



United Nations Environment Programme

Terminal Review of the UNEP/GEF Enabling Activity 5864
“Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in Moldova”

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

EPPO: Environmental Pollution Prevention Office

EA: Enabling Activity

EU: European Union

GEF: Global Environment Facility

MC: Minamata Convention

MIA: Minamata Initial Assessment

MOE: Ministry of Environment

NGOs: Non-Governmental organisations

PRTR: Pollutant Release and Transfer register

SAICM: Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management

ToC: Theory of Change

TOR: Terms of Reference

UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme

UNITAR: United Nations Institute of Training and Research

Project Identification Table

Sub-programme:	Chemicals and Wastes	Expected Accomplishment(s):	Minamata Initial Assessment in 5 countries	
UN Environment approval date:		Programme of Work Output(s):		
GEF project ID:	5864	Project type:	Enabling Activity (EA)	
GEF Operational Programme #:	2	Focal Area(s):	C&W	
GEF approval date:	11 June 2014	GEF Strategic Priority:	Mercury	
<i>Expected</i> start date:	August 2014	Actual start date:	05 January 2015	
<i>Planned</i> completion date:	31 January 2017	Actual completion date:	14 April 2017	
<i>Planned</i> project budget at approval:	\$182,648	Actual total expenditures reported as of 14 April 2017:	\$182,599,34	
GEF grant allocation:	\$182,648	GEF grant expenditures reported as of December 2016:	\$182,599,34	
Project Preparation Grant - GEF financing:	n/a	Project Preparation Grant - co-financing:	n/a	
<i>Expected</i> Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	\$52,000	Secured Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	\$59,651	
First disbursement:	23 January 2015	Date of financial closure:	31 October 2017	
No. of revisions:	1	Date of last revision:	January 2016	
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	N/A	Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:	Last:	Next:
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (<i>planned date</i>):	N/A	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	N/A	
Terminal Evaluation (<i>planned date</i>):	June-August 17	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	August-September 17	
Coverage - Country(ies):	Moldova	Coverage - Region(s):	Europe	
Dates of previous project phases:	N/A	Status of future project phases:	N/A	

Executive Summary

1. This report presents the results of the terminal review of the enabling activity entitled “Development of the Minamata Initial Assessment in Moldova” (MIA), executed by the Environment Pollution Protection Office (EPPO) of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova between 2015 and 2017 with a

UN Environment/GEF budget of \$182,648 and \$52,000 in co-financing from the Government of the Republic of Moldova. This project is a step towards the early ratification of the Minamata Convention, signed by Moldova in 2013, and is aimed at building national capacity to meet reporting and other obligations under the Convention. Moldova has indicated that availability of data in emissions and releases is a major issue, and the inventory, therefore the MIA, is an appropriate solution.

2. The project objective was to facilitate the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention (MC) by the use of scientific and technical knowledge and tools by national stakeholders in Moldova. It was based around five core components: establishing a national coordination mechanism, assessment of national infrastructure and capacity to manage mercury including legislation, the development of a mercury inventory as per the UNEP Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Mercury Releases (version 2013& corrections of 2015). but also contaminated sites, the identification of gaps and challenges and the preparation and dissemination of the final MIA report and awareness raising materials.
3. The review analysed project documentation, including original assessment reports in English, and carried out interviews via Skype and telephone with stakeholders in Moldova.

Criterion	Rating	Page in report
A. Strategic Relevance	HS	13
<i>1. Alignment to UN Environment MTS and POW</i>	HS	
<i>2. Alignment to GEF/Donor strategic priorities</i>	HS	
<i>3. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities</i>	HS	
<i>4. Complementarity with existing interventions</i>	HS	
B. Quality of Project Design	S	14
C. Nature of External Context	F	
D. Effectiveness	HS	15
<i>1. Achievement of outputs</i>	HS	
<i>2. Achievement of direct outcomes</i>	HS	
<i>3. Likelihood of impact</i>	HL	
E. Financial Management	HS	21
<i>1. Completeness of project financial information</i>	HS	
<i>2. Communication between finance and project management staff</i>	HS	
<i>3. Compliance with UN Environment standards and procedures</i>	HS	
F. Efficiency	HS	20
G. Monitoring and Reporting	S	21
<i>1. Monitoring design and budgeting</i>	S	
<i>2. Monitoring of project implementation</i>	S	
<i>3. Project reporting</i>	Complete	
H. Sustainability	S	22
<i>1. Socio-political sustainability</i>	S	
<i>2. Financial sustainability</i>	S	
<i>3. Institutional sustainability</i>	S	
I. Factors Affecting Performance	S	22
<i>2. Quality of project management and supervision</i>	HS	
<i>3. Stakeholders participation and cooperation</i>	S	
<i>4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity</i>	S	
<i>5. Country ownership and driven-ness</i>	S	
<i>6. Communication and public awareness</i>	S	
Overall Project Rating	S	

Conclusions

(The following conclusions, lessons and recommendations are discussed in detail in the final section of the report.)

4. Conclusion 1: What if there has been no project? Without the MIA project, it would be impossible for Moldova to take informed decisions towards the implementation of the Minamata Convention.
5. Conclusion 2: There is enough commitment from the national stakeholders.
6. Conclusion 3: Creating legislation and approving it at the parliament is the best way forward.
7. Conclusion 4: Moldova is motivated to lead on a regional level.
8. Conclusion 5: The lack of stakeholder availability has affected this review.

Lessons Learned

9. Lesson 1: Data is necessary to make any informed decision in chemicals and waste management in general, and in mercury management in particular.
10. Lesson 2: The importance of international and regional cooperation is essential.
11. Lesson 3: There is a need for an overarching authority to manage the issues of chemicals and waste.
12. Lesson 4: Gender aspects and the need for sex-disaggregated data must be defined and explained.

Recommendations

13. Recommendation 1: Working with the UN Environment Global Mercury partnership (GMP) in the future;
14. Recommendation 2: Socio-economic and sex-disaggregated data needs to be collected.
15. Recommendation 3: Working on more regional cooperation.

Introduction

1. This report presents the terminal review of the enabling activity entitled “Development of Minamata Initial Assessment in Moldova” (or MIA from hereafter). The objective of the project is to facilitate the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention by the use of scientific and technical knowledge and tools by the Government of Moldova. Moldova signed the Minamata Convention on mercury on the 10th of October 2013, and the project was prepared in 2014, with a planned duration of 24 months, from reception of the first payment in January 2015. The project was completed in time but an extension was requested by the Moldovan government in order to push Law on Ratification of the Minamata Convention on mercury for approval at the Parliament. The MIA report was submitted in February 2017, and the project will be closed in October 2017, with the Terminal Review being the last deliverable. It was implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme, with funding from the Global Environment Fund (GEF) and executed by the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova, more precisely its structural subdivision; the Environmental Pollution Prevention Office (EPPO) and the steering committee established during the implementation phase. By 14 April 2017, roughly 90% (\$163,879.15) of the total (\$182,648) UNEP/GEF budget had been spent, complemented by co-financing from Moldova of \$52,000, of which \$32,500 in-kind and \$19,500 in cash.

The Review

2. The Review was carried out in August and September 2017 by an independent consultant, Ines Benabdallah, under the overall responsibility and management of the Task Manager of the GEF team at the Chemicals and Health Branch, under the Economy Division of UN Environment.

3. The review has two main objectives, first to provide evidence of results to meet the accountability requirements, and second to identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation in the region specially, and for the next steps in the early implementation of the Minamata Convention. This is to be done through promoting operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing between national and regional stakeholders. To be effective, the review had a particular focus on how and why the results of the project were achieved, beyond displaying what the results were. Therefore, the evaluator aimed to differentiate between what would happen in the absence of the EA and what happened as a result of the EA.

4. Because of the timing restricts (most stakeholders being on leave in August) and the language barriers, it was impossible to carry out interviews with all stakeholders. The interview process was therefore limited to the project management staff at EPPO and the GEF team at UN Environment. This makes the review less participatory and informed. Travel to Moldova was not possible, due to time restrictions, therefore the interviews were carried out via Skype.

5. The desk review was therefore the main method of determining the completeness of the project’s results, but it must be noted that the interviews were very informative. The project’s performance was assessed in terms of its relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, as well as its actual and potential outcomes and impacts and their sustainability. This also included a likelihood of impact assessment, identifying intended and unintended effects; as well as assessing the potential for replication, upscaling and continuation of the project (or similar projects in the region). Then the factors and processes affecting project performance were assessed, relating to preparation and readiness, quality of management and supervision, stakeholder participation, public awareness, country ownership and responsiveness to human

rights and gender equity. Finally, the project financing and the monitoring and evaluation systems were reviewed. All findings in this report are based on referenced evidence, and the sources were crossed to the extent possible, while the logic behind the evaluator's judgement is explained when necessary.

The Project

Context:

6. Moldova suffers from poor environmental conditions due to years of environmental mismanagement, and like its neighbouring countries, the issues of solid waste management, and outdated agricultural practices have led to heavy air, soil and water pollution over time. Being an economy based on the agricultural and industrial sectors, contributing at 9,9% and 14,8% to the national GDP respectively.

7. In order to address these issues, and in an effort to be integrated into the European Union, the Government of Moldova has developed an environmental management strategy in line with the EU directives. It has produced an integral environmental strategy for the years 2014-2023, covering priorities such as the drafting and harmonizing of legislation to European norms, institutional strengthening, creating climate change mitigation strategies, promotion of green economy and social and sustainable development, creation of waste management infrastructure and working towards an integral chemicals management strategy. The concretization of this work is the proposition of two new bills to Parliament: the waste bill number 209, passed on 29.07.2016 and the chemicals bill, currently awaiting approval.

8. Moldova has ratified numerous multilateral international environmental agreements, notably the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions on hazardous waste, the Montreal Protocol for the protection of the Ozone layer, and the UNECE Convention on transboundary air pollution, Aarhus Convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental issues (POPs, HM and PRTR protocols). In line with the implementation of these conventions, Moldova signed the Minamata Convention on mercury in October 2013.

9. The Minamata Convention (MC) on mercury aims to protect human health and the environment from man-made emissions and releases of mercury and its compounds, through a set of measures to control the supply and trade including limitations on certain specific sources of mercury such as primary mining, and to control mercury-added products and manufacturing processes in which mercury or mercury compounds are used, as well as artisanal and small scale gold mining. In addition, the Convention also contains measures on the environmentally sound interim storage of mercury and on mercury wastes, as well as contaminated sites (Minamata Convention text ref)

10. An analysis of the areas of concern relating to mercury, for the period of 2005-2014, has revealed that the main sectors responsible for emissions to air in Moldova are: extraction and use of energy sources, cement production, consumer products containing mercury (manufactured and imported), and waste mismanagement (ref national Hg release inventory for 2014 on EPPO website). These findings consolidate Moldova's decision to ratify the Minamata Convention, which includes articles that address all of the above sectors inter alia, from a legislative, institutional and scientific perspective.

11. As a champion in the region, Moldova has been very active in pursuing projects that develop its environmental and agricultural sectors. There are about 9 national GEF endorsed projects currently under implementation or awaiting approval, implemented by different UN agencies, and 3 regional and global projects that cover a variety of priorities, such as PRTR inventories to capacity building and reporting on POPs, Introduction of POPs BAT and BEP in the metallurgical industry in CEECCA, etc. This project therefore is very relevant as data collection, baseline establishment and analysis of available capacities

and identifying gaps in order to make informed and effective decisions and legislation are elements most of the projects Moldova's involved in have in common.

12. As Moldova reported the lack of availability of data on the mercury cycle in the country as a major challenge, and as it reported uncertainty as to emissions sources such as waste incineration, this project is highly fitting in its priorities.

Institutional and political challenges:

13. The key governmental agencies involved in the project were the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economy, the National Centre for Public Health, Ministry of Labour, National Confederation of Trade Unions, and the NGO EcoContact, making up the project Coordination committee. The process ran smoothly on the institutional side, as all parties were equally engaged in the implementation phase. All progress reports point to the success of the coordination mechanism and to the solid leadership displayed by Environmental Pollution Prevention Office (EPPO hereafter) in implementation, even though the role of non-governmental entities is not very clear.

14. Considering the proactivity of Moldova, the only real political challenge was the defence of the laws the EPPO drafted and presented to the Parliament. Otherwise, the country has been stable through the project implementation period, with no interruption in communication between stakeholders and UN Environment Task Managers.

Objective and components

15. The project's objective was the facilitation of ratification and early implementation of the MC, by the use of scientific and technical knowledge and tools by national stakeholders in Moldova. The development of the MIA has five components stated below:

- I. Determination of Coordination Mechanism and organisation of process
- II. Assessment of the national infrastructure and capacity for the management and monitoring of mercury, including national legislation
- III. Development of a mercury inventory using the UN Environment mercury toolkit
- IV. Identification of challenges, needs, and opportunities to implement the Minamata Convention
- V. preparation, validation of national MIA report and implementation of awareness raising activities and dissemination of results.

Milestones/Key dates in project design and implementation

16. Project start date: Planned: August 2014; Actual: January 2015

17. Mid-term Evaluation (MTE): because of its scale and nature as an EA, the project document does not call for a MTE, therefore, beyond the quarterly progress reporting, the M&E plan consists of the independent financial audit and the independent terminal review.

18. Project completion date: Planned: January 2017; Actual: April 2017

Implementation arrangements:

19. UN Environment acted as the UN implementation agency for the project, with financing from the GEF in accordance with Article 13 on the financial mechanism of the convention; included in the GEF V Focal Area Strategies document under the Strategy Objective 3 Pilot Sound Chemicals Management and mercury Reduction, specifically under outcome 3.1 to build country capacity to effectively manage mercury in priority sectors.

20. Execution was undertaken by the EPP0 as a project team, which is an entity within the Ministry of Environment of Moldova. Their responsibilities include managing and executing project activities, reporting on a quarterly basis on progress and expenditures and conducting an independent financial audit at the project completion stage.

Project financing

Table1. Original and actual project budgets, by component and funding source

Project Components	GEF Financing original estimate/ actual disbursements		Actual co-financing		(Actual) Total (\$)
	\$	%	\$	%	
1.Determination of Coordination Mechanism and organisation of process	25,300/ 17,754	15/ 12	2,140	4/ 4	27,440
2.Assessment of the national infrastructure and capacity for the management and monitoring of mercury, including national legislation	29,344/ 17,440	17/ 11	7,000	12/ 12	36,344
3.Development of a mercury inventory using the UN Environment mercury toolkit	58,800/ 55,187	24/ 32	9,554	16/ 16	68,354
4. Identification of challenges, needs and opportunities to implement the Minamata Convention	15,800/ 16,300	10/ 10	9,279	15/ 15	25,079
5. Preparation, validation of national MIA report and implementation of awareness raising activities and dissemination of results	20,800/ 24,335	12/ 14	3,445	6/ 6	24,245
6. Project management and supervision	16,604/ 16,604	10/ 9	28,233	47/ 47	44,837
7. Project monitoring and evaluation	20,000/ 20,000	12/ 11	0	0/ 0	20,000
Total project costs	182,648/ 167,620		59,651		227,271

Table2. Co-financing, by source and type of funding

Name of co-financer (source)	Classification	Type	Contribution (\$)	%
Government of Republic of Moldova	(national government)	In-kind	39,500	66.2
		Cash	20,151	33.8
Total co-financing			59,651	100

21. The Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between UN Environment (UNEP in the legal agreement) and the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova, on October 13th, 2014, remaining in force until October 31st, 2017 (as per the Project Cooperation Agreement).

Project Partners:

22. The key project partners were:

- The EPPO within the Ministry of Environment as the executing agency
- UN Environment as the implementing agency
- The GEF as a financing partner
- The National Coordination Mechanism Committee, also referred to as the Project Steering Committee as the executing team along with the EPPO project team.

Changes in Design during Implementation

23. A three-month extension was requested by the EPPO in order to prepare and present its MC ratification law to Parliament. The extension was granted at no extra budgetary cost. However, a budget amendment was undertaken to shuffle allocated amounts between components.

Theory of Change of the Project

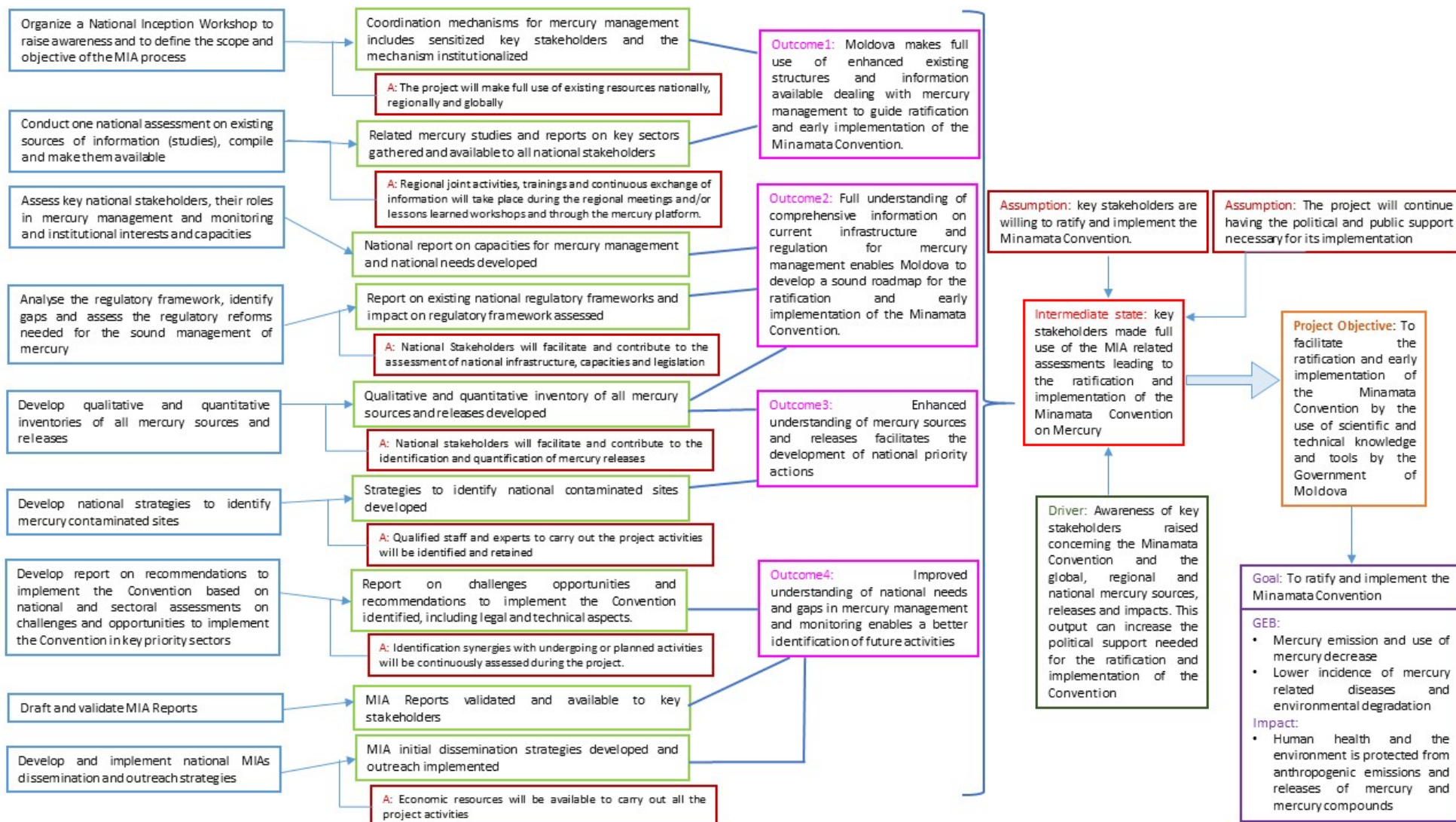
24. A reconstructed Theory of Change (ToC, as per figure 1 below) was prepared based on project documentation and reviewed with project staff during the review process. It demonstrates the logical sequence of intended results from immediate outputs and intended outcomes, feeding into the longer term impact.

25. Because of the small scale of this project, there is one major pathway of outcomes to impact identified, along with one intermediate state.

26. Impact pathway 1 - Data Collection and Establishment of Baseline Institutional Framework: From outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4 to project objective. The fulfilment of the project objective requires the success of all four main outcomes, and each outcome is linked to the next in a causal/continuous sequential logic: In order for Moldova to be able to ratify the Minamata Convention, it must first assess and enhance its existing information and structure (Outcome1), then it must have a complete understanding and baseline assessment of its institutional, regulatory and legal mercury management capacities (Outcome2). These two outcomes provide the first stages and baseline information in order to begin collecting quantitative and qualitative mercury source and release data using the UN Environment Mercury Inventory Toolkit (Outcome3), and in turn, the information provided by the Inventory leads to an improved understanding of the national priorities and the institutional and regulatory gaps (Outcome4).

27. Consequentially, at this stage, the project has reached the intermediate state at which all relevant stakeholders have the necessary information through the MIA report so as to take targeted action in filling the gaps in legislation and institutional capacity, while continuously working together to reduce and stop mercury releases to the environment, and address all issues that arose during the undertaking of the inventory. All of the above consequentially leads to the implementation of the Minamata Convention, which directly supports the project's GEBs.

Figure 1: Theory of Change (re-constructed)



Review Findings:

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

Strategic relevance:

National and regional priorities:

29. Moldova's environment, like its counterparts in the region, has suffered greatly from years of mismanagement. A largely rural population and an economy that heavily relies on the agricultural and industrial sectors places the environment and sustainable development at the centre of priorities as Moldova takes major steps to conform to EU directives. The "Moldova 2020" National Development strategy has ecological security as one its main priorities, making the project highly relevant. Moldova has signed many multilateral and regional agreements and partnerships, concerning the environment among other developmental issues, with its neighbouring countries and with the EU in general. Therefore, signing of the Minamata convention and taking steps towards its early ratification, especially by establishing baseline data on the mercury cycle in the country, is extremely relevant to the environmental priorities.

30. It must be noted that the efforts of Moldova are commendable, particularly in integrating the Minamata Convention articles in legislation. However, the political and regulatory assessment, under Chapter 3 of the MIA report, does not analyse the political sensitivity of the country and the political scene towards the issue; rather it lists all treaties and agreements Moldova has signed in its road towards EU integration.

UN Environment's mandate and policies

31. The project contributed to the sub-programme: Chemicals and Waste, as it is a step towards work under the sub-programme will aim to achieve the entry into force and implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury", identified in the UN Environment [Proposed Biannual Programme of Work 2016-2017](#). The project also contributes to the UN Environment [Medium Term Strategy 2014-2017](#), under the harmful substances area and the Chemicals and Waste sub-programme. It is in line with the strategy, as it increases the country's capacity to manage chemicals and waste, and increases collaboration with secretariats of chemicals and waste related multilateral environmental agreements, as well as collaboration with neighbouring countries in the efforts to manage and eliminate mercury pollution to the environment. The institutional and regulatory framework strengthening also falls under the same strategy goals, making the project perfectly relevant and in line with UN Environment's mandate.

The GEF's Strategic Objectives

32. Mercury is a priority chemical under the chemicals and waste focal area strategy under both GEF V and GEF VI : under GEF V, it is addressed as a part of the Strategic Objective 3 Pilot Sound Chemicals Management and Mercury reduction, which has as an outcome 3.1 to build country capacity to effectively manage mercury in priority sectors; while under GEF VI, it is addressed as a part of the Chemicals and Waste Focal Area Strategy, CW1, program 2: Support enabling activities and promote their integration into national budgets, planning processes, national and sector policies and actions and global monitoring. It details the funding mechanism, also identified by the MC under Article 13. The outcomes of the project

are crosscutting and contribute to fulfilling other CW objectives under [GEF VI](#).

33. Overall, the project is an initial and essential step towards early implementation of the MC, yet its outcomes encompass and contribute towards sustainable development, a sound environment and protection of human health, which also contribute to several sustainable development goals. The baseline information in various fields will be useful for environmental policies to be designed, but also social, economic and developmental policies and strategies to be developed.

Rating for strategic relevance: Highly satisfactory.

Quality of project design:

As per the inception report:

34. Overall, the project design was rated satisfactory, with many strong elements and some shortcomings. There is sufficient consideration of the baseline legal and institutional situation in Moldova; summarizing national priorities, current legislation and the infrastructural capacities in place at the time of design.

35. The project preparation was satisfactory, entailing a clear and adequate problem and stakeholder analysis.

36. Overall, the timeframe of milestones and results is realistic and includes SMART indicators as well as concrete means of verification, which will also be useful in the terminal review as the evaluator maps actual results against them.

37. The main **strengths** are the strategic relevance, the external context study, the governance and supervision arrangements, and the financial planning, each rated highly satisfactory. The logical framework and monitoring, project preparation, partnerships, intended results and causality and learning, communication and outreach components were all rated satisfactory. The governance and supervision arrangements are clearly identified, sharing and defining stakeholder roles and responsibilities in an appropriate manner that combine efficiency, stakeholder engagement, synergies and sound means of verification, to encourage sound implementation. The financial planning is sound and does not display any deficiencies, and the funding is budgeted coherently for the timeline and outputs of the project.

38. The financial mechanisms of the project at the design stage are well prepared, reasonable and transparent, contributing to its sustainability and overall success. Moreover, the project document does include a cookie-cutter Theory of Change, based on the one developed for the first MIA EA, and the Logical Framework includes a thorough and project-specific risk identification table, comprised of the risk identified, a ranking (high risk, medium risk or low risk), and mitigation measures. It also includes a list of assumptions the project designed is based upon. The latter are clearly formulated, and the mitigation measures are appropriate to the level and type of risk. This contributes to the overall preparedness of the project, as well as ensuring its effectiveness.

39. The project document includes very detailed information about the institutional and legislative baseline/background of chemicals management, yet lacks in socioeconomic information and reflection.

40. The **shortcomings** in the project design are the lack of preparation in relation to differentiated gender needs and human rights in sustainable development considerations. There is no mention of any population risk management in relation to the current environmental situation of Moldova, while this is an essential part of implementing and integrating new measures in chemicals and mercury management. The main source of mercury release to the environment is the stocking of mercury containing products, among other hazardous wastes, and absence of recycling facilities within the country will require a more detailed socio-economic consideration to be included in the implementation plan.

41. In relation to gender aspects, there are no strategies to integrate this in the project design, despite the necessity to do so. There is no recognition of the differentiated roles and power relations socially assigned to men and women, and the project document at the design stage does not address the role of women in any of this. It is noted that this is an initial assessment, but in order to prepare a good baseline for the further implementation of the Convention, the gender dimension must be studied and analysed, as this can prove a hurdle in the future.

42. There is a lack of baseline data for most indicators, but this is expected given the nature of the project.

Rating for quality of project design: Satisfactory.

Effectiveness

Achievement of outputs

43. The core outputs of the project consist of 1) an assessment of national infrastructure and capacity for the management of mercury, including national legislation; 2) a mercury inventory of emissions and releases, developed using the UN Environment toolkit; 3) a strategy to identify and assess mercury contaminated sites; 4) a national MIA report, an optional implementation plan and awareness-raising and results-dissemination materials; and 5) the creation of a National Coordination Mechanism Committee to oversee and manage the execution of the above outputs. Review of the project documentation, the deliverables and consultation with the available stakeholders confirmed that the outputs delivered are of sufficient quality and will be quite useful to stakeholders, overall. All deliverables were submitted in time. Each output will be discussed in detail below:

i. National capacity and infrastructure assessment:

44. Submitted as a part of the final MIA report, in Chapter III: Policy, regulatory and Institutional Framework Assessment; and it does not discuss the gaps in infrastructure. The gaps in the mercury relevant sectors can be found in Chapter I, under the profiles of economic sectors with particular focus on mercury. However, it does include actions to be taken to fulfil these gaps in tabular form. It is concluded that there is no legislation that specifically addresses mercury, mercury compounds, mercury added products or mercury waste management in Moldova. An annexed regulatory framework assessment elaborates more on how the 1993 “Law on Environmental Protection” (LEP) is the only overarching environmental management law to date, and this provides the necessary background the reader needs to understand the actions proposed in the MIA report. This annex should be integrated in the Chapter III analysis.

45. The actions are precise and well-rounded, and the concept of each action does address managerial and systemic sound management of chemicals in Moldova. The establishment of a Chemicals Agency will centralise all chemicals issues under one authority, capable of taking informed decisions in relation to the market placement of new chemicals; while a Centre for Hazardous Waste Management will address the issues of historical waste, contaminated sites, scientific analysis of hazardous and chemical waste, and coordinate its sound management and disposal. The legislation assessment is of satisfactory quality, but cannot be presented as a standalone output. It utilised the [NRDC checklist](#), following the [UNDP MIA guidelines](#).

ii. Mercury inventory as per the UNEP Toolkit

46. The inventory was carried out to Level 2 as per the UN Environment inventory. The inventory is complete, and its evaluation was carried out by the expert who elaborated the toolkit. This is the main scientific output of the MIA, and it identifies emissions and releases, stocks and contaminated areas as per the indices. Moldova's EPPO project management team has been highly proactive in undertaking this component of the project, because of previous experience the team had working on Pollutant Register and Transfer Registry (PRTR hereafter) and greenhouse gas emissions inventories. Not only is the inventory of high quality, but the team has worked together to point out technical errors in the Level 1 calculations, and provided recommendations to the toolkit authors, for improving the accuracy of calculations.

47. The inventory is the main scientific output of the project, and has proved to be very useful for informed decision making in Moldova, as they draft the waste law and the chemicals law. It is of high quality, and was delivered on time. However, feedback to the review has indicated that the 6-month period allowed for the inventory output is not sufficient, especially when it comes to data source verification, to ensure the most accurate results possible. The inventory was externally evaluated by the toolkit authors and therefore its completion, timely delivery and lessons learned by the country are the only factors that can be rated by the evaluator.

iii. Contaminated sites assessment:

48. The standalone strategy to identify contaminated sites was not included in the MIA report as an output. Based on stakeholder interviews, the project team has used the methodology of the toolkit to run the assessment of identification of hotspots of mercury contamination and this did not reveal major contaminated sites to be identified. Section 3.2 of the MIA report identifies the laws governing the management of contaminated sites briefly. It has been revealed that the territory of Moldova does not contain any contaminated sites, however, there is concern with a pesticide burial ground in Cismichioi village.

49. The standalone document produced by EPPO is an extensive report, treating the specific considerations of the use of the inventory, highlighting the particular policy issues in relation to contaminated sites, and proposing a strategy to identify and remedy to contaminated sites. However, it is more of a plan for a strategy rather than a technical strategy containing steps.

iv. MIA report:

50. The report is the final deliverable, submitted in March 2017 in English and is a compilation of the above outputs. It was delivered on time and is of highly satisfactory quality. The order and format of the report sections did not follow the [UNDP guidelines](#), and therefore made the report disorganised and difficult to follow. The report gives extensive background information on certain concepts (health and mercury contamination, risk assessment, etc) but does not necessarily make the linkage with the national situation, thus giving the report a lack of focus on national priorities. However, it does include all the necessary chapters, including the gender analysis. It is the evaluator's opinion that the execution team has provided a comprehensive view of the mercury cycle in Moldova, and despite the disorganisation, the report is very useful in taking steps towards implementing the MC.

Implementation plan: The implementation plan is not a MIA requirement, but it is considered good practice, and further demonstrates the country's engagement and understand of their situation in the early implementation process. The implementation plan drawn up by Moldova is a comprehensive and crystallized version of what needs to be accomplished, addressing all the priorities and gaps in legislation,

institutions and infrastructure, in order to comply with the MC. The implementation plan is complemented by a “Roadmap towards the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury”; which has a horizon of 2020, and identifies the priority activities and actions that Moldova will undertake. This is excellent practice, highly useful and of good quality.

v. Awareness raising materials:

51. Moldova has produced a number of informational materials, in coordination with the UN Environment team. All the materials produced are of high quality, and contain accurate depictions of the health risks, products containing mercury, and the interactions between mercury and its compounds and the environment. It also produced video “spots” dubbed in Romanian to facilitate understanding. All the communications materials were disseminated in training workshops for professional stakeholders and in awareness raising workshops for the general members of civil society. The communication is efficient, clear and to the point. There are plans to translate these materials from Romanian to English and/or Romanian to Russian in order to include them on the mercurylearn.org platform developed by UN Environment and UNITAR.

vi. National Coordination Mechanism Committee:

52. The National Coordination Mechanism Committee, called the project Steering Committee in this project, was set up in February 2015, approved by the Ministry of Environment via Decree 8. Its composition and regulation, as well as ToRs for its functioning were approved at the National Inception Workshop of March 2015. It is composed of representatives from the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Labour, the National Centre for Public Health, the National Confederation of Trade Unions, and the NGO EcoContact. There is a clear over representation of government officials in the steering committee, but the feedback from stakeholders demonstrated that around 20 NGOs working in different fields of concern have been involved, as well as many businesses and manufacturers. These have been reported on in progress reports as well as being published on the MOE website.

53. The steering committee undertook different workshops with different stakeholders, involving relevant industry, civil society and academia representatives according to the target audience. This is an interesting approach to the National Coordination Mechanism, and has proved to be useful at providing necessary results and accomplishing both satisfactory coordination and targeted awareness raising. The steering committee met 8 times in total, and these meeting reports were made available on the MOE website.

Stakeholder Involvement

54. Because of the impossibility of travel and the difficulty in reaching all stakeholders for various reasons, (language barrier, unresponsive stakeholders), only a small number has been interviewed. The interviews were conducted via Skype, and had a semi-structured format as per the review ToRs. The stakeholders interviewed are key players in the execution of the project, and are all on the steering committee. There was a mutual feeling of involvement and engagement from both the execution agency team and the implementing agency team. The stakeholders felt very involved in the project design phase, and had the opportunity to give their feedback on the project’s logical framework and design, as they were involved by UN Environment in the development stages. All stakeholders interviewed felt sufficiently involved in the implementation of the project; however, because of the limited stakeholder feedback, this

cannot be verified. The results show the involvement of industries, manufacturers, academia, public acquisition agencies, inter alia. The impressions gathered do reflect a strong sense of engagement from all stakeholders involved in the project.

Achievement of Outcomes:

55. As per the ToC developed for the purpose of this review, there is one impact pathway at the scale of this project. This is identified as Impact pathway 1 - Data Collection and Establishment of Baseline Institutional Framework: From outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4 to project objective. The fulfilment of the project objective requires the success of all four main outcomes, and each outcome is linked to the next in a causal/continuous sequential logic: In order for Moldova to be able to ratify the Minamata Convention, it must first assess and enhance its existing information and structure (Outcome1), then it must have a complete understanding and baseline assessment of its institutional, regulatory and legal mercury management capacities (Outcome2). These two outcomes provide the first stages and baseline information in order to begin collecting quantitative and qualitative data using the UN Environment Mercury Inventory Toolkit (Outcome3), and in turn, the information provided by the Inventory leads to an improved understanding of the national priorities and the institutional and regulatory gaps (Outcome4). Consequentially, at this stage, the project has reached the intermediate state at which all relevant stakeholders have the necessary information through the MIA report so as to take targeted action in filling the gaps in legislation and institutional capacity, while continuously working together to reduce and stop mercury releases to the environment, and address all issues that arose during the undertaking of the inventory. All of the above consequentially leads to the implementation of the Minamata Convention, which directly supports the project's GEBs.

56. These outcomes have all been achieved through the completion of the outputs discussed in the section above. Moldova went beyond the completion of outputs by presenting two law projects, the Waste Law and the Chemicals Law, which will encompass many elements of the Minamata Convention and other diverging environmental priorities on chemicals and waste management. Moldova has since ratified the Convention, on June 20th, 2017. Surpassing the defined outcomes is a strong sign of commitment and ownership that is commended. It is therefore concluded that the project has fulfilled both outputs and outcomes, and is therefore at the intermediate impact stage, with a positive extrapolated trajectory, if efforts continue at this rate.

Likelihood of Impact

57. The positive impacts of this project are the following: Acquisition of accurate baseline data in relation to the mercury cycle and mercury management strategies existing in the country; awareness raising among professionals in the economic fields of relevance, policymakers and decision makers, and the general public about the dangers of mercury and the aims of the MC; elaboration of a precise roadmap and implementation plan outlining the next steps; and the sufficient preparation for the implementation of the MC. All these impacts are a direct result of the project outcomes discussed and highlighted in the Theory of Change section and in Figure1.

58. The project has led to a new GEF project being proposed, to address the elimination of mercury-added product waste, in the form of a "de-mercurisation" line. This is an unintended positive effect, that stems directly from the acquisition by the MOE of enough baseline information on mercury via the Toolkit,

therefore the project will address the issue of product waste, and this action has been caused directly by a project outcome.

59. There are no unintended negative effects reported by the stakeholders. Because of the scale and nature of the project as a scoping mission to acquire baseline data, it has been carried successfully.

60. In terms of catalysed change, stakeholders reported a more participatory approach and multiplied linkages between different projects concerning Chemicals and Waste in Moldova, both with local stakeholders and different UN agencies. It is expected that the dissemination of the MIA report will result in more efforts to be made on institutional strengthening. The plan to establish a Chemicals Agency is directly influenced by project outcomes, causing behavioural and institutional change. However, it must be noted that Moldova is going through a process of institutional change: there is a plan for government reform, with the prospect of integrating the MOE under the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development. This will be discussed further in the sustainability section below.

61. However, to remain in line with the review criteria, and looking only at the direct results of the project, while keeping in mind that the aim was to provide necessary information for informed decisions in relation to mercury management and the MC, it is not expected that the project generates behavioural or institutional changes immediately. The Steering Committee has proved to be a functional unit and reached out beyond the country's borders to conduct regional workshops of knowledge sharing with its neighbouring countries, such as Russia, Georgia and Armenia. Also project outcomes were presented at Open Ended working group CEE region meeting in Brno, in 2017.

62. The feedback provided to the evaluator highlighted the need for more time allocated to conduct the inventory, if the project were to be replicated. The 6-month window leaves no time for regional discussions of inventory methodology and results. This is essential for a better understanding of the mercury life cycle in the region, and all participating parties will benefit from each other's experiences.

63. The project design is conducive to replication, particularly since Moldova has adjusted the project design to their national priorities, based on prior projects in the area of chemicals and waste as well as air emission inventories. It was suggested by stakeholders that part of the budget be allocated regional workshops and travel, in order to strengthen the regional component of the project.

64. One aspect to be considered in replication is a clearer definition of the expectations regarding the gender analysis. This will result in more precise conclusions, rather than research into various gender aspects of chemicals and waste management.

Attainment of objectives and planned results

65. The project deliverables, in the form of the full MIA report, a separate executive summary leaflet, along with awareness raising materials, were made available to all relevant non-governmental counterparts. This has been verified by the online publications on the MOE, the steering committee meeting reports, the progress reports, and stakeholder interviews. There is no reliable way for the evaluator to assess outreach however, in this case because of the impossibility of travel and the language barrier. It is therefore assumed that the target audience was reached, via all media of communication and dissemination.

Compliance of assumptions:

66. The Logical Framework of the project states that the following assumptions were made at the design stage:

67. *“The project will make full use of existing resources nationally, regionally and globally. Regional joint activities, trainings and continuous exchange of information will take place during the regional meetings and/or lessons learned workshops and through the mercury platform. Identification of common areas of work and synergies with undergoing or planned activities at the national and international level will be continuously assessed during the project.”* According to project documentation and stakeholder feedback, via the completion of outputs and feedback interviews, this assumption holds.

68. *“The project will continue having the political and public support necessary for its implementation”* According to project documentation, project outputs, the country’s highly satisfactory sense of engagement, this assumption holds.

69. *“National Stakeholders will facilitate and contribute to the assessment of national infrastructure, capacities and legislation”* According to feedback from project management, and considering the completion of project outputs and Moldova’s engagement to strengthen its chemicals and waste management sector through the establishment of new institutions for chemicals and waste management and laws, this assumption holds.

70. *“National stakeholders will facilitate and contribute to the identification and quantification of mercury releases”* According to progress reports, and stakeholder feedback, the level of national stakeholder engagement is high and this assumption holds.

71. *“Qualified staff and experts to carry out the project activities will be identified and retained”* All local consultants hired were competent, and the Steering Committee has been judged competent, as it has executed the project in a satisfactory manner, and considering the previous experience of the EPPO team in particular in executing similar projects.

72. *“Economic resources will be available to carry out all the project activities”* Both the GEF grant and co-financing from the Government were made available in time for the project to be terminated within the two-year period, therefore this assumption holds.

Rating for effectiveness: Highly Satisfactory.

Efficiency

73. The project was executed by the EPPO, which has experience in executing similar Enabling Activities and projects. This team has used its experience to harbour strong ties with other government officials from various ministries and in the parliament, but also among stakeholders in business and manufacturing industries. The project is built upon the national programme for chemicals management, the SAICM project and the [10-year National Waste Strategy](#) approved in 2010 and the [15-year National Chemicals Strategy](#).

74. The project was finished within the 24-month period approved at the design stage. However, Moldova has asked for a cost extension of 3 months to push law in parliament and to allow for sufficient time for it to be discussed and approved. At Moldova’s own suggestion, unspent funds were allocated to a final conference to share results and for members of the parliament to attend the meeting.

75. There were no reported delays in project output delivery, and the execution teams remained responsive and open to criticism and feedback at all times. All payments were disbursed in time. The project was cost effective, and the execution team was proactive in suggesting budget amendments to

use unspent funds for regional workshops and for further meetings and trainings. The financial audit finds that all expenses were eligible and covered by supporting documents. The project hired local consultants to fill in the inventory and this saved money while maintaining the quality of the output.

Rating for efficiency: Satisfactory.

Financial Management

76. The regular quarterly expenditure reports and the financial audit indicate that the executing agency managed funds well. Any unspent funds per component were utilised for other components of the project, at the request of the executing agency, after being reviewed and approved by UN Environment. All reporting has been transparent and found to be eligible and factual according to the independent financial auditor “Real Business Consulting”. The financial management of this project is an example of how to rewire funds into relevant activities, particularly if the budget allocated to certain components is partially unspent.

77. Co-financing provided by the government has materialized as expected, and has been reported on also in the quarterly expenditure reports.

78. There are no unaccounted financial irregularities to be reported based on project documentation. Stakeholders did not raise any financing-related issues during the interview process.

Rating for financial management: Highly satisfactory.

Monitoring and Reporting

79. The monitoring process consists of quarterly progress reports submitted to the UN Environment task manager, who gave regular, quick and efficient feedback based on these reports. This was done via email, Skype, telephone, and during UN Environment staff missions to Moldova to attend steering committee meetings or regional meetings where both UN Environment and EPPO staff were present. Both sources echoed the great working relationship they have developed, with special mention to the level of ownership and driven-ness displayed by EPPO staff.

80. Moldova also was in a feedback with [Madagascar](#), as the two countries were executing the MIA EAs in the same time period, and had the opportunity to discuss results and methods.

81. All progress reports and financial reports are complete and accurate.

82. There was only a limited amount of information collected on indicators to measure progress on Human Rights and Gender Equality, and the analysis of the gender aspect lacks national focus. This falls under the major challenge facing Moldova in the next steps of implementation: lack of baseline data and of framework to collect sex-disaggregated data.

Rating for monitoring and reporting: Satisfactory.

Sustainability

83. The nature of the external context assessment and stakeholder feedback confirms that cementing the project results in the form of law submitted to parliamentary vote will ensure the progress in the sector. As Moldova plans to establish a Chemicals Agency and a Waste Management Agency, this will increase the number of people employed by the sector, increasing its sustainability. It was brought to the evaluator's attention during the interview process that the Government of Moldova will undergo reform, going from 16 specialised ministries to 9, which will place the Ministry of Environment under the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development, before the parliamentary elections in 2019. However, the precise detail of how and when this will happen are not known yet. This is an important factor to keep in mind as the implementation efforts continue.

84. The level of ownership displayed by the main national and regional stakeholders is satisfactory. The execution team has proved proactive in requesting to attend regional meetings and in developing a regional network strengthened by cooperation in work on chemicals and waste and climate change management.

85. There is sufficient decision maker awareness, and the executing team has conducted awareness raising workshops with all the relevant ministerial entities. Their interest and commitment is reflected by the high attendance records of the workshops and meetings organised by the project execution team. This is also displayed through the incorporation of mercury management into laws voted by the parliament, and the plan to establish specialised agencies to address the chemicals and waste issue.

86. Public awareness cannot be assessed by the evaluator because of the impossibility of travel. However, it must be noted that this is a never ending process. The public awareness raising events ran by EPPO were successful in terms of attendance, but the commitment of the public cannot be gaged.

87. As of the moment this review was completed, the government and relevant stakeholders have shown sufficient commitment and engagement to safely predict that they will continue to show the same level of engagement in the future. Moldova is very proactive in carrying out the implementation process, and will not need to heavily rely on UN Environment for managerial support. However, the GEF financing is essential to the continuation of these efforts. The regional engagement Moldova has shown made it a champion in the region, and if these efforts continue, it is predicted that the project results will not only be sustained, but surpassed, leading these to impact on human health, environmental resources, good and services.

Rating for sustainability: Satisfactory.

Factors and processes affecting project performance

Quality of project management and supervision

88. The project was carried out as planned, with one 3-month cost extension, asked for by EPPO and granted by UN Environment. It can then be concluded that the project was well managed, as echoed by feedback from stakeholders and as reported in progress reports and documented via uninterrupted communication between the executing and implementing agencies. The EPPO had good relations with the multiple stakeholders it interacted with on a local level, highlighting the use of a 10-year-old network of stakeholders working on environmental management in Moldova. According to project documentation and stakeholder feedback, the project management is of highly satisfactory quality.

Rating for quality of project management and supervision: Highly satisfactory.

Stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships

89. The degree of effectiveness of collaboration between stakeholders is rated as satisfactory, based on stakeholder interviews and on progress reports. However, because of the limited number of stakeholders interviewed, the quality of collaboration and the level of participation cannot be evaluated.

Rating for stakeholder participation, cooperation and partnerships: Satisfactory.

Country ownership and driven-ness

90. Moldova has shown high commitment towards the implementation of the Minamata Convention. The project execution team has acquired the support of parliamentarians and government officials, and has passed the Waste Law with a majority in parliament. However, it cannot continue to sustain its implementation efforts without the support of UN Environment and the GEF, especially on a financial level.

Rating for country ownership and driven-ness: Satisfactory.

Communication and public awareness

91. The EPPO has produced informational package materials relaying findings and highlighting gaps in national legislation and infrastructure. Because of the language barrier, it is difficult to evaluate the content; however, the materials were drafted in coordination with the UN Environment team, and do not contain any inaccurate visual depictions of the dangers of mercury on human health and the environment. Brochures on mercury added products and waste management were also distributed in Romanian. The EPPO also produced a DVD, containing selected videos dubbed in Romanian, explaining the methodology of the inventory and video spots on the impact of mercury on the human body.

92. The audio-visual approach is recommended when raising the awareness of the nonprofessional general public. Radio interviews were also conducted with EPPO staff in order to inform the population of the progress made on the Convention and to encourage the public to be more thoughtful and mindful of their environmental behaviour and the impact of which on society and the environment.

93. As stated above, the factual content cannot be evaluated as all materials were in Romanian, however, the communication strategy and logic is explained in the minutes of results dissemination meetings conducted in 2016. It is concluded from this that the public awareness efforts were of satisfactory quality, however, it is not possible to evaluate the level of outreach.

Rating for communication and public awareness: Satisfactory.

Rating for factors affecting performance: Satisfactory.

Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Conclusions

94. **Conclusion 1: What if there has been no project? Without the MIA project, it would be impossible for Moldova to take informed decisions towards the implementation of the Minamata Convention.** This would have in turn lead to the impossibility of implementation of the Minamata Convention. The previous and inaccurate inventory of air emissions would have been insufficient as a data source and it would have been impossible to create a list of priorities, without knowing the gaps in the current state.

95. **Conclusion 2: There is enough commitment from the national stakeholders.** As displayed in all components of the project, the Moldovans are very proactive in execution and implementation. This should be encouraged.

96. **Conclusion 3: Creating legislation and approving it at the parliament is the best way forward.** In the face of political uncertainty and continuous government restricting of authorities and ministries; the drafting and passing of environmental strategies and chemicals and waste laws is the most efficient way to ensure the continuation of efforts in the sector.

97. **Conclusion 4: Moldova is motivated to lead on a regional level.** Moldova has displayed strong leadership and often suggested organising and attending regional meetings to share results and exchange knowledge. This should be encouraged.

98. **Conclusion 5: The lack of stakeholder availability has affected this review.** It was not possible to reach all stakeholders involved, due to a combination of time limitation from the evaluator's side, delay in providing the list of steering committee members and a lack of response from the members that were contacted. Therefore, only a very limited of stakeholders were reachable and available to interview. This limits the evaluator's perspective.

Table 3. Summary of review ratings

Criterion	Rating	Page in report
A. Strategic Relevance	HS	13
1. Alignment to UN Environment MTS and POW	HS	
2. Alignment to GEF/Donor strategic priorities	HS	
3. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities	HS	
4. Complementarity with existing interventions	HS	
B. Quality of Project Design	S	14
C. Nature of External Context	F	
D. Effectiveness	HS	15
1. Achievement of outputs	HS	
2. Achievement of direct outcomes	HS	
3. Likelihood of impact	HL	
E. Financial Management	HS	21
1. Completeness of project financial information	HS	
2. Communication between finance and project management staff	HS	
3. Compliance with UN Environment standards and procedures	HS	
F. Efficiency	HS	20
G. Monitoring and Reporting	S	21
1. Monitoring design and budgeting	S	
2. Monitoring of project implementation	S	

Criterion	Rating	Page in report
3. Project reporting	Complete	
H. Sustainability	S	22
1. Socio-political sustainability	S	
2. Financial sustainability	S	
3. Institutional sustainability	S	
I. Factors Affecting Performance	S	22
2. Quality of project management and supervision	HS	
3. Stakeholders participation and cooperation	S	
4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity	S	
5. Country ownership and driven-ness	S	
6. Communication and public awareness	S	
Overall Project Rating	S	

Lessons Learned

99. **Lesson 1: Data is necessary to make any informed decision in chemicals and waste management in general, and in mercury management in particular.**

100. **Lesson 2: The importance of international and regional cooperation is essential.** Moldova has participated in numerous international and regional meetings and information sharing workshops, that have proved useful for their understanding of the mechanisms, but especially to their neighbouring counterparts that are undertaking this type of exercise for the first time, and do not have the capacity to run it without support.

101. **Lesson 3: There is a need for an overarching authority to manage the issues of chemicals and waste.** Moldova faces multiple institutional and government structural changes, which makes the continuation uncertain. A standalone authority will solve this problem, while guaranteeing institutional continuation.

102. **Lesson 4: Gender aspects and the need for sex-disaggregated data must be defined and explained.** Gender is often misunderstood of a women's issue, whereas Gender analysis is defined by the GEF as "the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men". Once this is understood, there should be more guidance to help governments in carrying out such analyses.

Recommendations

103. **Recommendation 1: Working with the UN Environment Global Mercury partnership (GMP) in the future;** the Chemicals in Products partnership area in particular. As the issues of products and trade important and exports are of priority of Moldova. It is advised that the government reach out to the GMP, who can share valuable experience and can make tailored recommendations.

104. **Recommendation 2: Socio-economic and sex-disaggregated data needs to be collected.** Because most of the mercury emissions in Moldova is sourced in products, the easiest way to obtain data is to carry out socio-economic assessments among workers in the affected industries, and to carry out occupational health assessments and gender analyses. This can be done using the GEF guidelines on gender mainstreaming and gender equality, WHO guidelines for occupational health assessments and

gender, the UNDP gender mainstreaming guidance, among other guidance documents available on the internet.

105. **Recommendation 3: Working on more regional cooperation.** Moldova has demonstrated its capacity in carrying out this project, and could make its neighbouring counterparts benefit from its experience particularly with inventories and methodology, while profiting itself from the more established EU counterparts in its attempt to harmonize legislation with EU directives.

Annex 2: Terminal Evaluation Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP project
“development of Minamata Initial Assessment in Moldova”

PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Project General Information

Table 1. Project summary

Sub-programme:	Chemicals and Wastes	Expected Accomplishment(s):	Minamata Initial Assessment in 5 countries	
UN Environment approval date:		Programme of Work Output(s):		
GEF project ID:	5864	Project type:	Enabling Activity (EA)	
GEF Operational Programme #:	2	Focal Area(s):	C&W	
GEF approval date:	11 June 2014	GEF Strategic Priority:	Mercury	
<i>Expected</i> start date:	August 2014	Actual start date:	05 January 2015	
<i>Planned</i> completion date:	31 January 2017	Actual completion date:	14 April 2017	
<i>Planned</i> project budget at approval:	\$182,648	Actual total expenditures reported as of [14 April 2017]:	\$182,599,34	
GEF grant allocation:	\$182,648	GEF grant expenditures reported as of December 2016:	\$182,599,34	
Project Preparation Grant - GEF financing:	n/a	Project Preparation Grant - co-financing:	n/a	
<i>Expected</i> Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	\$52,000	Secured Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	\$59,651	
First disbursement:	23 January 2015	Date of financial closure:	31 October 2017	
No. of revisions:	1	Date of last revision:	January 2016	
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	N/A	Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:	Last:	Next:
Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (<i>planned date</i>):	N/A	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	N/A	
Terminal Evaluation (<i>planned date</i>):	June-August 17	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	August-September 17	
Coverage - Country(ies):	Moldova	Coverage - Region(s):	Europe	
Dates of previous project phases:	N/A	Status of future project phases:	N/A	

Project rationale

The Minamata Convention on Mercury identifies and describes in its Article 13 the financial mechanism to support Parties from developing countries and countries with economies in transition to implement the Convention. It identifies two entities that will function as the Financial Mechanism: a) the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund; and b) A specific international Programme to support capacity-building and technical assistance. The GEF Programming for its replenishment V highlights the strong commitment of the GEF to support the ratification and further implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. Additionally, at its 44th Meeting in June 2013, the GEF Council considered document GEF/C.44/04, Preparing the GEF to serve as the Financial Mechanism of the Minamata Convention on Mercury upon entry into force and its decision, inter alia: "Authorized the use of up to 10 million for the funding of an early action pre-ratification programme for the Minamata Convention on Mercury to be programmed during the remainder of GEF-5, upon request by eligible signatory countries. It also requested the GEF Secretariat to develop initial guidelines consistent with the final resolutions of the Diplomatic Conference for enabling activities and pre-ratification projects, in consultation with the interim Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and presented this as an information document at the 45th Council Meeting"

The GEF financial support of mercury related activities is included in the GEF V Focal Area Strategies document, which addresses mercury issues under the Strategic Objective 3 Pilot Sound Chemicals Management and Mercury Reduction, which has as an outcome 3.1 to build country capacity to effectively manage mercury in priority sectors.

The pre-ratification programme for the Minamata Convention on Mercury complements the 15 million USD assigned from GEF to support mercury projects since the start of GEF V (2010). The 15 million USD, initially allocated during GEF V, have been exhausted in 2013, therefore the 10 additional million USD are for countries that have the firm purpose to ratify the Convention and are to support the pre-ratification programme. These additional funding is made available with the purpose to: a) assess national regulatory framework in the context of preparation for a decision whether to ratify; b) decide if there is a justification to notify the convention in accordance with article 7; c) prepare to implement the obligations of the Minamata Convention on Mercury as soon as possible. As such, the GEF Secretariat, consistent with paragraph 9 (b) of the GEF Instrument, in the interim period between adoption of the Convention and the COP1, as well as after the COP1, will support developing countries and countries with economies in transition that: a) have signed the Convention; and b) are eligible for World Bank (IBRD and/or IDA) financing or eligible recipients of UNDP technical assistance through its target for resource assignments from the core (TRAC).

This project is aimed at facilitating the ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention by providing key national stakeholders in participating countries with the scientific and technical knowledge and tools needed for that purpose. The MIA will also assist Moldova to decide if there is a justification to notify to the Convention in accordance with Article 7 of the Minamata Convention.

Project objectives and components

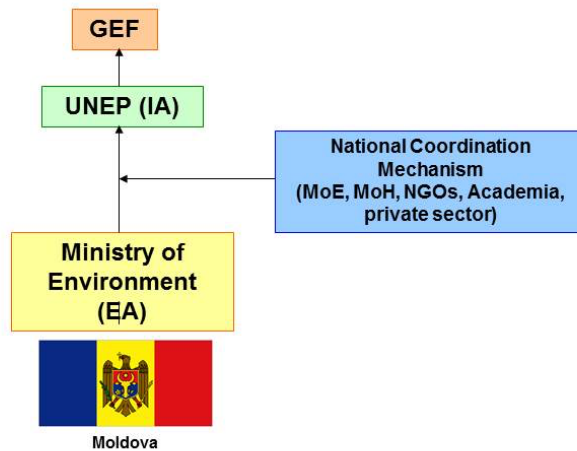
Objective: Ratification and early implementation of the Minamata Convention is facilitated by the use of scientific and technical knowledge and tools by national stakeholders in Moldova

Components:

1. Establishment of Coordination Mechanism and organization of process
2. Assessment of the national infrastructure and capacity for the management of mercury, including national legislation
3. Development of a mercury inventory using the UNEP mercury tool kit and strategies to identify and assess mercury contaminated sites
4. Identification of challenges, needs and opportunities to implement the Minamata Convention on Mercury

- Preparation and validation of National MIA reports and implementation of awareness raising activities and dissemination of results

Executing Arrangements



Project Cost and Financing

Component	Original budget	Revised budget	Expenditure as of 14 Apr 2017
Component 1	\$25,300	\$17,754	\$17,754
Component 2	\$29,344	\$20,140	\$17,440
Component 3	\$54,800	\$58,856	\$55,187
Component 4	\$15,800	\$19,842	\$16,300
Component 5	\$20,800	\$29,842	\$24,335
Project Management	\$16,604	\$16,604	\$16,604
M&E	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Total	\$182,648	\$182,648	\$167,620

Implementation Issues

The project has consistently performed as expected. No particular issues.

Section 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

Key Evaluation principles

Evaluation findings and judgements should be based on **sound evidence and analysis**, clearly documented in the review report. Information will be triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) as far as possible, and when verification is not possible, the single source will be mentioned (whilst anonymity is still protected). Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out.

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

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

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

Objective of the Review

In line with the UN Environment Evaluation Policy¹ and the UN Environment Programme Manual², the Terminal Review (TR) is undertaken at completion of the project to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The review has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UN Environment, Groundwork and all the national counterparts. Therefore, the review will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation [especially for the second phase of the project, if applicable].

¹ <http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEEvaluationPolicy/tabid/3050/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

² http://www.unep.org/QAS/Documents/UNEP_Programme_Manual_May_2013.pdf . *This manual is under revision.*

Key Strategic Questions

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

- Has the project facilitated the accession of the country to the Minamata Convention?
- Is the country aware of its obligations under the Convention

Evaluation Criteria

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

A. Strategic Relevance

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

i. *Alignment to the UN Environment Medium Term Strategy³ (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW)*

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

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

Donor, including GEF, strategic priorities will vary across interventions. UN Environment strategic priorities include the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building⁴ (BSP) and South-South Cooperation (S-SC). The BSP relates to the capacity of governments to: comply with international agreements and obligations at the national level; promote, facilitate and finance environmentally sound technologies and to strengthen frameworks for developing coherent international environmental policies. S-SC is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing countries. GEF priorities are specified in published programming priorities and focal area strategies.

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

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

³ UN Environment’s Medium Term Strategy (MTS) is a document that guides UN Environment’s programme planning over a four-year period. It identifies UN Environment’s thematic priorities, known as Sub-programmes (SP), and sets out the desired outcomes, known as Expected Accomplishments (EAs), of the Sub-programmes.

⁴ <http://www.unep.org/GC/GC23/documents/GC23-6-add-1.pdf>

iv. *Complementarity with Existing Interventions*

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

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

B. Quality of Project Design

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

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

C. Nature of External Context

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

D. Effectiveness

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

i. Achievement of Outputs

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

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

ii. Achievement of Direct Outcomes

The achievement of direct outcomes is assessed as performance against the direct outcomes as defined in the reconstructed⁵ Theory of Change (TOC). These are the first-level outcomes expected to be achieved as an immediate result of project outputs. As in 1, above, a table can be used where substantive amendments to the formulation of direct outcomes as necessary. The review should report evidence of attribution between UN Environment's intervention and the direct outcomes. In cases of normative work or where several actors are collaborating to achieve common outcomes, evidence of the nature and magnitude of UN Environment's contribution should be included.

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

iii. Likelihood of Impact

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

The review will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead, or contribute to, unintended negative effects. Some of these potential negative effects may have been identified in the project design as risks or as part of the analysis of Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards.⁶

The review will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role or has promoted scaling up and/or replication⁷ as part of its Theory of Change and as factors that are likely to contribute to longer term impact. Ultimately UN Environment and all its partners aim to bring about benefits to the environment and human well-being. Few projects are likely to have impact statements that reflect such long-term or broad-based changes. However, the review will assess the likelihood of the project to make a substantive contribution to the high level changes represented by UN Environment's Expected Accomplishments, the Sustainable Development Goals⁸ and/or the high level results prioritised by the funding partner.

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

E. Financial Management

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

⁶ Further information on Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards (ESES) can be found at <http://www.unep.org/about/eses/>

⁷ *Scaling up* refers to approaches being adopted on a much larger scale, but in a very similar context. Scaling up is often the longer term objective of pilot initiatives. *Replication* refers to approaches being repeated or lessons being explicitly applied in new/different contexts e.g. other geographic areas, different target group etc. Effective replication typically requires some form of revision or adaptation to the new context. It is possible to replicate at either the same or a different scale.

⁸ A list of relevant SDGs is available on the EO website www.unep.org/evaluation

standards and adherence to UN Environment’s financial management policies. Any financial management issues that have affected the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance will be highlighted.

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

F. Efficiency

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

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

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

G. Monitoring and Reporting

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

i. Monitoring Design and Budgeting

Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART⁹ indicators towards the achievement of the projects outputs and direct outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender or groups with low representation. The review will assess the quality of the design of the monitoring plan as well as the funds allocated for its implementation. The adequacy of resources for mid-term and terminal review should be discussed if applicable.

ii. Monitoring of Project Implementation

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

iii. Project Reporting

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

⁹ SMART refers to indicators that are specific, measurable, assignable, realistic and time-specific.

Endorsement template¹⁰), which will be made available by the Task Manager. The review will assess the extent to which both UN Environment and donor reporting commitments have been fulfilled.

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

H. Sustainability

Sustainability is understood as the probability of direct outcomes being maintained and developed after the close of the intervention. The review will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of achieved direct outcomes. Some factors of sustainability may be embedded in the project design and implementation approaches while others may be contextual circumstances or conditions that evolve over the life of the intervention. Where applicable an assessment of bio-physical factors that may affect the sustainability of direct outcomes may also be included.

i. Socio-political Sustainability

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

ii. Financial Sustainability

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

iii. Institutional Sustainability

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

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

I. Factors and Processes Affecting Project Performance

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

i. Preparation and Readiness

This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilisation stage of the project. The review will assess whether appropriate measures were taken to either address weaknesses in the project design or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation. In particular the review will

¹⁰ The Evaluation Consultant(s) should verify that the annual Project Implementation Reviews have been submitted, that the Tracking Tool is being kept up-to-date and that in the CEO Endorsement template Table A and Section E have been completed.

consider the nature and quality of engagement with stakeholder groups by the project team, the confirmation of partner capacity and development of partnership agreements as well as initial staffing and financing arrangements. (Project preparation is covered in the template for the assessment of Project Design Quality).

ii. Quality of Project Implementation and Execution

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

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

iii. Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation

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

iv. Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity

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

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

v. Country Ownership and Driven-ness

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

vi. Communication and Public Awareness

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

Section 3. REVIEW APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

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

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

- (a) **A desk review** of:
 - Relevant background documentation, inter alia;
 - Project design documents (including minutes of the project design review meeting at approval); Annual Work Plans and Budgets or equivalent, revisions to the project (Project Document Supplement), the logical framework and its budget;
 - Project reports such as six-monthly progress and financial reports, progress reports from collaborating partners, meeting minutes, relevant correspondence and including the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool etc.;
 - Project outputs: Inception workshop report, training report, MIA final documents for the 5 countries, final meeting report
- (b) **Interviews** (individual or in group) with:
 - UN Environment Task Manager (TM);
 - Project management team;
 - Project partners, including, Jakob Maag and national counterparts
 - Relevant resource persons.
- (c) **Review of the survey undertaken for the International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant**

Review Deliverables and Review Procedures

The review team will prepare:

- **Inception Report:** (see Annex 1 for links to all templates, tables and guidance notes) containing an assessment of project design quality, a draft reconstructed Theory of Change of the project, project stakeholder analysis, review framework and a tentative review schedule.
- **Preliminary Findings Note:** typically in the form of a powerpoint presentation, the sharing of preliminary findings is intended to support the participation of the project team, act as a means to ensure all information sources have been accessed and provide an opportunity to verify emerging findings.
- **Draft and Final Review Report:** (see links in Annex 1) containing an executive summary that can act as a stand alone document; detailed analysis of the review findings organised by evaluation criteria and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations and an annotated ratings table.
- **Review Bulletin:** a 2-page summary of key review findings for wider dissemination.

Review of the draft review report. The review team will submit a draft report to the Task Manager and revise the draft in response to their comments and suggestions. The Task Manager will then forward the revised draft report

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

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

The Consultants’ Team

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

The consultant will be hired for 1 month spread over the period 6 months and should have: an advanced university degree in environmental sciences, international development or other relevant political or social sciences area; a minimum of 1 year of technical / evaluation experience, and using a Theory of Change approach; a broad understanding of the Minamata Convention along with excellent writing skills in English; and, where possible, knowledge of the UN system, specifically of the work of UN Environment.

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

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

Schedule of the review

The table below presents the tentative schedule for the review.

Table 3. Tentative schedule for the review

Milestone	Deadline
Inception Report	15 August 2017
Telephone interviews, surveys etc.	15 August – 01 September 2017
Powerpoint/presentation on preliminary findings and recommendations	07 September 2017
Draft report to Task Manager	19 September 2017
Draft Review Report shared with UN Environment Project Manager and team	22 September 2017

Draft Review Report shared with wider group of stakeholders	02 October 2017
Final Review Report	06 October 2017
Final Review Report shared with all respondents	06 October 2017

Annex 3. Evaluation Programme

People interviewed for the evaluation:

Mme. Tatiana TUGUI & team, Manager, Environmental Pollution Prevention Office, Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova, email: tuguitatiana@gmail.com;

Mme. Giovanna Chiodi Moiré, Associate Programme Officer, Chemicals and Health Branch – Economy Division; email: Giovanna.chiodi@unep.org;

Annex 4. Ratings on Financial Planning and Management

Financial management components			Rating	Evidence/ Comments
Attention paid to compliance with procurement rules and regulations			HS	
Contact/communication between the PM & FMO			HS	
PM & FMO knowledge of the project financials			HS	
FMO responsiveness to financial requests			HS	
PM & FMO responsiveness to addressing and resolving financial issues			HS	
Were the following documents provided to the evaluator:				
A.	An up to date co-financing table	Yes		
B.	A summary report on the projects financial management and expenditures during the life of the project - to date	Yes		
C.	A summary of financial revisions made to the project and their purpose	Yes		
D.	Copies of any completed audits	Yes		
Availability of project financial reports and audits			HS	
Timeliness of project financial reports and audits			HS	
Quality of project financial reports and audits			HS	
FMO knowledge of partner financial requirements and procedures			HS	
Overall rating			HS	

similar interventions?	Final report:		
I. Factors affecting project performance: Does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of all factors affecting project performance? In particular, does the report include the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used; and an assessment of the quality of the project M&E system and its use for project management?	Draft report: Final report:		
J. Quality of the conclusions: Do the conclusions highlight the main strengths and weaknesses of the project, and connect those in a compelling story line?	Draft report: Final report:		
K. Quality and utility of the recommendations: Are recommendations based on explicit evaluation findings? Do recommendations specify the actions necessary to correct existing conditions or improve operations ('who?' 'what?' 'where?' 'when?'). Can they be implemented?	Draft report: Final report:		
L. Quality and utility of the lessons: Are lessons based on explicit evaluation findings? Do they suggest prescriptive action? Do they specify in which contexts they are applicable?	Draft report: Final report:		
Report structure quality criteria			
M. Structure and clarity of the report: Does the report structure follow EO guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included?	Draft report: Final report:		
N. Evaluation methods and information sources: Are evaluation methods and information sources clearly described? Are data collection methods, the triangulation / verification approach, details of stakeholder consultations provided? Are the limitations of evaluation methods and information sources described?	Draft report: Final report:		
O. Quality of writing: Was the report well written? (clear English language and grammar)	Draft report: Final report:		

EO? Were all comments to the draft evaluation report sent directly to the EO and did EO share all comments with the commentators? Did the evaluator(s) prepare a response to all comments?			
W. Participatory approach: Was close communication to the EO and project maintained throughout the evaluation? Were evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations adequately communicated?			
X. Independence: Was the final selection of the evaluator(s) made by EO? Were possible conflicts of interest of the selected evaluator(s) appraised?			
OVERALL PROCESS RATING			

Rating system for quality of evaluation reports

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1

The overall quality of the evaluation report is calculated by taking the mean score of all rated quality criteria.