

Management Support and Expansion of Marine Protected Areas in Libya.

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

Basic project information

GEF ID

10158

Countries

Libya

Project Name

Management Support and Expansion of Marine Protected Areas in Libya.

Agencies

UNEP

Date received by PM

7/10/2019

Review completed by PM

6/11/2020

Program Manager

Jaime Cavelier

Focal Area

Biodiversity

Project Type

MSP

CEO Approval Request

Project Consistency

1. Is the project aligned with the relevant GEF strategic objectives and results framework?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-23-19

Yes. BD-1 Improved Management Effectiveness of Protected Areas.

Cleared

Agency Response N/A

2. Is the project structure/ design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-23-19

Component 1.

What are the Competent Authorities that will receive, review and approve the MPA governance structure? Are they operational? Same for the National Strategy on MPAs, the law on protected areas and the Management Plan for at least 1 MPA.

What does "At least one (1) MPA under sustainable management scheme" actually mean? Does this refer to the implementation of the "sustainable management scheme"? In other words, does this mean investing technical and financial resources for implementation (execution) of activities listed on paper in the management plans?

Isn't too early for the marine "megafauna monitoring programmes" and "networks"? Does it make sense to spend valuable and limited financial resources on these activities when there is no funding for basic implementation of the management plans? The project should think first in protecting the "biological assets" and later on on the monitoring programs. the GEF request removing the monitoring activities from the project.

Component 2

The component suggest training as the main delivery mechanism for the management of MPAs. What is the expected "durability" of the teachings in these 5 training sessions? It looks like any gains will be short lived, unless the Government Agencies in charge of the management of MPA are up and running. What about building/reinforcing the institutional capacity for management MPA first?

What about investing in addressing the threats of fisheries by engaging the local communities instead?

Component 3

The "durability" of the "awareness raising campaigns" is questionable under the current political situation in Libya. Suggest removing this component and reinforce the Institutional Capacity for the management of MPAs. It make very little sense to spend nearly \$400,000 on awareness raising when the MPA have no management plans or investments for implementation. If awareness raising is a must, suggest concentrating with the communities living near the three declared MPAs. A reduction of the budget would be needed anyway.

3-30-20

It is becoming clearer that the proposed interventions will not be sufficient to deliver the objective ("*Expanding seascapes under protection and improving protected area management*") . Furthermore, all the proposed interventions are Technical Assistance leaving no funding for the execution of the activities to claim the creation of El Kouf National Park (2,500 ha) and the Improvement of Effective Management of FARWA and AIN AL-GHAZALA MPA (31,324 ha). Co-financing can't be used for these activities since all Co-financing is In-Kind.

Component 1 & 2 are basically in support of Governance (Government and CSO) and the Component 3 - with 1/4 budget on Awareness raising.

6-11-20

Cleared

Agency Response

Response: 28/02/2020

Component 1

“Competent Authorities”

The activities proposed under component 1 will be executed under the lead of the Environmental General Authority (EGA) in Libya which has always played and is still playing a key role in Environment protection efforts and governance. This assumption is still valid despite the current socio-political situation in Libya.

The scheme adopted during the development phase will be replicated during the project execution. A wide range of stakeholders (from both the western and eastern parts of the country), under the coordination of EGA, will be involved in the proposed activities (namely: establishing MPA governance structure, the National Strategy on MPAs, the law on protected and MPA governance structure). EGA will work in close coordination with other key agencies and stakeholders in particular with the Marine Biology Research Centre (MBRC) and the Agriculture and Fisheries Sector which should be involved in all proposals that concern even partially fisheries management. Other authorities will be involved such as Tourism authorities, coastal management authorities, infrastructure and equipment authorities, coastal guard authorities, legal authorities, research institutes and academics, etc. It is also worth mentioning that a strong involvement of local communities and civil society organizations with focus on gender mainstreaming and women empowerment will be ensured through the overall support provided by the MedProgramme (GEF ID 9607) and its Gender Mainstreaming Strategy.

This proposed governance structure will be the first of its kind for Libya and is much needed as the lack of governance hindered so far, the country from expanding its conservation efforts in the marine environment.

Particularly for the national strategy on MPAs and the law on protected areas, it is important to mention that under the previously executed GEF-MedPartnership project (ID 2600), a draft national Strategy for Marine Protected Areas and a draft law on Protected Areas was elaborated in 2014. This process, led by EGA in close consultation with the relevant national stakeholders, was entirely covered by NON-GEF funds as cash co-financing of the execution partners participating to the current Child Project 3.1.

Under the current Child Project 3.1, the national strategy will be review and updated as necessary and shared for a final consultation with stakeholders in view of its endorsement by EGA, the authority in charge of is endorsing national strategies related to environmental issues. The same process will be implemented for the draft national law on protected areas, in order to have a national consultation on the updated version of the text for its submission to the official legislative channels (Parliament) for endorsement.

“MPA under sustainable management”

An MPA under sustainable management scheme means that the MPA will have its management plan and an on-site MPA management unit to implement that management plan. The existence of a management plan is one of the major criteria for qualifying as an MPA. It is worth mentioning that the proposed Child Project 3.1 will lead to the elaboration of a management plan in a participatory approach engaging all the relevant stakeholders in all stages of the process (initiation, preparation and consultation on the management plan) and considering ecological and socioeconomic aspects (see page 26 of the GEF CEO endorsement request).

The Project will also establish an on-site MPA management unit which will be in charge of the implementation of the management plan. Once set-up under the current project, the management unit will start mobilizing national resources as well as support from international players for the execution of management plan whose actions are and remains by all means, a national priorities and responsibilities.

"Megafauna monitoring programmes"

The Child project is not intended to spend financial resources on marine "megafauna monitoring programmes". The project is proposing to execute *Activity 1.2.2. - Conduct at least one field survey to identify and characterize sites of conservation interest in Libya through rapid assessment* - to create link and synergy with ongoing and upcoming processes supported European Union and MAVA Foundation funded projects in Libya. These projects deal with monitoring, inventory and assessment of biodiversity with a special focus on key habitats and megafauna and highly mobile species. This activity is a specific request raised by the country during the project development phase to coordinate and complement several ongoing and upcoming programmes and projects in Libya – for this reason our advice would be to leave it in the project because it provides a clear response to a need expresses by the country.

The text describing component 1 has been slightly modified to describe this approach in the GEF CEO Endorsement request template.

Component 2

“Trainings”

Civil Society Organizations in Libya are in need for trainings to build awareness and technical capacity on MPA.

The proposed trainings under Child project 3.1 will be undertaken in full coordination with EGA, which is the Government Agencies in charge of the management of MPA. This scheme should ensure mid-term durability and impact of the trainings delivered by the project.

In terms of engagement of relevant actors, the project builds on the requests raised by local community whose showed willingness and full strength toward sustainable development of their villages and cities. The project will mobilize these local communities through local CSO's. Among them particular attention will be made on threats related to Fishery. This will be done in two ways: 1) reducing illegal fishing activities; and 2) developing sustainable small-scale fisheries around MPA's. The proposed activities will target local communities. including local fishermen, by providing technical training, knowledge and awareness on MPA management and conservation.

Texts have been added to the description of output2.1 / activity 2.1.1/ activity 2.1.3/ activity 2.2.1/ activity 2.2.3 in order to explain in a clearer way this approach.

Component 3

“Awareness raising campaigns”

Communication and awareness-raising are not only a way to inform the population, but they are also an important “tool” to engage relevant stakeholder including local communities which may have interest in MPA. Although we do recognize that the long-term durability of the communication and awareness campaigns may be an issue in the current socio-political context n Libya, we also recognize that campaigns targeting a large population, CSOs and local community of interest is the only way to move forward the MPA agenda in Libya. In this sense the full engagement of EGA is a guarantee that whatever is the future of the countries, the competent authority was involved thus it may give continuity to the effort. Moreover

Additional text has been added to the GEF CEO Endorsement Request to improve the description of the local community's contribution to MPA management through citizen-science strategy and engage locals, particularly youth in MPA monitoring

On the budget, the fund allocated for Component 3 (i.e. USD 397,087) will not only be used for awareness campaigns but also for the organization of meetings, contribution to the MedProgramme (GEF ID 9607) Knowledge Management Strategy (Annex Q), support the engagement of regional and national technical expert, support a comprehensive media outreach and education campaign at national level, support the definition of best practices for the neighboring Mediterranean countries. Details are given in the budget (Annex F1) which has been designed in an integrated manner with the other 7 Child Projects' budgets of the MedProgramme to bring and receive benefit from the programmatic approach, as well as to be executed as part of a programme rather than a stand-alone MSP. This synergetic approach is surely beneficial for a small project like Child project 3.1 which is receiving much more support and services by the other Child projects of the Programme compared to its specific resources allocated for knowledge Management.

Finally, kindly note that the request for a specific knowledge management strategy has been expressed by the countries during the MedProgramme stakeholders' meetings (Athens March 2018 and Paris September 2018). The countries, including Libya, expressed the need of a better management of the data and information produced by the 7 Child projects of the MedProgramme. In this spirit the countries recognized the value added of an organized and transversally applied knowledge management strategy to the entire programme. Contextually a specific and proportional allocation of budget to support this strategy was agreed for each Child project including CP3.1

Response of 3-30-20

Child Project 3.1 (CP3.1) – 10158, aims reducing the threats to Libyan coastal and marine biodiversity and related ecosystem services by establishing an effective Marine Protected Areas (MPA) governance and policy framework. The project's objective will be achieved by engaging all potential stakeholders involved in marine ecosystems conservation and management in Libya.

This is a clear need for Libya and a clear request made by the country. The proposed project structure, executing arrangements, components and activities, specifically addressed this request.

On the execution structure and Technical Assistances (TAs): According to the current situation in Libya and after assessing the institutional capacity for the creation and management of Marine Protected Areas, the government of Libya has requested specific support reflected into the TAs included in the Project proposal. As explicitly requested by the Country, the TAs will be delivered on-ground by SPA/RAC, IUCN and WWF. These organizations have the capacity and the expertise required by Libya to execute the activities at national level. The request of the Libyan authorities built on the long-lasting partnership with these 3 institutions and on their long track record of activities in the countries as well as on their capacity to engage with all the relevant stakeholders at national and regional level. SPA/RAC, IUCN and WWF will work closely with the Libyan governmental and non-governmental institutions to deliver the project outcomes and to ensure a smooth transition by the end of the project.

Both the Libyan Environmental General Authority (EGA) and the proponents believe that the current project execution scheme is the most appropriate to achieve the objectives committed by the CP3.1 (10158) under the current circumstances in the country. A clear endorsement to this choice is provided by Dr. Ali Elkekli, Head of the Environmental General Authority in his letter dated 14/04/2020 (attached to the current resubmission). The letter was issued by the Head of EGA upon discussing the comments made by the GEF Sec on 30-03-2020.

On the achievement of the project objectives: CP3.1 (10158) will contribute on both quantitative and qualitative aspects of MPAs in Libya. The proponents would like to emphasize that the project will not only providing TAs for MPAs stakeholders, but also will invest in:

- 1) Developing/updating management plans in three targeted priority MPAs; and
- 2) Putting in place the relevant management structures to boost the management plans implementation.

This setup is instrumental for the management support and expansion of MPAs in Libya. The Country in fact is strongly requiring TAs and capacity building to boost the establishment of its MPAs network. This is a national priority and response to the global CBD Aichi target 11. Moreover, this is fully aligned with the MPA Roadmap approved at COP19 by the 22 Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (being Libya one of them).

The analysis conducted during the early project development phase indicated to select the three MPAs included in CP3.1 (10158) as priority sites. The Governmental partners in Libya supported and validated this selection and made the commitment to be fully engaged in addressing the threats and obstacles that hinder the sustainability and effectiveness of the MPA network in Libya rather than activities focusing on only one MPA since an individual MPA along the big coastal and marine area will not be effective, i.e. will not generate a positive impact even if it is well managed. What is effective is to move from individual MPAs to a network of MPAs as clearly stated by CBD global Aichi Target 11.

By the end of the project, at least 33,804 hectares of seascape will be benefiting from newly protection status through additional 2,500 hectares of El Kouf newly established MPA and 31304 hectares of Ain El Ghazala and Farwa lagoon MPAs.

A table has been added at page 25 of the GEF CEO ER providing a clear visual description of the expansion of the seascapes under protection and the improvement of protected area management in Libya before and after CP3.1 (10158) execution.

In addition, through the execution of the activities 1.1.3 and 1.1.4, CP3.1 (10158) will provide support to the Libyan government to establish management units in the three targeted MPAs. The project will ensure that the management units are fully operational by the end of the project execution. To further support this approach, US\$ 50,000 have been moved from Component 3 to Component 1.

Finally, CP3.1 (10158) is also looking at the long-term to ensure a sustainable management of the targeted MPAs. The project will lay the foundations for proper co-management concepts in MPAs as a new and unprecedented approach in Libya. This will allow the local CSOs to be involved in preserving Farwa, El Kouf and Aïn El Ghazala through specific training program to be designed with management authorities based on local needs assessment and targeting local coastal communities including all relevant economic sectors (tourism, fishery, etc.). For instance, local fishers will follow capacity building programs to help the MPA managers provide a complementary monitoring of the MPA by reporting new invasive species and make sure to reduce illegal fishery practices such as blast fishing commonly practiced in the region, and promote using selective fishery gear in the MPA territories. These actions will be fully supported by collaborative projects coordinated by the national administration and the CSOs to ensure applying conservation principles on the ground for longer term sustainability in Farwa, El Kouf and Aïn El Ghazala MPAs.

For the above-mentioned reasons the proponents reiterate that CP3.1 (10158) will achieve the targets committed in the GEF CEO ER. Moreover, the project is fully aligned with the specific requests made by the government of Libya who committed the entire national STAR allocation of GEF6 to the MedProgramme.

Additional changes have been made to the GEF CEO ER on TABLE B, and at page 24-25 on the project's objectives (Expanding seascapes under protection and improving protected area management), at page 30 on activity 1.3.4, and at page 32 on activity 2.1.4.

3. Is the project consistent with the recipient country's national strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-23-19

Yes. Information on item 11 of the PIF in Portal.

Cleared

Agency Response N/A

4. Does the project sufficiently indicate the drivers of global environmental degradation, issues of sustainability, market transformation, scaling, and innovation?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-23-19

Fisheries and Invasive Alien Species are mentioned as threats, but apparently, there are no activities to address these two threats. Please address.

Please elaborate on the financial and institutional sustainability of the project. On the financials: Is there going to be a Government budget to support the management of MPAs and the Government unit(s) responsible for the management? What are the necessary investments in those institutions to make them work? Understanding the current situation in Lybia, is it likely that the project requires additional fundraising among institutions like GEF, Foundations and International NGOs until the situation stabilizes?

Under Coordination, the project states that "*The UN Environment/Mediterranean Action Plan (UN Environment/MAP) will serve as the Executing Agency (EA) for the entire project*". Why is central Government and/or Government Agencies listed as Executing Partners?

Other Executing Partner(s):

UN Environment/MAP, WWF Mediterranean, IUCN, SPA/RAC.

Executing Partner Type

Others

3-30-20

As noted before, the project is only going to deliver TA to the Government of Lybia leaving no funding for the implementation of the Management Plans. If there are no funds for implementation the management plan is likely to get outdated very fast and the entire investment of the project lost.

The issue with the Executing Partners remain. UNEP can't be both the GEF Agency and an Executing Partner. Please clarify what agency will receive the funds to carry-out the proposed activities.

Other Executing Partner(s):

UN Environment/MAP, WWF Mediterranean, IUCN, SPA/RAC.

6-11-20

Cleared

Agency Response

Response: 28/02/2020

Fisheries and Invasive Alien Species

Both Fisheries and Invasive Alien Species issues will be tackled within the elaboration of the MPA management plans. Namely, under *Activity 1.3.2: Elaborate management plans of targeted MPAs*, management goals will be set up based on the updated/complementary ecological, socio-economic/fisheries studies and a SWOT analysis which will lead to identify certain threats such as Alien species and to propose actions in the management plan to mitigate them.

The text describing Activity 1.3.2 has been revised accordingly by adding a clear statement on Alien Species issue.

Financial and institutional sustainability of the project

The Barcelona Convention system, including SPA/RAC, IUCN Med and WWF Med constantly worked together with the government of Libya. Despite the critical political situation, the State of Libya proactively and concretely contributed to the development of the national MPA strategy (2010-2015). The Environmental General Authorities (EGA) expressed a strong intention to define a national budget to support the management of MPAs and their management unit. As a matter of example, EGA (government) covered all the costs related to the national consultation workshops held in 2013 and 2014 to develop the national MPA strategy. Child Project 3.1 will support the establishment and enhance technical capacities of the management units.

This being said while the project can make commitments on developing activities which address specific needs expressed by the State of Libya and provide direct benefit for the country, it cannot commit on the political stability of the countries. This implies that, moving forward into the execution of the process a close monitoring of the situation will allow to assess the need of additional fundraising. This monitoring will be done in the context of the Barcelona Convention where national focal points for Libya sit and are authorized to speak on behalf of the country.

Executing partner

The central Government and/or Government Agencies of Libya have been removed from the executing agency box. However, as explained in detail in the GEF CEO endorsement request form, EGA will be fully involved in the project execution providing governance support as competent authorities, specific knowledge and long-term sustainability of the project activities. Kindly note that EGA will not receive GEF grants therefore all its contributions will be supported by its own resources.

Response: 3-30-20

On the issue about TAs vs. implementation of the Management Plans: As indicated in the response to the comment 2 during the preparation phase of CP3.1 (10158), the Libyan national institutions and stakeholders stressed the need for targeted TAs aiming at improving institutional and individual capacities and knowledge on MPAs creation and management. Therefore, the activities of the project have been designed to respond to these specific needs while ensuring a complete involvement and ownership of the project outcomes by the national institutions and civil society organizations.

The TAs to be provided by CP3.1 (10158) will set-up the basis for a sustainable MPAs conservation strategy in Libya. This is done through a set of activities targeting: 1) the development of the national MPAs strategy; 2) the national legal framework; and 3) the establishment of MPAs management plans and the related Operational Management Units (OPMs). The OPMs will provide knowledge, capacities and an enabling environment to mainstream MPAs in the overall conservation strategy in Libya.

In addition, and according to the response provide to point 2, additional budget has been allocated to the implementation of the management plans.

It is also worth mentioning that the co-management scheme that will be promoted through the involvement of CSOs in the MPAs management, will open new funding opportunities (CSOs supporting programmes) and establish a new core of MPAs managers and practitioners capable of pursuing support to the implementation of the management plans of the targeted MPAs. Furthermore, although the Environmental General Authority (EGA) expressed a strong intention to define a national budget to support the management of MPAs and their management unit, UNEP/MAP, SPA/RAC, IUCN and WWF will continue supporting the MPA network in Libya through additional initiatives that could be developed on the basis of available opportunities during or after the current GEF project lifespan.

Looking at the long-term sustainability of the actions executed by Child Project 3.1 will be fully consistent with the Barcelona Convention process and other ongoing processes and/or mechanisms being created in the Mediterranean region. In this context, text has been added to the GEF CEO ER to mention the effort to create a link with the GEF project entitled “Long-term financial mechanism to enhance Mediterranean MPA management effectiveness” (GEF ID 9959) implemented by CI-GEF and executing by Association for the Sustainable Financing of the Mediterranean MPAs. Child Project 3.1 will aim to working with the Libyan government and EGA towards joining this regional initiative. If successful, this strategy could become part of the longer-term funding strategy fostered by Child Project 3.1 confirming the commitment of Libya to implementing an ambitious policy to support MPAs.

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On UNEP/MAP executing the project: Child Project 3.1 (10158) will be executed by UNEP/MAP together with the other 6 Child Projects of the MedProgramme (GEF ID 9607). Regional Seas Convention Secretariats have been recognized as one of the ‘exceptional cases’ where the same Agency both implements and executes the GEF project. This is because UNEP’s role is limited to hosting and administering the Convention Secretariats and they have separate governance and programming arrangements driven and managed by their Contracting Parties. Regional Seas Convention Secretariats are currently executing GEF projects (which are also implemented by UNEP) in the Caribbean, Guinea Current and Western Indian Ocean, among others. The entirety of the MedProgramme has been conceived, designed and developed by the UNEP/MAP with the support of its network of regional partners. UNEP/MAP serving as Executing Agency has been approved by the GEF Council and cleared by the GEF Secretariat along the MedProgramme development process and if we were to change this now, we would need to consult though the Barcelona Convention processes. Also, given the fiduciary risks and challenges that we have experienced in other GEF projects with national entities in this country, we would be hesitant to adopt a full national execution modality for the current project design.

5. Is the project designed with sound incremental reasoning?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-23-19

Of the projects listed under Table 1 (Associated baseline projects for Child Project 3.1), all except one (The Small-scale Initiative Programme for Civil Society Organisations in North Africa (PPI-OSCAN) 1st phase 2014-2017 and 2nd phase 2018-2021) have been completed already.

What are the baseline investments (projects) that the project will be executed in the future whether or not the GEF project gets approved? In other words, what are the upcoming investments on which the GEF project will be built on? \

3-3-20

The upcoming investments "Mediterranean Trust Funds allocated 600,000 USD which will also benefit Libya. On the same line the Barcelona Convention and SPA/RAC will implement over the period 2019-2024 a 4,000,000 EUR EU funded project which is also benefitting Libya and its MPAs" are the Baseline Projects. The GEF needs to know if these are the projects that deliver the funds for Investments (rather than TA in the GEF funded project) and what their status. The GEF will do a disfavor to Libya approving this TA project when funding for Implementation has not been secured or is likely to be secured. Please indicate who can provide an estimate of the likelihood of these investments,

6-11-20

Cleared

Agency Response

Response: 28/02/2020

On Table 1 (now table 2) of the GEF CEO endorsement request

The projects listed in this table are those that served to set the baseline scenario from which Child project 3.1 is starting.

All these projects, including the MPA component of the GEF MedPartnership (GEF ID 2600), were totally funded by donors other than the GEF (EU, MAV, national developing agencies). Considering the importance and relevance of the results by these projects (for example the MPA roadmap for the Mediterranean, and the national MPA strategy for Libya), we believe that it would be appropriate to keep the reference to these projects in the document.

Upcoming investments

The project is building on and is fully embedded within the Barcelona Convention system. In practical terms this means that the project is benefitting of all the investments (projects and activities) promoted by this context.

For example, the Barcelona Convention COP21 held in Naples on December 2019, agreed and mandated the Barcelona Convention and SPA/RAC to prepare an undated SAP/BIO for the entire Mediterranean region, including Libya over the period 2020-2021. To this purpose the Mediterranean Trust Funds allocated 600,000 USD which will also benefit Libya. On the same line the Barcelona Convention and SPA/RAC will implement over the period 2019-2024 a 4,000,000 EUR EU funded project which is also benefitting Libya and its MPAs. The project named IMAP-MPA has been added to Table 1 (now table 2) of the GEF CEO endorsement.

Other projects are being developed by the Barcelona Convention system, WWF Med and IUCN. This will ensure that a considerable amount of investments and funds will support the effort of Libya over the lifespan of Child Project 3.1 and beyond.

These projects/initiatives cannot be formally reported as co-financing because there is not a formal agreement of the donors. However, during the inception these funds will be tracked, and synergy will be ensured by the MedPCU at both Child project 3.1 and the overall MedProgramme level.

Regardless the result of this attempt, the most important goal, i.e. executing Child project 3.1 in the context of a series of other investments moving the entire region towards a better management of the Mediterranean Sea will be accomplished.

Text in the section 4 of the GEF CEO Endorsement Request template has been added.

Response: 3-3-20

UNEP/MAP, through the Mediterranean Trust Funds allocated 600,000 USD to support dedicated staff to execute the entire MedProgramme, including CP 3.1 (10158). This staff, under the so called MedPCU, will provide coordination to the entire MedProgramme including CP3.1 (10158). During the MedProgramme preparation phase, it was agreed with the GEF Secretariat to allocate this cash co-financing under the support of child project to the entire MedProgramme (Child Project 4.1 – GEF ID 9686). This arrangement is presented in section A.6. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT AND COORDINATION of the GEF CEO ER and has been included as such in the GEF CEO ERs of the 6 Child Projects to the MedProgramme which have been already endorsed by the GEF CEO.

UNEP/MAP and SPA/RAC are implementing (2019-2023) a 4,000,000 EUR EU funded project which is also benefiting Libya and its 2 MPAs, namely Ain El Ghazala and Farwa Lagoon. The project named IMAP-MPA (see table 2 of the GEF CEO ERs) aims at contributing towards the achievement of Good Environmental Status (GES) in the Mediterranean Sea and along its coast. In doing so, the project proposes to consolidate, integrate and strengthen the ecosystem approach (EcAp) for Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) management and their sustainable development. It will strengthen the Barcelona Convention Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (IMAP) implementation and further develop the Mediterranean network of ecologically representative, effectively managed and monitored MPAs and enhance relevant capacities, e.g., through targeted trainings, exchange of specific best practices, and undertaking of pilots in new areas of monitoring of IMAP, in MPAs and outside MPAs.

Specifically for Libya, the project will strongly contribute to the implementation of the IMAP targeting in particular two MPAs proposed under the CP3.1 (10158), namely Ain El Ghazala and Farwa lagoon as they have been defined at national level to be considered as the two MPAs that will be monitored within the Barcelona Convention IMAP programme. More specifically, the IMAP activities will consist on implementing an integrated monitoring in those two MPAs and in high-pressure areas for agreed common indicators. It means that there will be investments and funds on monitoring that will support the effort of Libya over the lifespan of CP 3.1 (10158) and which will complement and improve management effectiveness of MPAs in Libya. EGA is fully aware of and involved in the IMAP-MPA Project and requested the TAs under CP 3.1 (10158) as specific needs of the country.

6. Are the components in Table B sound and sufficiently clear and appropriate to achieve project objectives and the GEBS?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-23-29

It is not clear if the proposed interventions will deliver tangible and durable results on the ground, when all activities are on Technical Assistance and there are no Investments to implement the proposed Governance Structures, and Management Plans.

Consider reducing the number of target protected areas and make at least 1 work. Management Plans without implementation, are likely to get outdated with the inevitable consequence of having to start all over again next time there is interest in the issue of MPAs.

3-30-20

These issues remain unresolved.

6-11-20

Cleared

Agency Response

Response: 28/02/2020

The proposed interventions have been elaborated in close consultation among the three regional partners and with the national authorities to respond to the national needs and priorities regarding especially technical assistance on the three proposed components. The implementation of the governance structures and the management plans are planned to be ensured through both national funds and complementary international funds, if necessary. We believe that the size of the project allows for this kind of interventions which is instrumental to prepare the country for long term sustainable MPA management structure which should not be financed by GEF funds but by national funds.

The number of targeted protected areas have been indicated by the government of Libya. Our understanding, especially for the STAR allocated funds, is that the project should address the needs of the country. Libyan representatives of EGA wanted to benefit from the technical assistance of three regional organizations to elaborate the maximum of management plans and propose the establishment of management units. They need technical capacity building on that and believe that once the situation is better in Libya, they could move to the management implementation on the field. As explained above this step will be done with national funds thus would not rely on external donors' resources.

Response: 3-30-20

Libya, like other countries in the region, is bearing the brunt of coastal and marine habitat loss, and its associated impacts in terms of environmental and socio-economic consequences. The situation is exacerbated by the lack of a proper management and governance structure for Libyan MPAs.

Several threats that hinder the future of marine and coastal biodiversity are still occurring in the country such as using illegal fishing methods and intrusion of foreign fishing fleets engaged in illegal fishing in Libyan waters.

The analysis conducted during the early project development phase indicated to select the three MPAs included in CP3.1 (10158) as priority sites. The Governmental partners in Libya supported and validated this selection and made the commitment to be fully engaged in addressing the threats and obstacles that hinder the sustainability and effectiveness of the MPA network in Libya rather than activities focusing on only one MPA since an individual MPA along the big coastal and marine area will not be effective, i.e. will not generate a positive impact even if it is well managed. What is effective is to move from individual MPAs to a network of MPAs as clearly stated by CBD global Aichi Target 11.

To reach this objective and set the fundamental basis of a sustainable of an MPA network in Libya, CP 3.1 (10158) will:

- Provide TAs and invest in capacity building at institutional and non-institutional levels, in the development of management plans in the three targeted MPAs and in establishing a management unit in each site,
- Set a governance system at national and local level to ensure a transparent and effective decision-making process for the current and future conservation agenda related to MPAs in Libya,
- Foster exchange between the administration and the CSOs to initiate co-management process and contribute to initiate the implementation of some components of the management plan in parallel with the scientific monitoring programmes that will be launched during the project,
- Implement awareness activities that will be adapted to the national and local context and executed with and for the local stakeholders and communities to ensure a full ownership and involvement in the MPAs conservation strategy.

The above-mentioned activities are instrumental to prepare the country for long term sustainable MPA system which should not be financed by GEF funds only, which is in all cases limited, but by national funds and other initiatives and programmes, including those ongoing under the Barcelona Convention system.

7. Are socio-economic aspects, including relevant gender elements, indigenous people, and CSOs considered?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-23-19

Fisheries, and IAS are mentioned as threats but not included in the proposed interventions (Results Framework). See above

3-30-20

Cleared

Agency Response

Response: 28/02/2020

As explained above, Fisheries and IAS will be tackled with the elaboration of management plans together with other relevant issues. Kindly refer to the response to point 4 and the modified description of Activity 1.3.2: Elaborate management plans of targeted MPAs.

8. Is the financing adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objective?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-23-19

The financing of the project is all in-kind and while it may be adequate to deliver all the documents listed in the project, it will not be sufficient to deliver something tangible and measurable results on the ground. While it is true that there is a need to start somewhere, the GEF request reconsidering the scope of the project. Not sure why the project has to use all GEF financial resources in Technical Assistance when the co-financing is all in-kind and could be used to cover the expenses allocated to the GEF.

3-30-20

Although the scope of the project may have been agreed with the Government, this issues remains unresolved.

6-11-20

Cleared

Agency Response

Response: 28/02/2020

The scope of the project has been defined and agreed with the government of Libya who made available the STAR allocated funds under the conditions that the needs identified in the project where addressed. In addition, being clear that a project of this size cannot generate huge impact on ground, it is also true that in case the project will manage to achieve its outcomes, a solid base to ensure long term sustainable management of MPA and biodiversity in Libya.

In addition, a workshop with all relevant stakeholders from both the western and eastern part of the countries was organized at the end of 2018 to present the project ideas and discuss on the activities to be included. The meeting was followed by a “National consultation survey on management of Marine Protected Areas” included in the submission package as final part of Annex S - Reports of the stakeholder consultations for CP 3.1. The survey reached a wide range of MPA stakeholders and practitioners among them University professors and lecturers from the University of Tripoli, University of Omar Almokhtar, University of Zawia, University of Al-

Mergeb, members of Libyan civil society organizations (NGOs), government employees, PhD students, researchers at a Libyan research institute, masters students from Tripoli and Tobruk, and others.

The scope of the project has been designed coherently with the inputs received by the State of Libya and with the results of the national survey.

Finally, recalling the response to point 5, it is important to consider that this project will not be executed in an isolated context. The Barcelona Convention system, WWF Med and IUCN Med are executing and developing a number of initiatives that will enhance the impact of this project. All these projects and strategies are mobilizing a considerable amount of cash co-financing that cannot be reported in the GEF project for formal agreement with the donors. Nevertheless, looking at the impact on grounds these initiatives will generate impacts together with Child project 3.1

For these reasons, we would suggest keeping the focus of project and allocation of resources as proposed to be compliant with what was agreed with the government of Libya.

Response: 3-30-20

The table 4 added at page 23 of the GEF CEO ER is clearly indicating the contribution of this project in terms of quantitative and qualitative targets related to increasing marine areas under protection and to the improvement in the MPAs management, through the elaboration of new management plans and the setting up of management units.

As stated in the previous comments, the project will not only ensure the setting up of concerted and updated governance structures and management plans for the three MPAs, but will support the Libyan government institutions and stakeholders in starting the implementation of the MPA management plans and governance structures. To this end, three management units will be established in the three targeted MPAs during the life cycle of the project.

To this end, additional budget has been made available by reshuffling US\$ 50,000 from component 3 to component 1. This fund will further strengthen the activities related to governance and management effectiveness of the targeted MPAs so that the MPA management units are fully operational by the end of the project duration and start effectively managing their respective MPAs.

Please refer to revisions made on the Annex related to the budget and to the project document on table page 1 and 2 and the paragraphs related to on page 24 and on Activity 1.3.4 on page 27 and Activity 2.1.4 on page 29.

9. Does the project take into account potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, and describes sufficient risk response measures? (e.g., measures to enhance climate resilience)

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-23-19

The greatest risk is the Political instability as stated under item 6 in the Portal document. Not clear how the risk associated with the Lack of Political Support is considered as low when there is political instability. What government agencies have a more or less stable personal that this project can count on for the implementation of the project?

Did the consultants that developed this MSP, visited the field (including the proposed PAs) or was this PIF prepared with secondary information and virtual meetings?

3-30-20

Cleared

Agency Response

Response: 28/02/2020

We do agree that the Political Instability and the current situation in Libya are relevant risks. The risk table has been updated in this direction. However, as explained above in the responses to points 2 and 4, EGA has been pro-actively involved in the development of the project, its revision and submission. Moreover, this authority together with the Barcelona Convention's Focal Points nominated by the UN recognized government of Libya, are constantly active and responsive, therefore we feel confident that a continuous exchange will happen, including if need be, about the early identification of issues and approval of contingency measures.

The consultant hired for the development of the Project is of Libyan nationality. This element together with the proved expertise of the consultant at national (in Libya), regional (in the Mediterranean) and global level was considered fundamental to allow the person to visit the country, the sites and run negotiation and technical meetings with the authorities of Libya.

10. Is co-financing confirmed and evidence provided?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-23-10

Yes

7-19-20

ADDITIONAL ISSUES.

Co-financing from IUCN should be marked as from “donor Agency” since IUCN is not the GEF agency for this child project. Co-financing from WWF should be reported as “CSO” rather than “other”.

7-17-20

Cleared

1.

Agency Response

Response to 7-19-20 ADDITIONAL ISSUES

The markers for IUCN and WWF have been updated in the GEF portal. No changes are made in the GEF CEO Endorsement Request where the two organization are referred to as “Executing Agencies:” in table C of the GEF CEO Endorsement Request.

11. Are relevant tracking tools completed?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-24-19

The table with the core indicators provided.

Cleared

7-19-20

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Please note that it is mandatory to provide baseline for the METT score (sub-indicator 2.2.) at CEO endorsement/approval. Baseline is needed to provide evidence of “improved management”.

7-17-20

Cleared

1.

Agency Response

Response to 7-19-20 ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The figures for sub-indicator 2.2 in the GEF7 Core Indicator Worksheet, have been included. These are the objective by the end of the project (33,824 hectares) and the baseline (31,324 hectares). This makes clear that the project will improve additional 2,500 hectares. No changes are made in the GEF CEO Endorsement Request.

12. Only for Non-grant Instrument: Has a reflow calendar been presented?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

N/A

Agency Response N/A

13. Is the project coordinated with other related initiatives and national/regional plans in the country or in the region?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-23-19

Cleared

Agency Response N/A

14. Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-23-19

Yes

Cleared

Agency Response N/A

15. Does the project have description of knowledge management plan?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-23-19

Yes

Cleared

Agency Response N/A

Resource Availability

16. Is the proposed Grant (including the Agency fee) within the resources available from (mark all that apply):

The STAR allocation?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-23-19

Cleared

Agency Response N/A

The focal area allocation?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

Agency Response

The LDCF under the principle of equitable access

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**Agency Response**

The SCCF (Adaptation or Technology Transfer)?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**Agency Response**

Focal area set-aside?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request**Agency Response**

Secretariat Recommendation

17. Is the MSP being recommended for approval?

Secretariat Comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7-23-19

No. Please address outstanding issues. The GEF Secretariat is available for consultation on this review. Thanks.

3-30-20

No. The most significant issues raised in the last two reviews remain unresolved. The GEFSEC suggest having a conference call to discuss the best course of action. The re-submission took 8 months to come back to the GEF and we need to avoid a repetition of this.

7-19-20

Please address issues under items 10 and 11.

7-17-20

This MSP is Recommended.

Agency Response

Response: 28/02/2020

All the main elements have been addressed either in the GEF review sheet by providing additional elements and information or by introducing changes in the GEF CEO endorsement request.

Moreover, building on the experience of the other Child Projects of the MedProgramme and the long negotiation and discussion with GEF PPO concluded in December 2019, all the elements requested by the GEF PPO for clearance of the proposal have been also added to the new GEF CEO endorsement request and submission package.

Response: 3-30-20

The issues raised by the GEF secretariat were discussed in a skype call held on 29 April 2020. During the discussion it was agreed to include some modifications in the GEF CEO endorsement Request to explain clearly the impact of the activities executed by the project and how these will contribute to the global environmental benefits committed by CP3.1 (10158). Moreover, the decision to focus on 3 MPAs in Libya was confirmed. This approach is fully in line with the request of the Governmental partners to be fully engaged in addressing the threats and obstacles that hinder the sustainability and effectiveness of the MPA network in Libya rather than activities focusing on only one MPA since an individual MPA along the big coastal and marine area will not be effective, i.e. will not generate a positive impact even if it is well managed. CP 3.1 (10158) moves from individual MPAs to a network of MPAs as clearly stated by CBD global Aichi Target 11. A letter issued by the

Head of Environment General Authority (EGA) of Libya supporting the approach, activities and MPAs selection proposed by CP3.1 (10158) is also uploaded in the GEF portal for future reference. Based on the discussion on the same date, the revisions were included as indicated in above sections.

Response 7-19-20

Additional Comments under 10 and 11 have now been addressed.

Review Dates

	1SMSP CEO Approval	Response to Secretariat comments
First Review		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		
Additional Review (as necessary)		

Recommendations

18. Is the MSP being recommended for approval?

CONTEXT: The Libyan coast represents most of the southern central Mediterranean coastal area in North Africa. It was identified as one of several hotspots of marine and coastal biodiversity in the region. More than 60% of the country’s coastline is composed of pristine sandy beaches, the remaining 40% are either rocky or sandstone cliffs. This diversity in coastline geomorphology made Libya one of the important locations for nesting sea turtles, seabirds and sea-grass beds, with all associated sub-habitats, fauna and flora, that have already deteriorated in other Mediterranean countries, due to pollution, tourism impacts and over fishing practices. These aforementioned factors are still underdeveloped in Libya, allowing it to be one of the last natural habitats for several Mediterranean and globally migrant marine

and coastal species (e.g. Blue fin Tuna, Lesser crested terns, Sea turtles, Posidonia sea-grass meadows, etc. To date, three marine protected areas have been established in Libya. The first of these is the Farwa Lagoon and its facing Farwa Island (Zwara municipality) which were placed under protection in 2009. The second is the coastal lagoon of Ain Al-Ghazala and its facing Elba Island, Gulf of Bumbah and its four small islands which were declared as Marine Protected Areas in 2011. Both sites are very important as nesting sites for sea turtles, seabirds and spawning areas for local fisheries and characterized with healthy sea-grass meadows. A third site – the Kouf National Park – is the oldest protected area in the country, with a coastal section extending more than 20 km and characterized by mixed sandy and rocky shores along the Mediterranean. Together, these three protected areas are the proposed sites for the activities of this project, including the expansion of the Kouf National Park.

PROJECT: The project has the following components and outcomes. **Component 1:** Improving Governance and Management Support (Outcomes: Protection of marine biodiversity in Libya's Marine Protected Areas is enhanced through the development of an MPA governance structure at the national level and supported through new on-site management units, sustainable management plans and monitoring programs and networks; **Component 2:** Participation and Institutional Strengthening (Outcomes: The governance and sustainable management of MPAs is reinforced through the increased participation of Libyan stakeholders and strengthening of institutional capacities on MPA management and related monitoring activities). **Component 3.** Awareness-raising and Communication (Outcome: Awareness of the value and importance of MPAs is raised at the national level, as a further means of strengthening MPA governance and management).

RESULTS: The project will result in the creation of 2,500.00 of Marine Protected Areas Newly created, 31,324 ha of Marine Protected Areas Under improved management effectiveness; the Mediterranean Sea, under new or improved cooperative management; level 4 of Regional Legal Agreements and Regional management institution(s) to support its implementation; Level 1 of National/Local reforms and active participation of Inter-Ministerial Committees; Level 1 of engagement in IWLEARN through participation and delivery of key products, 2,000 people benefited from the project.

INNOVATION, SUSTAINABILITY, SCALE-UP; Innovative aspects of this project include: i) The development of a specific MPA governance structure with clear mandates to different stakeholders; ii) To provide needed capacity (based on capacity gap analysis) to deliver the country's national and site level actions to protect marine and coastal biodiversity in Libya, bringing together state and civil society organizations and local communities to manage marine and coastal biodiversity on three MPAs of Libya, reduce resource exploitation and protect ecological functions while minimizing pressures on natural resources; and iii) conduct specific awareness campaigns and produce materials for the necessity to protect Libya's unique marine and coastal biodiversity and its sustainable use for the present and future generation. Sustainability Looking at the long-term sustainability of the actions executed by this project, will be fully consistent with the Barcelona Convention process and other ongoing processes and/or mechanisms being created in the Mediterranean region. In this context, the Mediterranean MPA Forum in 2012 highlighted the need to establish a regional financial mechanism to support the sustainable financing of the Mediterranean MPAs in accordance to the 2014 Athens Declaration of the Union for the Mediterranean and to help countries meet their commitments under the Barcelona Convention.

CO-FINANCING: Will be provided by the Government of Libya, IUCN, WWF Mediterranean, and UNEP.