigenous People and UNEP’s Policy and Strategy for gender Equality and the Environment?</p>	<p>and UN Environment Policy and Strategy for gender Equality and the Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of a gender action plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and reporting documents • PMU, UNEP manager and CTA 	
<p>21) <i>Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity</i>: To what extent have the project implementation and monitoring taken into account gender inequalities and differentiation? What were the completed gender-responsive measures?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of measures in project implementation and monitoring, respectively, that address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Possible gender inequalities in access to and control over natural resources; ○ Specific vulnerabilities of disadvantaged groups to environmental degradation or disasters ○ The role of disadvantaged groups (especially women, youth and children) in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes, and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning documents • Monitoring and reporting documents • PMU, UNEP manager and/or CTA • Local communities • Local implementing partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews • Field Visit
<p>22) <i>Environmental and social safeguards</i>: To what extent did the project meet UNEP requirements in terms of environmental and social safeguards?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk rating review on a regular basis - Monitoring of project implementation for possible safeguard issues - Response to safeguard issues through risk avoidance, minimization, mitigation or offsetting - Reporting on the implementation of safeguard measures taken - Measures or lessons learned to address identified risks assessed • Evidence of measures taken to minimise UNEP’s environmental footprint 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring reports (risk classifications from PIR reports) • PMU, UNEP manager and CTA • Local implementation partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews
<p>23) <i>Country ownership and driven-ness</i>: Was the level of involvement of government/ public sector agencies sufficient to ensure ownership over project outputs and outcomes and representation of all gender and marginalized groups?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and types of representatives from government and public sector agencies present at workshops and involved in implementation (including PSC) and level of involvement • Level of ownership generated by the project over outputs and outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government partners • Local implementing partners • Project monitoring and reporting information (workshop summaries, attendance lists, action items etc.) • PMU, PSC and TWGCC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews • Field visit

Evaluation questions	Indicators	Information source	Data collection method
<p>24) <i>Communication and public awareness: To what extent has the project implemented an effective knowledge management and dissemination strategy? (KSQ2)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence and quality of a knowledge management and dissemination strategy • Extent of use of existing communication channels and networks (including to reach marginalized groups) • Number and quality of public awareness activities undertaken and public reached • Evidence of change in awareness of the public resulting from project communication • Perceived awareness by partners and interested groups about project lessons, including by gender and marginalized groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local implementing partners • Community members, groups • Government stakeholders, technical staff • Other local stakeholder groups (non-government) • PMU, UNEP manager, and/or CTA • Workshop/planning meeting minutes and action items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Interviews • Field visit

Annex D: Mission Plan

- **10/05/2022 - Tirana**

Nr	Institution	Name	Position	Email	Time
1	Ministry of Tourism and Environment	Klodiana Marika	Director of Environmental Development Programs	klodiana.marika@turizmi.gov.al	10:00 am
2	Ministry of Tourism and Environment	Elvana Ramaj	Responsible for Projects Feasibility Preparation Sector, Environmental Protection, Nature and Biodiversity	elvana.ramaj@turizmi.gov.al	10:00 am
3	Ministry of Tourism and Environment	Shpresa Mezini	Specialist in Directorate of Conception and Feasibility of Environmental Projects	shpresa.mezini@turizmi.gov.al	10:00 am
4	Ministry of Tourism and Environment	Sofjan Jaupaj	GEF Focal Point	sofjan.jaupaj@turizmi.gov.al	11:00 am
3	CEIA	Spartak Sinoimeri	Baseline Study	s_sinoimeri@yahoo.com	12:15

- **10/05/2022 - Tirana**

Nr	Institution	Name	Position	Email	Time
1	NAPA	Zamir Dedej	Head of National Agency Protected Area	zamirdedej@yahoo.com	10:00
2	GIZ	Merita Meksi	Deputy Project Manager	Merita.meksi@giz.de	11:00
3	UNDP	Odetta Cato	Project Coordinator	odeta.cato@undp.org	12:15
4	REC Albania	Mihallaq Qirjo	Chief of Regional Environment Center	mihallaq.qirjo@gmail.com	14:30

- **12/05/2022 - Lezha**

Nr	Institution	Name	Position	Email	Time
1	Lezha Regional Council	Linda Maci	Head of Policy Development Sector Regional Development	macilinda@gmail.com	10:30
2	Lezha Prefecture	Ndrek Mhillaj	Civil Sector Emergency	ndrekmhillaj@yahoo.com	11:30

3	Expert	JakGjini	District Technical Adviser	jakgjini@gmail.com	12:30
4	Consultant	Etleva Cico	Expert of Small Business	etlevacico@gmail.com	

- **13/05/2022 - Lezha**

Nr	Institution	Name	Position	Email	Time
1	RAPA	Pjeter Toni	Director of RAPA	pjetertoni@hotmail.com pjeter.toni@akzm.gov.al	09:30
2	RAPA Staff		Specialist		10:30
3	Fish Company	Filip Xhani	Fisherman		11:30
4	Local Communities				12:30
5	Consultant	Etleva Cico	Expert of Small Business	etlevacico@gmail.com	

Annex E: List of documents consulted

Documents

Financial documents

- Audit report 2018, 2019, 2020
- Quarterly report (Q4 2017, Q1, Q2, Q3 2018, Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 2019, Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 2020, Q1 Q2 Q3 2021)
- Cash advances (Apr 2017, Mar 2018, Oct 2018, Jan 2019, Dec 2019, Jan 2020, Apr 2021)
- Management letters (2018, 2019, 2020)
- Co-finance report 2019 and 2020
- 2020-2021 budget revision
- Inventories
- Annual workplans (2017 2018 2019 2020 2021)

Workshop and training reports

- **National EbA expert reports**
 - Modules
 - National expert reports
- **Nature interpreter training**
 - Training workshop report
 - Training manual
 - Information on progress
- **Closure workshop**
 - Closure report
 - PPT presentation
- **Training reports**
 - Final post training event reports (Jul 2018, Nov 2018, May 2019, Sept 2019)

Monitoring documents

- **ProDoc**
- **Baseline study**
- **Half year progress reports**
 - S2 2016, S2 2017, S2 2018, S2 2019, S2 2020
- **Mid term review**
 - Final report MTR
 - Response to MTR recommendations
- **PIRs (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021)**
- **PSC minutes (sept 2016, dec 2017, June 2018, May 2019, Jan 2020, Jul 2020)**
- **Awareness raising documents**
 - Final progress report June 2019
 - Communication plan
 - Reports REC (5 reports)
- **PCA amendments (1 and 2)**
- **CEO and project document**
- **List of stakeholders**
- **Research and monitoring**
 - Monitoring and research annexes
 - Technical reports

- Questionnaires
- Long term monitoring and research strategy

Technical reports

- **Final report on baseline survey**
- **CTA mission reports**
 - CTA mission summary December 2017
 - Mission report June 2018
- **Environmental impact assessment**
- **GIS report**
- **EbA guidelines, protocols and training manuals**
 - EbA training manual Nov 2018
 - EbA finance summary of presentation
 - EbA guidelines April 2018
 - Final report EbA protocols July 2017
- **ToR for Technical Working Group**
- **Intervention design**
 - Afforestation
 - Artesian wells
 - Quantities
 - Tidal inlet channel technical report

Strategies

- **Exit strategy**
 - Maintenance strategy
 - Final report on intervention work
 - Final report sedimentology study and maintenance plan
- **Factsheets**
- **Upscaling strategy (Apr 2020)**

Annex F: List of people interviewed

Role	Name	Position
UNEP	Atifa Kassam	Task Manager
PMU	Viola Agasi	Project Manager
	Klodiana Zebi	Finance Officer
CTA	Nick Tye	CTA
DTA	Jak Gjini	DTA
Representatives of the Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MTE)	Eneida Rabdishta SofjanJaupaj Klodiana Marika Elvana Ramaj Shpresa Mezini	PSC members and GEF Focal Point
Lezha Regional Council	Linda Maci	Head of Policy Development Sector Regional Development
Lezha Prefecture	Ndrekmhillaj	Civil Emergency Sector
RAPA	Pjeter Toni	Director of RAPA
(ex-)Employee of Fishing Company	Filip Xhani	Fisherman
Local Communities	Raki and Besiona	Two women living in the area
NAPA	Zamir Dedej	(ex-)Head of NAPA
Collaborators	Spartak Sinoimeri	CEIA
Collaborators	MihallaqQirjo	REC Albania
UNDP	MeritaMeksi and Emi Rezearta	Deputy project manager GIZ project
GIZ	Odetta Cato	Project coordinator UNDP
Consultants	Etleva Cico	Expert of Small Business
	Ferdinand Bego	Monitoring strategy consultant from the University of Tirana
	Jonathan McCue	EbA specialist



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North American Office

Le Groupe-conseil Baastel Itée
92, rue Montcalm
Gatineau (Québec)
Canada, J8X2L7

P: +1 819 595 1421
F: +1 819 595 8586

European Office

Le Groupe-conseil Baastel srl
Rue de la Loi 28
B-1000 Brussels
Belgium

P: +32 (0)2 355 4111

Representation France

Olivier Beucher & Gaetan Quesne
T: +33 7 82 92 44 98
E: olivier.beucher@baastel.com
gaetan.quesne@baastel.com

Representation Jamaica

Curline Beckford
P: +1 876 298 6545
E: curline.beckford@baastel.com

