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30/10/2023

**Mitigating key sector pressures on marine
and coastal biodiversity and further
strengthening the national system of
marine protected areas in Djibouti
(MPA2)**

Terminal Evaluation

Project details		Project milestones	
Project Title	Mitigating key sector pressures on marine and coastal biodiversity and further strengthening the national system of marine protected areas in Djibouti (MPA2)	PIF Approval Date:	April 19, 2016
UNDP Project ID (PIMS #):	5560	CEO Endorsement Date (FSP) / Approval date (MSP):	May 22, 2018
GEF Project ID:	9215	Project Document Signature Date:	July 24, 2018
UNDP Atlas Business Unit, Award ID, Project ID:	Atlas Project ID: 00106632 Atlas Output ID: 00107267	Date Project Manager hired:	August 1st, 2018
Country:	Djibouti	Inception Workshop Date:	September 27, 2018
Region:	Africa	Mid-Term Review Completion Date:	August 3 rd , 2022
Focal Area:	GEF Focal area 3: Resilience of populations to natural hazards and food insecurity	Terminal Evaluation Completion date:	December 17, 2023
UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017:	Output 2.5: Legal and regulatory frameworks, policies and institutions enabled to ensure the conservation, sustainable use, and access and benefit sharing of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems, in line with international conventions and national legislation	Planned Operational Closure Date:	July 2023 + 6-month contract extension
Trust Fund:	GEF		
Implementing Partner (GEF Executing Entity):	Initially Ministry of Housing, Urban Planning and Environment (MHUPE) ¹ And then Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development		
NGOs/CBOs involvement:	4 local communities, Union Nationale des Femmes Djiboutiennes		
Private sector involvement:	/		
Geospatial coordinates of project sites:	See Annexes 8		
TE team members	Benjamin Landreau and Idleh Abar Allaleh		

¹ In French: Ministère de l'Habitat, de l'Urbanisme, de l'Aménagement du Territoire et de l'Environnement(MHUATE)

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Once again, thank you for your outstanding support and commitment to environmental sustainability and the goals of the Global Environment Facility (GEF)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of tables	5
Glossary	6
Executive Summary	8
1. Introduction	13
1.1) Terminal Evaluation objective, purpose and scope	13
1.2) Methodology.....	13
1.3) Cross-cutting issues	14
2. Project Description	15
2.1.1) Geographical setting.....	15
2.1.2) Global significance of marine and coastal biodiversity	16
2.1.3) The system of marine protected areas in Djibouti.....	17
2.1.4) Development context: environmental, socio-economic, institutional, and policy factors relevant to the project objective and scope	18
2.1.5) Barriers to improved biodiversity protection identified in the Project Document	19
2.1.6) Project Description and Strategy	20
2.1.7) Theory of Change	22
2.1.8) Main stakeholders.....	24
2.1.9) Project budget and main milestones	26
3. Findings	27
3.1) Project Design/Formulation	27
3.1.1) Project in line with national priorities and country driven- ness	27
3.1.2) Coherence and synergy	27
3.1.3) Planned stakeholder participation at project design	28
3.1.4) Analysis of Results Framework	29
3.1.5) Gender equality and women's empowerment	30
3.1.6) Social and Environmental Safeguards and UNDP risk log	31
3.2) Project Implementation	32
3.2.1) Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements	32
3.2.2) Adaptive management.....	34
3.2.3) Project Finance and Co-finance	36
3.2.4) Monitoring & Evaluation	37
3.2.5) UNDP implementation/oversight.....	38
3.3) Project Results and Impacts.....	40

3.3.1) Relevance	40
3.3.2) Effectiveness and progress towards objectives.....	41
3.3.3) Efficiency	46
a) Project management and timeliness	46
b) Resource allocation and cost effectiveness	47
3.3.4) Overall Outcome	55
3.3.5) Sustainability.....	56
a) Financial sustainability.....	56
b) Socio-political sustainability	57
c) Environmental sustainability.....	59
3.3.6) Country ownership	60
3.3.7) Gender equality and women's empowerment.....	61
5.3.1) Cross-cutting Issues.....	64
5.3.2) GEF Additionality	65
5.3.3) Catalytic / Replication Effect	66
5.3.4) Progress to Impact.....	67
4. Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons Learned...	69
4.1) Main findings	69
4.2) Conclusions	70
4.3) Recommendations	72
4.4) Lessons learned.....	73
Annex 1: Terms of Reference of the Terminal Evaluation.....	74
Annex 2: Project Logical/Results Framework.....	84
Annex 3: TE Mission itinerary, including summary of field visits.....	88
Annex 4: List of interviewed people	89
Annex 5: List of documents reviewed.....	90
Annex 6: Evaluation Question Matrix	91
Annex 7: TE Rating scale	94
Annex 8: Maps of the newly created Marine Protected Areas	95
Annex 9: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form	100
Annex 10: Details on stakeholders.....	101

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Evaluation Ratings Table.....	9
Table 2: Recommendations summary table.....	12
Table 3: Existing and new marine protected areas in Djibouti	18
Table 4: Project Theory of Change	22
Table 5: Summary list of main stakeholders	24
Table 6: Project budget	26
Table 7: Project timing and milestones	26
Table 8: Status of MTR recommendations	34
Table 9: GEF budget according to Project Document	36
Table 10: Project expenditures and commitments as of October 2023	36
Table 11: Co-financing as per project document	36
Table 12: Confirmed Sources of Co-Financing at TE Stage.....	36
Table 13: Key indicators that were not monitored by the project.....	38
Table 14: Monitoring & Evaluation - Ratings	38
Table 15: UNDP Implementation/Oversight & Implementation Partner Execution - Ratings	39
Table 16: Project's contribution to SDGs (at TE stage)	43
Table 17: Project's contribution to Aichi Biodiversity Targets (at TE stage)	43
Table 18: Effectiveness - Ratings & Achievement Summary Table	44
Table 19: Challenges faced in buoys and signage panels installation	48
Table 20: Progress towards results matrix	49
Table 21: Overall likelihood of sustainability	59
Table 22: Participants to workshops and training sessions under the MPA2 project, by gender	62
Table 23: 6 areas of GEF additionaliy	65
Table 24: Progress to impact.....	67

GLOSSARY

AF	Adaptation Fund
AU	African Union
BIOFIN	Biodiversity Finance
BMP	Biodiversity Management Programme
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CDS	Capacity Development Scorecard
CERD	Centre d'étude et de recherche de Djibouti (National Research Center Djibouti)
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (of Wild Fauna and Flora)
CORDIO	Coastal Oceans Research and Development in the Indian Ocean
CPD	Country Programme Document
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DAM	Directorate of Maritime Affairs
DDIC	Directorate of Documentation, Information, and Communication
DEDD	Directorate for Environment and Sustainable Development (Direction de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable)
DPFZA	Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FSP	Full Sized Project
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GoD	Government of Djibouti
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
LDCF	Least Developed Countries Fund
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAWFLR	Ministry of Agriculture, Water, Fisheries, Livestock and Marine Resources
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MEDD	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (Ministère d'Environnement et de Développement Durable)
MET	Ministry of Equipment and Transport
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MHUPE	Ministry of Housing, Urban Planning and Environment
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MPA2	Project alias
MSP	Marine Spatial Plan
MTR	Midterm Review
MUET	Ministry of Urbanism, Environment, and Tourism
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
NEF	National Environmental Fund
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NPD	National Project Director
PA	Protected Area
PANA	National Adaptation Plan of Action (English – NAPA)
PERSGA	Strategic Action Programme for the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
PIF	Project Identification Form
PIR	Project Implementation Report

PMU	Project Management Unit
POPP	Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures
PPG	Project Preparation Grant
PPP	Public Private Partnerships
PRAREV	Programme to support the reduction of vulnerability in coastal fisheries
PRMSRVCP	Projet Renforcement des Moyens de Subsistances et de la Réduction de la Vulnérabilité des Communautés Pastorales
RTA	Regional Technical Advisor
SBAA	Standard Basic Assistance Agreement
SCCF	Special Climate Change Fund
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SESP	Social & Environmental Screening Procedure
SRF	Strategic Results Framework
STAP	Scientific Technical Advisory Panel
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TOR	Terms of Reference
UGAP	Unité de Gestion des Aires Protégées - Protected Areas Management Unit
UNDP CO	UNDP Country Office
UNDP-ERC	UNDP Evaluation Resource Center
UNDP-GEF	UNDP Global Environmental Finance (Unit)
UNDP-IEO	UNDP Independent Evaluation Office
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFD	Union Nationale des Femmes Djiboutiennes
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Information Table

Project name	Mitigating key sector pressures on marine and coastal biodiversity and further strengthening the national system of marine protected areas in Djibouti (MPA2)
# project FEM	9215
# project PNUD	5560
Country	Djibouti
Region	Afrique
Implementing partner	Ministère de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable (MEDD)
Management arrangements	National Implementation Modality (NIM)
Type of project	Full-sized Project (FSP)
Funding Source	GEF Trust Fund
Project Preparation Grant	
GEF Grant Amount	\$ 2,822,374
Co-finance (total)	\$ 12,390,000
Total project cost	\$ 15,212,374

Milestone in the project cycle	Date
PIF approved	19 April 2016
CEO-endorsement of Project Document	22 May 2018
LPAC meeting	19 June 2018
Grant agreement signed	24 July 2018
Project Inception Workshop	27 September 2018
Staff appointments	National Project Coordinator, August 2019
First project board meeting	19 November 2018
Second project board meeting	18 December 2019
Third project board meeting	24 June 2020
Fourth project board meeting	13 January 2021
First MTR mission	March – April 2021
Fifth project board meeting	12 January 2022
Finalization MTR	May-July 2022
Sixth project board meeting	12 February 2023
Terminal Evaluation	Sept-December 2023
Initial project closure	July 2023
Final project closure (6-molnth no cost-extension)	January 2024

Project description

The Republic of Djibouti is a small coastal country in the Horn of Africa, with a total area of 23,200 km², a coastline of 372 km and, within a maritime territory area of 7,200 km². Djibouti's economy is largely dependent on its service sector (76.3% of GDP) connected with the country's strategic location as a deep-water port at the intersection of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Over the last years, led by the vision to turn the country into a platform for commercial and logistics services for the Horn of Africa, the Government has started to undertake vast projects for the development of port, rail and road infrastructure, aimed at facilitating and increasing access to markets in the region.

While the Government of Djibouti has made investments to protect some of its unique and biodiversity rich marine habitats, these achievements risk to become precarious given the magnitude and speed of new developments of port infrastructure in Djibouti, most notably in the Gulfs of Tadjourah and

Ghoubet. There are major risks (e.g. pollution due to accidents or cleaning) associated with the new shipping routes and increased traffic of oil tankers and other ships transporting noxious substances through this vulnerable environment.

This GEF project has the objective to “Enhance the resilience of Djibouti’s marine biodiversity through increasing institutional capacity, enhancing financial sustainability and management effectiveness of the MPA system, and mainstreaming marine biodiversity into key maritime sectors” (often referred as the MPA 2 project). The project Objective will be achieved through implementation of four components that address the key barriers identified for effective MPA and marine ecosystem services management:

- *Component 1* - Strengthening the effectiveness of Djibouti’s MPA system through enhanced capacity of all stakeholders, including dialogue to mainstream biodiversity into maritime sectors.
- *Component 2* - Expanding the national MPA network and strengthening MPA management at site level.
- *Component 3* - Sustainable financing mechanism for marine biodiversity and the national protected areas system.
- *Component 4* - Gender Mainstreaming, Knowledge Management and M&E.

Table 1: Evaluation Ratings Table

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Rating ²
M&E design at entry	Satisfactory
M&E Plan Implementation	Moderately Satisfactory
Overall Quality of M&E	Moderately Satisfactory
Implementation & Execution	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	Satisfactory
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	Satisfactory
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	Moderately Satisfactory
Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	Satisfactory
Effectiveness	Medium Unsatisfactory
Efficiency	Medium Unsatisfactory
Overall Project Outcome Rating	Medium Unsatisfactory
Sustainability	Rating
Financial resources	Moderately Unlikely
Socio-political/economic	Moderately Likely
Institutional framework and governance	Moderately Likely
Environmental	Moderately Likely
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	Moderately Likely

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

Summary of findings, conclusions and lessons learned

The project "*Mitigating key sector pressures on marine and coastal biodiversity and further strengthening the national system of marine protected areas in Djibouti*" (MPA2) has made notable progress but also encountered challenges. While significant legislative advancements were achieved for the establishment of new MPAs, notably with the approval of a law regulating new MPAs by the Council of Ministers in Djibouti in May 2023, this legal process remains unfinished. Furthermore, challenges persist, including the absence of demarcation buoys and incomplete integration of the MPAs into nautical charts, rendering the MPAs somewhat abstract in their current state.

The actions taken have increased the effective approach to marine conservation. Activities such as stakeholder awareness initiatives, specialized training for eco-guards, the elaboration of management plans for 4 MPAs and the upcoming installation of mooring buoys have most likely improved the protection of the marine ecosystem, even if such improved conservation still can't be accurately monitored. These efforts pave the way for a more sustainable future for this valuable coastal region.

The project also faced significant challenges, including the impact of COVID-19, which halted most activities for several months and resulted in limited progress in the initial project years. Despite these setbacks, project activities accelerated in 2021 and benefited from a well-justified 6-month no-cost extension. Overall, the project's management has been commendable, with active oversight from UNDP, effective governance mechanisms, and positive commitment from partners, as evidenced by multiple Memoranda of Understanding and their involvement in project activities. As of October 2023, 85% of committed finances have been executed, which is a reasonable delivery rate.

MPA2 project has revitalized and facilitated enhanced coordination and integration among various institutions, which took the form of signed agreements between the Ministry of Environment and partner institutions including: Department of Maritime Affairs, Coast Guard, Djibouti Study and Research Center (CERD), Djibouti National Tourist Office, Directorate of Fisheries and National Women Union of Djibouti (UNFD).

Without negatively impacting the project, the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development has undergone significant transformations. Importantly, the project played a role in structuring the new Marine Protected Areas Management Unit (UGAP), which could become the key institution for the improved management of the PA system over the long term. The success and sustainability of these protected areas now largely depend on the UGAP's capacity to effectively carry out its mission, including specialized functions related to regulation and scientific research.

Even if financial sustainability could become a critical limiting factor, the overall sustainability of the project can overall be considered as "moderately likely". There are some encouraging signs that it could improve soon, if national authorities agree to a request made by the MEDD to allocate a sufficient operational budget to the UGAP.

The 'Gender Results Effectiveness' of the project could be considered as "Gender responsive", meaning that the project adequately tried to address differential needs between men and women and tried to equitably distribute benefits, but the root causes of inequalities were not tackled. While the project made substantial efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, only 8 women directly benefited from income-generating trainings, on sewing and craftsmanship, a rather low number when considering the amount of upfront work and expected impact.

The national network of MPA is now covering 8%, which is a great accomplishment. The project's successes and challenges provide essential insights into the complexities of MPA establishment and management the experiences and lessons learned from the project will serve as valuable guidance for national authorities as they pursue the ambitious target of achieving a 30% coverage for the national network of MPAs

The project's main findings are as follows:

- The project's objectives were in line with local and national priorities and strategies.
- The project objectives were likely to be met to a significant extent.
- Some underachievement occurred due to initial delays in project implementation, primarily caused by factors like the COVID-19 pandemic and lengthy administrative processes.
- The project successfully contributed to the expansion of Djibouti's national network of Marine Protected Areas to include 7 sites, covering 8% of the Exclusive Economic Zone.
- Good management plans have been elaborated for the 4 new MPAs, unfortunately their appropriation and implementation remain limited.
- A Protected Areas Management Unit (UGAP) has been established within the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD), which is a key achievement of the project.
- The UGAP has some capacities for planning, coordinating, managing, monitoring and evaluating the system of MPAs in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, but its functioning budget is still to be negotiated.
- The financial needs for the MPA system have not been established, the funding gap for an effective management of the network of MPAs remains unknown. The MPA system financial sustainability is not secured and will now mostly rely on national authorities.
- Challenges in setting up an Environmental Fund and limited technical guidance affected outcomes.
- The project was cost-effective overall, with expenditures generally aligned with international standards and norms. However, some delays in project implementation impacted cost-effectiveness.
- The planned outputs have been partly produced, offering a great space for continued impact if national authorities take over adequately.
- The sustainability of project results is closely tied to institutional frameworks and governance. The newly established UGAP and its integration into existing institutions will play a critical role in this regard.
- The project was adequately gender-focused but may not have reached the level of social impact that was initially expected.

The project's journey underscored several lessons learned, the main ones are as follows:

- ✓ Exit strategies should be considered and initiated early in project planning to ensure a smooth transition and long-term project impact.
- ✓ Maintaining continuity between different GEF biodiversity projects is vital. Effective strategies for transitioning from one project to another should be implemented from the project's inception.
- ✓ Setting up an Environmental Fund can be more complex than initially anticipated. Clear ToRs from the project's outset, aligned with BIOFIN methodology, are essential. Strong technical support for financial sustainability matters is crucial.
- ✓ The project demonstrated the importance of actively involving local communities, authorities, and stakeholders in conservation efforts. Their engagement contributes to the success and sustainability of conservation initiatives.
- ✓ The project highlighted the need for comprehensive technical guidance, particularly in Components 1 and 3, to address potential shortcomings and ensure project effectiveness.
- ✓ Challenges were encountered in updating the reference study on biodiversity due to a lack of capacity and technical support. Future projects should prioritize capacity building in relevant areas.
- ✓ To enhance ownership and impact, technical reports of GEF projects should be systematically drafted in the national language, ensuring accessibility to key stakeholders.
- ✓ The project experience suggests that exploring the possibility of direct cash transfers as part of conservation strategies could be beneficial.

Table 2: Recommendations summary table

#	TE Recommendations	Entity responsible	Timeframe
A	Category 1: Finalization of the legal process for MPA creation		
A.1	Conclude the formal publication of the new law on Protected Areas	National Assembly, Presidency, MEDD, PMU	Short term
A.2	Enact the "implementation decree" to officially establish the operational status of the four new protected areas.	Presidency, MEDD, PMU	Short term
B	Category 2: Support the MEDD in its efforts to strengthen the UGAP		
B.1	Allocate a sufficient annual operating budget to the UGAP (the request has been sent to the Ministry of Budget and Finance)	Ministry of Budget and Finance / UNDP	Recurrent, every January
B.2	Construct office facilities for the UGAP (a proposal already made to the minister)	MEDD	Short term
B.3	Renew the six MoUs that were originally signed within the mere framework of the project. To facilitate a seamless transition, these MoUs should be updated to better reflect the new institutional arrangements.	MEDD / Blue Economy Sub-Direction / UGAP	Short term
B.4	Enhance the capacity of the UGAP team by having all PMU members transition into civil service roles within the UGAP. Also, consider the recruitment of additional staff to further strengthen the team.	Ministry of Budget and Finance / MEDD / Blue Economy Sub-Direction / UGAP	Short and medium terms
B.5	Keep supporting the Ministry of Environment to achieve a positive evaluation for the "Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers" (HACT), which will allow fully-fledge national implementation procedures (NIM).	UNDP / MEDD	Short and medium terms
C	Category 3: Recommendations regarding future GEF projects in Djibouti		
C.1	Carefully weigh the pros and cons before embarking on the creation of a National Agency for Protected Areas	UNDP/GEF/MEDD	Medium term
C.2	Persist in examining the potential establishment of an environmental fund, which may incorporate a Conservation Trust Fund	UNDP/GEF/MEDD	Medium / long terms
C.3	Ensure that the upcoming GEF project focused on biodiversity ("Conserving Biodiversity and Restoring Ecosystem Functions in and around the Day Forest National Protected Area") significantly enhances the capacity and capabilities of UGAP.	UNDP/GEF/MEDD	Short term
D	Category 4: PMA2 project closure		
D.1	Rehabilitate the Arta ecoguard station	UNDP/PMU	Short term
D.2	Transfer ownership of the 2 project vehicles and 3 project boats to UGAP	UNDP/PMU/MEDD	Short term
D.3	Engage in discussions with the Coast Guard to have them assume the operational and maintenance expenses of the 3 boats	Coast Guard/MEDD/UGAP	Short term

D.4	If there is any remaining project balance, allocate it for UGAP's operating activities	UNDP/PMU/MEDD	Short term
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1) Terminal Evaluation objective, purpose and scope

Terminal Evaluations for GEF-financed projects have the following complementary purposes:

- To promote accountability and transparency
- To synthesize lessons that can help to improve the selection, design and implementation of future UNDP-supported GEF-financed initiatives; and to improve the sustainability of benefits and aid in overall enhancement of UNDP programming;
- To assess and document project results, and the contribution of these results towards achieving GEF strategic objectives aimed at global environmental benefits;
- To gauge the extent of project convergence with other priorities within the UNDP country programme, including poverty alleviation; strengthening resilience to the impacts of climate change, reducing disaster risk and vulnerability, as well as cross-cutting issues such gender equality, empowering women² and supporting human rights

Furthermore, as expressed in the Terms of Reference of the Terminal Evaluation (see annex 1), the TE tends to assess the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved and draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

The TE assesses project performance throughout the project period against expectations set out in the project's Logical Framework/Results Framework. All project components and outputs were included in the evaluation covering all project areas. The TE also examines the project strategy and a particular focus is on the project sustainability.

Overall, it is expected that the results of the evaluation will allow donors, UNDP, and the government to draw lessons learned from the project. These results will be used to improve future programs, in particular by using the evaluation report as a tool to guide future actions.

1.2) Methodology

As expressed in the ToRs, the TE report assesses the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved and draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming. The TE report promotes accountability and transparency and assesses the extent of project accomplishments. The final evaluation report assesses the progress and achievement of the project's objectives and outcomes as specified in the project document. The TE also examine the project strategy and its risks to sustainability. The following methodological tools and approaches were used:

- **Document review**, including: PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure/SESP) the Project Document, project reports including annual PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based evaluation. The TE

team has reviewed the baseline and midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools submitted to the GEF at the CEO endorsement

- **Interviews and meetings** with key stakeholders such as key government counterparts, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organizations, United Nations country team (UNCT) members and implementing partners:
 - Semi-structured interviews, based on questions designed for different stakeholders based on evaluation questions around relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.
 - Key informant and focus group discussions with men and women, beneficiaries and stakeholders.
 - All interviews with men and women have been undertaken in full confidence and anonymity. The final evaluation report should not assign specific comments to individuals.
- **Questionnaires** including male and female participants in development programmes, UN Country Team and surveys and questionnaires to other stakeholders at strategic and programmatic levels. The questionnaire was largely based on the Evaluation Question Matrix, available in annex 6.
- **Field visits and on-site validation** of key tangible outputs and interventions as mentioned above. The duration of the field visit is expected to be 12 days but could be subject of adjustments.
- **Data review and analysis:** financial and funding data, and other data sources and methods. To ensure maximum validity, reliability of data (quality) and promote use, the evaluator has ensured triangulation of the various data sources.

The international consultant has worked in close collaboration with his national counterpart. The Mid-Term Review came with a list of recommendations, that were used to better understand the latest achievements of the project.

1.3) Cross-cutting issues

As suggested in the Guidance for Conducting TE of UNDP-Supported GEF-Financed Project, the evaluation took a holistic approach to integrate various cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, rights-based approach, capacity development, poverty-environment nexus, crisis prevention and recovery, disaster risk reduction, and climate change mitigation and adaptation. Evaluators aimed to create a comprehensive understanding of these interconnected elements by employing a multidisciplinary methodological framework.

- **Gender** considerations were embedded from the inception phase through to the end of the evaluation. This involved consulting with gender experts, conducting gender-sensitive interviews, and sourcing sex-disaggregated data to analyze gender impacts.
- The evaluation did adhere to international **human rights standards**, ensuring inclusivity and equality. Participants were selected without discrimination, and their rights to privacy and informed consent were upheld.
- Consultants assessed the **capacity-building measures** within the project, looking at how these efforts intersect with other cross-cutting issues like gender equality and poverty alleviation.

- The evaluation considered the reciprocal relationship between **poverty and environmental degradation**.
- The evaluation assessed how well the project was equipped to **prevent or mitigate crises** and facilitate recovery. This involves examining contingency plans, adaptive capacities, and resilience factors in target communities.
- A special focus has been given to understanding how the project contributes to **reducing the vulnerability of communities** to natural and man-made disasters. Strategies like early warning systems, community training, and infrastructure resilience have been scrutinized.
- The evaluation dedicated a distinct segment to scrutinizing the project's role in facilitating **climate change adaptation**. Special attention has been given to how the project has enabled communities to adapt to changing environmental conditions. This involved evaluating adaptation measures such as building resilient infrastructures, diversifying livelihoods to cope with new climate risks, and implementing sustainable resource management practices.

A mixed-method approach has been used for data collection, combining both quantitative and qualitative data. When available, quantitative data has been disaggregated by sex to provide nuanced insights. Qualitative methods, such as observations, interviews, did incorporate questions aimed at understanding the influence of gender and other cross-cutting issues. By integrating these cross-cutting issues in the evaluation, the evaluators aimed to achieve a comprehensive, nuanced, and intersectional understanding of the project's impact on different sectors and communities.

To be noted that no limitations were encountered during the evaluation process. In order to uphold the confidentiality of all stakeholders interviewed by the TE team, this report does not indicate the specific source of quotations or qualitative data. A signed Code of Conduct form, indicating that the team member agrees to the ethical expectations, can be found in Annex 9.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

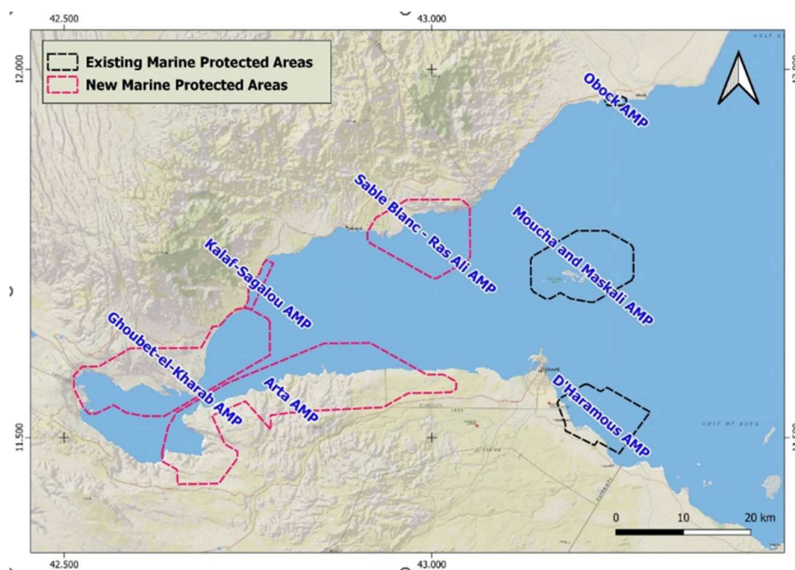
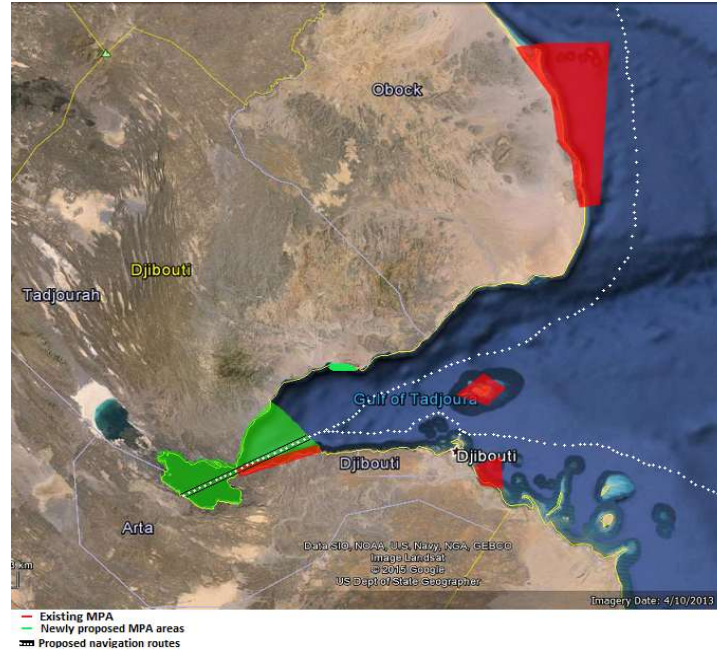
2.1.1) Geographical setting

The Republic of Djibouti is a small coastal country in the Horn of Africa, with a total area of 23,200 km², a coastline of 372 km and, within a maritime territory area of 7,200 km², three isolated island groups: Haramous Island immediately southeast of Djibouti capital; Musha and Maskali Islands, low coral, and sand islands north-east of Djibouti capital; and Sept Frères Islands, eroded volcanic islands off the northern coast of Djibouti, south of the Strait of Bab El Mandeb across Yemen. Djibouti's marine space is located on the confluence of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. A small portion of the coastline belongs to the Red Sea (38 km) and the Gulf of Aden (80 km). The remaining, coastline of Djibouti lies along the narrow Gulf of Tadjourah. A narrow opening with two passes of 2 and 13 m depth separates it from the nearly enclosed basin of the Ghoubet al-Kharab, which has a maximum depth of 300 m and increased salinity. The position at the confluence between two large biogeographical regions gives the Djiboutian waters particular characteristics, including a diversity of hydrodynamic conditions and the emergence of unique assemblages of marine species and habitats. With similar conditions to those prevailing in the southern reefs of the Red Sea, the reef of Djibouti is very turbid. On the south coast,

close to the border with Somalia, the effects of upwelling nutrient-rich water begin to be discernible in fish assemblages. Water there is very turbid, and the poorly developed reefs support fewer species and lower abundances of reef-associated fish than reefs further north. Non-reef species are more abundant, however, and this area represents the main fishing ground in Djibouti. Several beaches and coral reefs, such as at Khor Ambado, Arta Plage and Sables Blancs are important for ecotourism.

The project document states that MPA development will focus on the three MPAs supported under the first GEF MPA project as well as additional MPAs to be developed.

Maps of the proposed expanded MPA system



2.1.2) Global significance of marine and coastal biodiversity

As highlighted in a few regional and national studies, Djibouti harbours regionally and globally important and also under-explored marine habitats/ecosystems that are moreover partly in excellent condition. Marine and coastal biodiversity is primarily associated with two ecosystems, mangroves covering 800 ha, and fringing coral reefs extending over 400 km². The largest mangrove forests are located in Khor Angar and Godoria (Obock district; within the marine and coastal protected area Sept Frères). Mangroves on the islands of Musha and Maskali are also relatively dense, if of limited extent, while mangroves near Djibouti capital (incl. Doralé and Haramous) are sparse and highly degraded. Mangroves have been regressing in recent decades under the pressure of human activities (exploitation for wood and animal fodder) and drought, which reduced the supply of freshwater the mangroves require. Near-pristine coral reefs are found in the Gulf of Djibouti (outer: Gulf of Tadjourah, inner: Gulf of Ghoubet); these are a seasonal feeding ground for the Whale Shark (*Rhincodon typus*). Coastal fringing reefs and pelagic areas extend moreover along the remoter external northern coast towards the border with Ethiopia.

Although the inventory of marine biodiversity is still incomplete, several studies have reported more than 889 animal species and 17 plant species in the marine environment. The rich marine biodiversity includes endemic, rare and threatened species such as the Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricate*, Critically Endangered), sharks, groupers, the Napoleon Wrasse (*Cheilinus undulatus* Endangered), dolphin species including the Spinner Dolphin (*Stenella longirostris*), and the Dugong (*Dugong dugon*, Vulnerable). The coral reefs off the coast of Djibouti exhibit high levels of biodiversity for both corals and fish. They form a part of a larger transboundary ecosystem of coral reefs and associated marine environments stretching from Sudan to Djibouti which have been identified by IUCN as potentially qualifying for World Heritage site status. These ecosystems provide a source of food and livelihoods for the local population and offer opportunities for future economic development and diversification.

2.1.3) The system of marine protected areas in Djibouti

Protected areas are the principal means of protecting the unique marine and coastal biodiversity of Djibouti while preserving the ecosystem services on which rests the narrow subsistence base of local communities. Two marine PAs were initially established: Musha Island in 1972 (Decree 72-1363/SG/CG) and Maskali Island added in 1980 as an integral reserve (Decree 80/062/PR/MCTT). In 1985, the Decree 85/103/PR/AG reinforced the conservation approach through prohibiting collection of coral and shells and only allowing line fishing by artisanal fishermen. In 2004, the Law No. 45/AN/04/5th L *Establishing terrestrial and marine protected areas* designated the three MPAs of 1) Musha & Maskali Islands, 2) Sept-Frères Islands including Ras Syan, Khor Angar and Godoria mangroves, and 3) Haramous Island, and identified forbidden and regulated activities and uses, and the role of local communities.

Section 7 of the law refers to regulations³ to define exact boundaries and mode of management of protected areas. Until recently, these MPAs existed only on paper and were not actually managed as they had not yet been delineated and there was neither any management staff nor essential equipment. Also, the creation of protected areas was made without the participation of concerned parties even if the law required the involvement of local communities in the management of protected areas (Article 6). Other institutional, legal, and financial obstacles had also hampered the operationalization of the management of protected areas.

³ These regulations, however, have not yet been formally developed and approved.

Table 3: Existing and new marine protected areas in Djibouti

Name of MPA	Size km ²	Status
Iles Des Septs-Freres, Ras Syan, Khor Angar et Godoria	447.1 km ²	Created under the protected area law (2004), but no management plans ⁴
Iles Moucha et Maskalii	36.6 km ²	Created under the protected area law (2004), but no management plans
Ile Haramous, Douda	35.1 km ²	Created under the protected area law (2004), but no management plans
Littoral d'Arta / Arta Plage	70.4 km ²	Developed by the project, Management plans prepared.
La baie de Ghoubet El Kharab	158.5km ²	Developed by the project, Management plans prepared.
Sable Blanc / Ras Ali	1.85 km ²	Developed by the project, Management plans prepared.
Kalaf et Sagallou	86.0 km ²	Developed by the project, Management plans prepared.
Total defined under protected area law (2004)	518.8 km ²	
Total developed under present project	316.75 km ²	
Total (at project completion)	835.55 km ²	

2.1.4) Development context: environmental, socio-economic, institutional, and policy factors relevant to the project objective and scope

Before the year 2000, the responsibility for environmental governance in Djibouti was limited to the Department of Territorial Development and the Environment (DATE) created in 1996, alongside the planning commission attached to the prime minister's office. In 2000, Djibouti set up a specific ministry in charge of the environment⁵ entitled: the Ministry of Housing, Urbanism, Environment and Land Use Planning (MHUEAT). Integrated into the MHUEAT, the DATE coordinated all activities and projects related to the environment sector (e.g. Biodiversity, PERSGA, Climate change). Subsequently, the DATE was reinforced by the National Commission for Sustainable Development (2004), the Technical Committee for Sustainable Development and the National Committee for Climate Change (CNDCC). In 2014, the DATE has been transformed into the Department of the Environment and Sustainable Development (DEDD)⁶. Other departments in the MHUEAT were the Department of Documentation, IT and Communication (DDIC) and the Department of Territorial Development, Urban Planning and Housing (DATUH). The DEDD included sub-departments responsible for Sustainable Development, for Pollution and Environmental Assessment, and for the Great Green Wall.

In 2018 the MPA2 project started and had been anchored in the DEDD by the creation of a project management unit under this Direction as well as a steering committee for the MPA system. In October

⁴ MPA management plans have been prepared under the first GEF AMP project, but these plans have not been approved and the draft plans appear not to be available

⁵ Law No. 82/AN/00/4th L of May 17, 2000 on the creation and organization of the Ministry of Housing, Urbanism, Environment and Territorial Development

⁶ Law No. 54/AN/14/7th L reorganizing the Ministry of Housing, Urbanism and the Environment

2021, the MPA2 project was dislodged from the DEDD and placed under the supervision of the DDIC in anticipation of further reforms of the Ministry.

A new Unit for the management of protected areas (UGAP) has been created on 20 February 2020 by the MUET. Further reorganization of the Ministry took place in 2022, when a new law transformed the MUET into the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD). The UGAP will be attached to the Blue Economy Sub-Direction. A new MEDD organization chart currently in preparation provides for the creation of two departments: Department of the Environment and Department of Sustainable Development. The latter will include the Terrestrial and Marine Protected Areas service.

Reform is also taking place in other related sectors. The National Office for Tourism (ONTD) has obtained the status of National Tourism Agency of Djibouti in 2022 including a service for the protection of natural sites. The MPA2 project have revitalized and boosted a new momentum of coordination and integration between the different institutions. In this sense, the project has contributed to the evolution of the institutional framework such as the MPA Steering Committee and the UGAP.

Djibouti's MPA system has made some progress over the last years, most notably through the completed UNDP/GEF/Government of Djibouti MPA project. However, these achievements risk to become precarious given the magnitude and speed of new developments of port infrastructure in Djibouti, most notably in the Gulfs of Tadjourah and Goubet; and the risks associated with the new shipping routes and increased traffic of oil tankers and other ships transporting noxious substances through this vulnerable environment. Because of limited awareness, dialogue and coordination between the actors affecting marine biodiversity including those involved in port development in the context of an increased use of maritime space for commercial transport, and because of limited capacity for surveillance and monitoring within MPAs and the lack of resources dedicated to MPA operational costs, there can be no effective prevention or rapid response to developments and incidents negatively impacting Djibouti's unique marine and coastal ecosystems and resources.

2.1.5) Barriers to improved biodiversity protection identified in the Project Document

The project document identified 2 main set of barriers:

a) Barriers to mainstream biodiversity and protected areas into the regulations, planning and practices of key maritime sectors

- *Inadequate institutional framework.* There is no agency with the technical capacity and trained staff to take the leadership for planning and managing the MPAs of the country as a unified network and to effectively engage other sectors that may either harm or benefit from marine biodiversity.
- *Insufficient coordination between government agencies concerned by marine biodiversity and ecosystem services.* A National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) conducted in 2008 identified the lack of coordination and overlapping mandates between Government entities as key challenges to environmental governance. Coordinating fisheries, maritime, transport, military and other interests both of public and private sector – while guaranteeing environmental sustainability – requires technical knowhow but more importantly political weight.
- *Insufficient integration of marine biodiversity concerns into relevant sector development strategies and plans (maritime transportation, ports, tourism, fisheries).* The major political

and national economic orientations mention the environment in general and biodiversity protection. These issues are also an integral part of sector plans (water, fisheries, tourism, transport, etc.). However, integration is not really effective. Indeed, the various sectors focus primarily on their core mission without effective strategic trade-off discussions taking place.

- *Limited capacity to coordinate participatory planning involving public and private actors concerned with the marine environment and its resources.* Institutionally, the management of the environment is marked by the predominance of the MHUPE. The scheme planned for the sectoral and cross-sectoral integration had provided for a decision on two levels, the first involving the MHUPE, technical services, NGOs and the private sector, the second associating the relevant ministries to the MHUPE within a National Commission for Sustainable Development. However, the National Commission for Sustainable Development has since its creation been rather inactive, and weak coordination between different ministries and the low involvement of the private sector and civil society, are now major obstacles to the implementation of NBSAPs and to advancing other environmental and sustainable development concerns.

b) Barriers to strengthen and expand the national system of coastal and marine protected areas

- *Knowledge management barrier.* Over the years, the coral reefs and mangroves of Djibouti have been the object of occasional studies. Such data collection has been rather discontinuous, has depended on external financing, and has been conducted largely by international experts. Now these databases are not secure in a permanent structure and are not easily accessible.
- *Lack of representativity in the MPA system.* Recent surveys are indicating that the Gulf of Goubet includes pristine coral reefs that show unusually high resilience to extreme conditions. The current MPA coverage does not allow the full protection of critical habitats for the whale shark, endemic marine species, and coral reefs, including those in the Goubet.
- *Inadequate capacities to plan and operationalize the management of marine protected areas and to enforce applicable regulations.* Despite recent progress, the MHUPE continues to have inadequate capacity in terms of equipment and human resources for marine environmental research, management, monitoring and enforcement.
- *Absence of sustainable financing mechanisms to support recurrent operational costs for the management of the MPA system.* The environment and especially biodiversity sectors only receive a small share of the state budget, which can only cover a few staff salaries. The Government does not provide adequate operational budgets to manage marine biodiversity and the MPA system. Support to MPAs is reliant on donor funding, however such external funding is often short-lived and not sufficient to assure continuous and long-term interventions. A National Environment Fund has been created but was never operationalized.

2.1.6) Project Description and Strategy

The mission of the project is to strengthen and expand a functional system of marine/ coastal protected areas in Djibouti, supervised by an institution dedicated to its management, supported with adequate political backing and financial resources, with management and financing plans effectively implemented at the system and site levels, and whose long-term sustainability is ensured by the prevention, mitigation or compensation of the impacts most notably of the massively growing coastal development and maritime sectors. In this context, the expansion of tourism and fisheries activities represent a threat for marine and coastal biodiversity, yet also offer opportunities for shared interests and co-management if sustainability measures can be introduced.

The immediate objective of the project is to *“Enhance the resilience of Djibouti’s marine biodiversity through increasing institutional capacity, enhancing financial sustainability and management effectiveness of the MPA system, and mainstreaming marine biodiversity into key maritime sectors”*.

The Project Objective was achieved through implementation of four project components that address the key barriers identified for effective MPA and marine ecosystem services management.

- ***Component 1: to strengthen the effectiveness of Djibouti’s MPA system through enhanced capacity of all stakeholders, including dialogue to mainstream biodiversity into maritime sectors.***

A unit dedicated to the management of MPAs within the MHUPE⁷/ Directorate for Environment and Sustainable Development (DEDD) will be established. The dedicated unit will be empowered to convene multi-stakeholder processes, develop policies and laws and support their enforcement, as well as to draw on best accessible scientific and technical knowledge for decision-making. A well trained and capacitated professionals will be employed by the unit, who will lead dynamic and effective interventions. A M&E system of the key elements of marine biodiversity will be established and used for planning and decision-making. Capacities amongst the multitude of stakeholders will be enriched to effectively address Djibouti’s marine biodiversity and sustainable marine resource management concerns, including amongst private sector investors and businesses.

- ***Component 2: to expand the national MPA network and strengthen MPA management at site level.***

Ongoing support for effective management of already established MPAs will be provided, while several new sites will be added such as the Gulf of Goubet, the marine/ coastal stretch of Sagallou/Kalaf (adjacent to the already-existing Arta Plage MPA), and the Sable Blanc/ Ras Ali MPA. Several site-specific pilot projects will be established to mobilize important conservation gains. Hence, Djibouti’s MPA system will be expanded and increased management effectiveness for Djibouti’s MPAs will provide greater protection to globally significant habitats and species habitats over approx. 83,555 ha including 51,880 ha of existing and 31,675 ha of newly protected seascape. Direct and indirect benefits to local communities and stakeholders create tangible incentives to support marine biodiversity conservation objectives, most notably through the development of sustainable and MPA-compatible artisanal fisheries and tourism.

- ***Component 3: to sustainable financial mechanism for marine biodiversity and the national protected areas system.***

The project will support the establishment of a new/innovative funding mechanism, coordinated with other initiatives, to provide relevant financial resources for MPA management and sustainable management of marine resources following the BIOFIN approach. Under this component a National Environment Fund (or an alternative mechanism/ structure) is set up, capturing income from national

⁷ The text refers to the institutional context before the recent institutional reforms

sources and ready to supply regular financing towards the national MPA system, helping to reduce the financing gap.

- ***Component 4 - Gender Mainstreaming, Knowledge Management, and M&E.***

Outcomes under this component will allow that lessons learned from the project are made available nationally and internationally to facilitate improved MPA and marine ecosystem management via active participation of all stakeholder groups in the project implementation and M&E. Gender mainstreaming will strengthen project strategies and implementation. The increased focus on gender mainstreaming under GEF-6 has thus been elevated to component level.

2.1.7) Theory of Change

The theory of change outlined in the project document appears to be well-structured and comprehensive in addressing the project's objectives, outcomes, impacts, and underlying assumptions. It provided a solid conceptual framework for understanding how the project aims to achieve its objectives and contribute to the conservation of marine biodiversity.

Table 4: Project Theory of Change

Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts	Assumptions
Component 1. Strengthening the effectiveness of Djibouti's MPA system through enhanced capacity of all stakeholders, including dialogue to mainstream biodiversity into maritime sectors			
A dedicated and fully staffed MPA unit will be established at the DEDD in the MHUPE, including through a decentralised presence (i.e. through ecoguards). Relevant capacity support will be provided through the project, including on surveillance and enforcement procedures and methods for the monitoring of marine environment and biodiversity (Outputs 1.2. – 1.4; partially Output 1.1.).	A unit dedicated to the management of MPAs is institutionalized within the restructured MHUPE, has adequate capacities for planning, coordinating, managing, monitoring and evaluating the system of MPAs in collaboration with relevant stakeholders. The Unit is supported in its mission by capacitated collaborators in line with their responsibilities, especially regarding law enforcement.	Through strengthening systemic, institutional and individual capacities at MHUPE and amongst other relevant partners, MPA management effectiveness will be strengthened	DEDD is a suitable institution to host the MPA Unit. Government will make necessary provisions to establish the MPA Unit (formal integration into DEDD, staff and financial resource allocations).
It is a major role of the MPA Unit to facilitate multi-sector engagement and capacity support to all relevant actors. Relevant institutional collaborations will be established and institutional mandates with regards to MPA management and responsibilities will be reviewed and agreed. A targeted capacity development plan for management of the MPA system and surrounding seascapes will be designed and executed with all concerned parties. Collaborations for delivering integrated planning, and management as well as a long-term monitoring system of marine biodiversity are established. A special focus will be placed on generating the necessary high level political support to effective MPA management, as well as sustainable management of Djibouti's marine areas per se (Outputs 1.1. and 1.5).	Strengthened MPA management effectiveness allows engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including those economic sectors having adverse impacts on marine and coastal biodiversity related to port developments and operations, including maritime traffic, as well as fisheries.	greatly (objective outcome). Impacts through increased development activities in Djibouti's maritime space will be minimized, and marine biodiversity and living resources will be protected from negative impacts (GEB).	The MPA Unit receives higher-level political support. The MPA Unit can effectively facilitate multi-sector and multi-stakeholder collaborations.
Component 2. Expanding the national MPA network and strengthening MPA management at site level			
MPA expansion: Additional and formally recognised MPA areas will be established through the project at Arta Plage/ Gulf of Ghoubet/ Sagallou-Kalaf and Sable Blanc/ Ras Ali including the gazetting of the expansion area, the definition of conservation objectives, and relevant formalisation of legal documents, all conducted with relevant stakeholders especially the local communities (Outputs 2.1. and 2.2.).	Djibouti's MPA system expanded to add the Gulf of Ghoubet and the marine/ coastal stretch of Sagallou/Kalaf to the adjacent already-existing Arta Plage MPA to form one large management unit, as well as the formal establishment of the Sable Blanc/ Ras Ali MPA.	Improved management effectiveness of existing and newly established MPAs in Djibouti, contribute to the conservation of globally relevant marine biodiversity and habitats, and contribute to increasing the global area of seascapes under improved management (GEB).	MPA establishment will bear visible results and benefits to partners.
New MPAs: Apply relevant MPA management tools (5-year management and financing plan, annual work plans and budgets) in participatory manner and equip new MPA with needed infrastructure and equipment (complementing investments already in place in the existing MPAs) (Outputs 2.3. and 2.4).	Increased management effectiveness for Djibouti's MPAs provides greater protection to globally significant habitats and species habitats over approx. 83,555 ha including 51,880 ha of existing and 31,675 ha of newly protected seascape.		Government will provide relevant long-term support to MPA management, including through adequate staffing and financial resources.
In relation to all the MPAs in Djibouti including the expanded MPA areas: Recruitment (as required) and train PA management staff and guards, for community engagement, surveillance and environmental / biodiversity monitoring, a.o. and support implementation of new and existing management plans (Outputs 2.5 and 2.6).	<i>[newly protected areas: Ghoubet to Sagallou/Kalaf, Sable Blanc/Ras Ali; in addition to final designation and expansion of Arta MPA to the north]</i>		
Identify and implement biodiversity-friendly sustainable livelihood options for the benefit of relevant communities in support of collaborative MPA management (Output 2.7), to create incentives for sustainable management and protection of marine resources and MPAs.	Direct and indirect benefits to local communities and stakeholders create tangible incentives to support marine biodiversity conservation objectives, most notably through the development of sustainable and MPA-compatible artisanal fisheries and tourism.	Giving more benefits from MPAs and marine resources to local communities will enhance their commitment to sustainable management and conservation, and increase MPA effectiveness (GEB).	Benefits from MPA management and sustainable marine resource management provide incentives. Benefits are seen as being received directly and shared fairly among rural communities.
Component 3: Sustainable financing mechanism for marine biodiversity and the national protected areas system			

The project will lead a comprehensive assessment of the policy and institutional context relevant to (marine) PA financing, determine the financial needs for the PA system, and develop and begin the implementation of a PA financing strategy that will look at new revenue sources, opportunities to capture existing revenues, and opportunities for budgetary realignments. The project will intend to eventually activate the National Environment Fund, or seek and deploy an alternative mechanism to capture and distribute sustainable financing to Djibouti's (marine) PA system (Outputs 3.1 to 3.4)	National Environment Fund (or an alternative mechanism/ structure) is set up, captures income from national sources and is ready to disburse regular financing towards the national MPA system, helping to reduce the financing gap.	Increased revenue for (marine) PAs will help meet the total expenditures for their management, contributing to the more effective management of marine biodiversity and resources in Djibouti (Objective, Outcome and GEB).	Resources are being effectively mobilized from at least one new source, professionally and transparently managed, and invested into (marine) PA management and marine conservation.
Component 4: Gender mainstreaming, Knowledge Management and M&E			
Gender will be systematically mainstreamed into the project strategy and implementation tracked (Outputs 4.1 and 4.3.). The project will hire a Gender and Community Engagement Expert. The project will engage external parties to mobilise best practice lessons, as well as systemize lessons learned from the implementation by encouraging national and international stakeholders to participate in the project M&E and KM (Outputs 4.2 and 4.3).	Gender mainstreaming will strengthen project strategies and implementation. Participatory approach in M&E and strong lesson learning system will allow effective Adaptive Management of law enforcement and community based conservation. Successful techniques will be implemented at national and international level by other projects leading to increase of law enforcement and MPA effectiveness (Objective Outcomes).	Thus, effect of the project will be strengthened and multiplied leading to an improvement of MPA management effectiveness (Mid-Term Impact) and a stabilization of marine biodiversity and resources (Long-Term Impact)	Gender mainstreaming will be appreciated as an important success factor for MPA management in Djibouti. Other stakeholders have interest to learn from lessons and successful practices developed by the project.

2.1.8) Main stakeholders

A detailed list of stakeholders is presented in annex 10. A summary is presented here under:

Table 5: Summary list of main stakeholders

Stakeholders
Institutions of the Djibouti Government
➤ Directorate of Environment and Sustainable Development (DEDD) / Ministry of Housing, Urban Planning and Environment (MHUPE)
➤ Directorate of Fisheries / Ministry of Agriculture, Water, Fisheries, Livestock and Marine Resources (MAWFLMR)
➤ Directorate of Maritime Affairs / Ministry of Equipment and Transport (MET)
➤ Ports Authority / MET
➤ Minister of Economy and Finance
➤ National Tourism Office, Ministry of Economy and Finance, in charge of Trade, SMEs, Handicrafts, Tourism and Formalization
➤ National Scientific Research Institution: CERD / Ministry of Higher Education and Research
➤ National Coast Guard

Stakeholders
➤ MPAs managers and ecoguards
Regional authorities and representatives
➤ Prefecture councils
➤ Regional development councils
Civil society
➤ IUCN-IGAD// Nature Djibouti / CORDIO / Fondation Cousteau
➤ National Union of Women of Djibouti
➤ Professional associations (fishers association, tour operators association)
➤ Academic and scientific institution: Djibouti University/ Faculty of Science / Ministry of Higher Education and Research
➤ Media (print and radio media)
Village communities concerned by MPAs
➤ Users of natural resources from local communities in/around MPAs (local fishers, tour guides, etc.)
➤ Local community leaders / including representatives of elders, women and youth
➤ Community-based organizations, such as active co-management committees
Private sector / Other
➤ National Chamber of Commerce and Industry
➤ Tourism operators/ investors, incl. Dolphin Dive/ Coubeche
➤ Sable Blanc
➤ Merchant shipping companies, users of the Gulf of Tadjourah and Ghoubet
➤ Military (users of MPAs coastal zones)

2.1.9) Project budget and main milestones

Table 6: Project budget

Financial information	
PDF/PPG	at approval (US\$M)
GEF PDF/PPG grants for project preparation	\$ 100 000
Co-financing for project preparation	\$ 0
Project	at CEO Endorsement (US\$M)
[1] UNDP contribution:	\$ 0
[2] Government:	Government of Djibouti: USD 3,120,000 Government of Djibouti (PRAVEV): USD 6,520,000 Government of Djibouti (PRMSRVCP/Islamic Development Bank): USD 1,500,000
[3] Other multi/bi-laterals:	World Food Programme: USD 750,000 IGAD-IUCN-Nature Djibouti (BMP): USD 750,000
[4] Private Sector:	\$ 0
[5] NGOs:	\$ 0
[6] Total co-financing [1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5]:	USD 12,390,000
[7] Total GEF funding:	USD 2,822,374
[8] Total Project Funding [6 + 7]	USD \$15,212,374

Table 7: Project timing and milestones

Milestone in the project cycle	Date
PIF approved	19 April 2016
CEO-endorsement of Project Document	22 May 2018
LPAC meeting	19 June 2018
Grant agreement signed	24 July 2018
Project Inception Workshop	27 September 2018
Staff appointments	National Project Coordinator, August 2019
First project board meeting	19 November 2018
Second project board meeting	18 December 2019
Third project board meeting	24 June 2020
Fourth project board meeting	13 January 2021
First MTR mission	March – April 2021
Fifth project board meeting	12 January 2022
Finalization MTR	May-July 2022
Sixth project board meeting	12 February 2023
Terminal Evaluation	Sept-December 2023
Initial project closure	July 2023
Final project closure (no cost-extension)	January 2024

3. FINDINGS

3.1) Project Design/Formulation

3.1.1) Project in line with national priorities and country driven-ness

The project's objectives were in line with the national development priorities and adequately formulated according to national strategies to improve environmental protection. Indeed, the Republic of Djibouti is characterized by an extremely arid climate with extreme temperatures, very low precipitation (an average of 188 mm per year), and acute droughts. The degradation of land and a decline in terrestrial and marine biodiversity have been exacerbated by the combined effects of climatic processes and human activities such as resource utilization, deforestation, overgrazing, and pollution. Approximately 33% of the population lives in areas considered to be at high risk. Periods of drought observed over the past decade have led to a reduction in arable land and grazing areas, contributing to the impoverishment of rural populations. These droughts have also affected urban populations by causing water shortages and erratic increases in food prices.

The government of the Republic of Djibouti is committed to environmental protection and conservation for sustainable development. It has ratified various relevant international conventions in recent decades (i.e. UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD), demonstrating its dedication to environmental sustainability.

At a regional level, Djibouti is part of some regional environmental agreements that shows Djibouti's commitment to addressing environmental challenges within its geographical and ecological context and in collaboration with neighboring countries and regions. The following regional agreements are well aligned with the project's objectives:

- Regional Agreement for the Conservation of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Environment (PERSGA)
- Convention for the Protection, Management, and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region (Nairobi Convention)
- Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA)
- Arabian Regional Agreement for Combating Pollution of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden
- Djibouti has also joined the African Great Green Wall Initiative to combat desertification.

The MPA2 project also aligned well national priorities, as defined in the country's development initiatives dating back to 2007 and outlined in the national development plan known as "Vision Djibouti 2035." The operationalization of this vision involves successive five-year plans, with the project fitting into the continuity of the initial plans, including the Strategy of Accelerated Growth and Promotion of Employment (2015-2019) adopted in August 2015. The project concept, objective, and outcomes were also directly relevant to national development and environmental objectives in Djibouti, providing an important vehicle for delivery for implementing the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), the National Environmental Action Plan (PANE) or the national action plan for the development of capacities for sustainable management of the environment in the Republic of Djibouti.

United Nations agencies operating in Djibouti have also committed to supporting the government's efforts in implementing its national priorities. This commitment is reflected in a strategic plan developed by UNDP and approved during the mid-term review of the country program. The project is in line with the second component of the UNDP action plan within the country program signed with the Government of Djibouti in 2013 as part of the Djibouti Vision 2035 initiative.

3.1.2) Coherence and synergy

The project strategy focusses integrated management of MPAs within the seascape by the promotion of the use of the Marine Spatial Plan and other instruments for integrated planning and sector coordination. Key sectors have been included in the Project Board and a high level multi sector committee has been envisioned.

Coordination with other development initiatives was expected to be achieved through partnerships with other initiatives such as (1) the Lower Awash-Lake Abbé Land and Seascape Project (IUCN-IGAD), (2) the PRAREV Programme to support the reduction of vulnerability in coastal fisheries (Government of Djibouti / Department of Fisheries/ IFAD), and (3) the PRMSRVCP / Millennium Village Project (MAWFLFR / Islamic Development Bank). It should be noted however, that the list of partnerships suggested in the project document includes mainly activities that have phased out. Collaboration with some key actors in these initiatives such as CERD and CORDIO sustained the linkage with some of these projects and programmes. The central position of MEDD and its predecessor MHUET in these initiatives is also a factor contributing to coherence and synergy of the MPA project.

3.1.3) Planned stakeholder participation at project design

The entire project design was adequately based on a multi-stakeholder approach and the coordination of engagement by various sectors. Especially the Ministry of Agriculture, Water, Fisheries, Livestock and Marine Resources (MAWFLMR), Ministry of Equipment and Transport (MET), Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority (DPFZA), the Ministry of Higher Education have a direct interest and role to play in the implementation of the project.

A participatory approach was adopted to facilitate the continued involvement of local stakeholders including the vulnerable and marginalized members of the community (including women) and institutions under outputs related to outcomes 2.1 to 2.3, in particular⁸. Wherever possible, opportunities were supposed to be created to train and employ local residents from villages proximate to sites targeted for project intervention.

The project's design satisfactorily incorporated several features to ensure ongoing and effective stakeholder participation in the project's implementation. The mechanisms to facilitate involvement and active participation of different interested parties in project implementation adequately comprised the following elements:

- Project inception workshop to enable stakeholder awareness of the start of project implementation. This workshop provided all stakeholders with updated information on the project and the project work plan. It allowed partners to fully understand and take ownership of the project; detail the roles, support services and complementary responsibilities the stakeholders.
- A Project Board or Steering Committee was constituted to ensure broad representation of all key interests throughout the project's implementation.

⁸ Outcome 2.1: Djibouti's MPA system expanded to add the Gulf of Goubet and the marine/ coastal stretch of Sagallou/ Kalaf to the adjacent already-existing Arta Plage MPA to form one large management unit; another unit of marine protected area will be established at Sable Blanc and Ras Ali.

Outcome 2.3: Direct and indirect benefits to local communities and stakeholders create tangible incentives to support marine biodiversity conservation objectives, most notably through the development of sustainable and MPA-compatible artisanal fisheries and tourism.

- Establishment of a Project Management team to oversee stakeholder engagement processes during project.
- Project communications to facilitate awareness of project.
- Stakeholder consultation and participation in project implementation.
- A comprehensive stakeholder consultation and participation process was developed and implemented for each project outputs/activities.

3.1.4) Analysis of Results Framework

As rightly pointed out in the Mid-term review, the analysis of the results framework leads to the following observations:

- **Component 1. Strengthening the effectiveness of Djibouti's MPA system through enhanced capacity of all stakeholders, including dialogue to mainstream biodiversity into maritime sectors**

The establishment of the entire institutional structure to manage AMP, including extensive stakeholder involvement and capacity building, as proposed under component 1, is crucial for effective conservation of marine ecosystems of Djibouti. The Project Document correctly emphasized the importance of biodiversity monitoring and the different roles of MPA staff and specialized research institutions such as CERD in this regard.

However, output 1.4 resulted to be too ambitious. According to the Project Document it involved creating and sustaining mechanisms for integrated planning and regular monitoring of the use of the maritime space and its resources, including through Strategic Environmental Assessment, Marine Spatial Plan implementation, and high-level coordination. The Djibouti legal environmental framework does not provide regulations on strategic environmental assessments (SEA). SEA is cited in the Environmental Law (2009), but no specific text describes in which cases and how they need to be carried out. SEA practice has not yet been mainstreamed in environmental governance in Djibouti. The development of SEA practice requires commitment from MEDD and other key actors involved in policy development and planning. This was beyond the scope of the MPA2 project, but should be encouraged.

- **Component 2. Expanding the national MPA network and strengthening MPA management at site level**

This component covered provisions for the conservation of marine protected areas including trained staff, legal, institutional and operational arrangements as well as infrastructure and logistics. The development of protected area development plans was included under this component without referring to standards of protected area management planning such as the IUCN/WCPA guidelines⁹ and PERSGA¹⁰.

Another weakness in the design of this component was the omission of a proper analysis of the legal framework for protected area management during the PPG phase. As a result, weaknesses in this framework were overlooked which complicated the enactment of new marine protected areas.

⁹ <https://www.iucn.org/content/guidelines-management-planning-protected-areas-0>

¹⁰ PERSGA 2016. Guidelines for the management of marine protected areas

➤ **Component 3. Sustainable financing mechanism for marine biodiversity and the national protected areas system**

Component 3 is based on the BIOFIN¹¹ approach for the development of sustainable finance of protected areas. In the Project Document, the starting point of this component is the establishment of a National Environment Fund or an alternative mechanism/ structure. This is supposed to be achieved by the following outputs: (3.1) policy and institutional analysis and financial needs assessment, (3.2) the development of a strategy to mobilize PA funding, (3.3) the operationalization of this fund, and (3.4) capacity building.

The BIOFIN approach, however, is based on an extensive analysis of the context and resource requirements leading to the development of the best financing options. Accordingly, the following steps should have been more rigorously followed in the design of Component 3:

- Step 1: Finance Policy and Institutional Review: Assess the policy, institutional, and economic context for biodiversity finance and map existing finance solutions.
- Step 2: Biodiversity Expenditure Review: Measure and analyse current biodiversity expenditures from the public and private sectors, donors, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
- Step 3: Biodiversity Financial Review Assessment: Make a reliable estimate of the finances needed to achieve a country's biodiversity goals, and compare this to current biodiversity expenditures and other resources available.
- Step 4: Biodiversity Finance Plans: Develop a Biodiversity finance plan that identifies and mobilizes the resources and policies required to implement the most suitable finance solutions.

➤ **Component 4. Gender mainstreaming, knowledge management & M&E**

In the Project Document, participatory M&E follows the GEF frameworks, but the elaboration of knowledge management is mainly delegated to the development of a knowledge management plan by the project in the first year. Its impact was therefore relying too much on the performance of the responsible expert of the team. The same applied to the implementation of a gender mainstreaming strategy, although the Project Document provided more direction to this aspect in various sections. The development of the former (the knowledge management strategy) turned out to be omitted by the project.

3.1.5) Gender equality and women's empowerment

The SESP determined that the risks related to the project implementation with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment was low. The project promoted gender mainstreaming and capacity building among its project staff to improve socio-economic understanding of gender issues and strategy on gender mainstreaming at the level of the project and its context. A gender approach has been well anchored in the project design as follows:

- Gender mainstreaming is integrated in Component 4 of the project (Gender mainstreaming, Knowledge Management and M&E) and the Theory of Change explains the mechanisms that were used for this purpose (gender and community engagement expert, gender strategy, participatory monitoring and planning).

¹¹ <https://www.biofin.org/>

- Gender focused recruitment guidelines have been proposed for the recruitment of project staff.
- The preparation of a gender strategy and action plan by the gender and community engagement expert has been under Component 4, which resulted among others in specific (but limited) activities for vulnerable groups.
- In anticipation of this strategy, the project documents included a gender analysis of the project strategy which was prepared during the PPG phase and this has been used for the development of gender mainstreaming actions for all project Components.
- The Results Framework included gender-disaggregated indicators.

3.1.6) Social and Environmental Safeguards and UNDP risk log

The UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure conducted during the PPG concluded that the project had a low-risk rating regarding any unintended social and environmental impacts. Although the SESP did not elaborate on this risk, this value of the assessment seems adequate. Resources have declined in the past due to pressure from among others foreign fisheries. MPAs offer a framework for sustainable participatory resource management and control of "outsiders". The involvement of local fishers was envisaged in the MPA management and could be considered as an essential mitigation of the risk.

Risks in relation to project performance and sustainability have not been assessed in the Project Document, but the risks have been identified during the PPG phase and listed in the Risk Log annexed to the project document. A series of 8 risks were identified, the following 3 were given a "high" rating (high impact and high probability):

- Due to lack of awareness about or interest in the importance of marine biodiversity, the public and private sectors may be unwilling to compromise on lucrative short term economic or development opportunities.
- The absence of reliable financial flows to the MPA system undermines the effectiveness of MPA management beyond the duration of the project intervention.
- Lack of political power by MHUPE/DEDD based MPA management unit to address maritime environmental safety and protection of MPAs, marine natural resources and biodiversity effectively due to higher-level and powerful financial and business interests and corruption.

Mitigation measures were rightly identified but not easy to implement, especially with regards to the absence of financial flows to secure the sustainability of the MPA network (see section 3.3.5 on sustainability).

3.2) Project Implementation

3.2.1) Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements

The project has been executed under the National Implementation Modality (NIM), in which the GEF channels funds through its Implementing Agency (IA) – UNDP – for the agreed programme of work, as reflected in the Project Document, which has been endorsed by the GEF CEO and signed by representatives of UNDP and the Government of Djibouti. Under this arrangement, UNDP remains accountable to the GEF for overall project delivery, and is responsible for providing high-level oversight, technical and logistical support to the project's Implementing Partner (IP).

Under NIM, the Implementing Partner (IP) – in this case the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (before Ministry of Housing, Urban Planning and Environment) – assumes overall responsibility for day-to-day implementation or execution of the project, in accordance with the project's agreed Strategic Results Framework and budget, and following the terms laid out in the Letter of Agreement (LoA) between UNDP and the IP. More specifically, the implementation modality was "support to NIM", involving that all the payments were made by the UNDP, following strict and sometimes lengthy Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).

The project governance and management arrangements envisaged in the Project Document included:

A Project Board / Project Steering Committee – it ensured adequate guidance, oversight and integration of project activities. The PSC provided strategic advice to the Project Management Unit (PMU) for the implementation of project activities to ensure broader integration of the project activities within the national development goal of poverty reduction and sustainable development objectives. The Project Board was comprised of the following representatives/institutions: Project Director at MHUPE/DEDD (Chair), UNDP Djibouti, Ministry of Agriculture, Water, Fisheries, Livestock and Marine Resources (MAWFLMR), Ministry of Equipment and Transport (MET), Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority (DPFZA); and the Prefectures of Arta, Obock, Tadjourah. A member of the Union Nationale des femmes Djiboutiennes (UNFD, National Union of Djiboutian Women) joined the Project Board in the course of the project.

The **Project Management Unit (PMU)** was adequately established at the launch of the project within the Directorate of the Environment and Sustainable Development. The PMU operated under the direct authority of the DEDD, with hierarchical links to the General Secretariat and the Minister's Office. The PMU managed the activities of project and reported directly to the DEDD. In October 2021, a significant change occurred within the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development: the project was moved from the DEDD and placed under another directorate of the Ministry, the Directorate of Documentation, Information, and Communication (DDIC).

The Project Management Unit was composed of:

- National Project Coordinator.
- Principal Technical Advisor of the Project.
- Project financial assistant.
- Assistant in charge of communication.
- Assistant in charge of community development.
- Administrative Assistant of the Project.
- 5 ecogards
- 3 boat drivers

- A **Chief Technical Advisor** (part-time) - The Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) is an internationally recruited expert selected based on an open competitive process managed by UNDP. The CTA is responsible for providing technical backstopping to the Project, related to all project components.

A **high-level multi-stakeholder committee** for integrated coastal zone management was supposed to be convened by the Directorate of Environment and Sustainable Development (DEDD) / Ministry of Housing, Urban Planning and Environment (MHUPE). Member were supposed to include: Directorate of Fisheries / Ministry of Agriculture, Water, Fisheries, Livestock and Marine Resources (MAWFLMR), Directorate of Maritime Affairs / Ministry of Equipment and Transport (MET), Ports Authority / MET, Minister of Economy and Finance, National Tourism Office / Minister Delegate to the Minister of Economy and Finance, in charge of Trade, SMEs, Handicrafts, Tourism and Formalization, National Scientific Research Institution: CERD / Ministry of Higher Education and Research, and the National Coast Guard. Unfortunately, this multi-stakeholder committee was never set up by the project, but, under the authority of the DDIC, the PMU adequately collaborated with a range of institutions directly involved in MPA management, the main ones being as follows:

- The Djiboutian Coast Guard collaborated with the PMU in providing training and support to eco-guards in areas such as navigation, maritime safety, seamanship, boat engine mechanics, first aid, mission reporting, incident or accident documentation, boat maintenance, application of regulations, and MPA surveillance.
- The Djibouti Center for Studies and Research (CERD), under the Ministry of Higher Education and Research, was tasked with strengthening and involving scientific research in various development sectors, including the environment. The CERD, through its Marine Biology Laboratory, was responsible for conducting scientific studies in MPAs, including the survey of rare species, critical habitat studies (coral reefs), and monitoring seawater quality.
- The National Tourism Office of Djibouti (ONTD) was responsible for organizing, promoting, and regulating the tourism sector in the Republic of Djibouti. ONTD collaborates with the PMU for the protection of natural environments and the development of sustainable tourism. In this capacity, ONTD works with the PMU to raise awareness among tourists, including the installation of informative signs.
- The Directorate of Maritime Affairs, under the Ministry of Equipment and Transport, was responsible for organizing and developing merchant shipping and monitoring maritime transport. The Directorate of Maritime Affairs was supposed to assist the PMU in integrating the boundaries of MPAs into maritime navigation charts.
- The Union Nationale des femmes Djiboutiennes (UNFD), a non-profit NGO whose main mission is to advocate for women's rights and promote women's empowerment, was involved in MPA awareness campaigns in villages and promote income-generating activities.
- The Directorate of Fisheries was responsible for the development and improvement of fishing, technical studies, the dissemination of fishing and aquaculture methods, and the implementation of fishing programs and projects. The Directorate of Fisheries also ensured the enforcement of regulations related to maritime fishing and the monitoring and control of fishing activities within marine protected areas.

3.2.2) Adaptive management

No major changes were to be observed in the project during the project. The main attempt to realign some of the main objectives of the project happen during the MTR, which is an essential part of the project's adaptive management cycle and contributes to ongoing improvement and reflexive learning. Recommendations of the MTR were clear and reasonable but some of them also difficult to implement, especially given the fact that there was only one year left before the end of the project when the recommendations were formulated.

The feasibility of these recommendations should have been discussed further with the project board, the MPU and relevant stakeholders before their publication. Consequently, only very few of them were implemented, reducing the quality of the project's adaptive management:

Table 8: Status of MTR recommendations

	Recommendations of the MTR	Status of recommendations (at Terminal Evaluation)
Corrective actions		
1	Promote integrated coastal zone management - Review the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) of Djibouti - Integrate the Marine Spatial Plan, the revised legal and institutional framework for protected area management as well as innovative instruments for integrated planning such as Strategic Environmental Assessment in the CZMP - Evaluate and operationalize the National Committee for Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the perspective of the high-level multi-stakeholder committee as proposed in the project document	Recommendation not implemented.
2	Reinforce MPA management framework - Involve senior international expert in protected area management - Elaborate terms of reference and job descriptions for UGAP and its staff - Review of legislation developed by the project - Develop mechanisms for participatory MPA management - Develop monitoring and reporting system for surveillance and other activities of UGAP and consider monitoring tools (e.g., SMART, AIS, etc.)	Recommendation not implemented.
3	Implement/review/improve MPA mapping - Translate report on the geographical limits of the marine protected areas of the gulf of Tadjourah & Ghoubet el Kharab in French - Map MPA "Islands of the seven brothers including the marine sites of the Obock region, the bay and the mangrove of the village of Khor Angar", which has not been covered in the MSP - Review mapping MPA Kalif-Sagalou - Include boundaries Haramous MPA in the Decree - Consider large AMPs and the application of zoning according to different spatial and resource use options, to optimize the management of pressures and impacts, and to avoid micro-management	Recommendation partly implemented. The report on geographical limits was translated into French and Haramous is mentioned in the Decree.
4	Counteract deadlock in development MPA finance - Translate and validate consultancy report on national fund for environment and climate change in French - Recruit an international consultant with BIOFIN experience to guide process - Recruit a national consultant (finance, institutional) to support - Carry out policy and institutional review - Assess MPA management resource expenditures - Assess MPA management resource needs and availability - Elaborate biodiversity conservation finance plan	Recommendation partly implemented. Report translated into French and a national consultant was hired to complement the study on conservation finance (work still in progress during TE). Some efforts were also made to establish a fee system for whale shark observation (currently in

	Recommendations of the MTR	Status of recommendations (at Terminal Evaluation)
		progress) and to initiate a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) with hotels for the management of the Rasali Protected Area
5	Increase the participation of non-governmental and local stakeholders in the Project Board	Adequate inclusion of National Union of Djiboutian Women
6	Elaborate a project exit strategy immediately after the MTR planning in detail all the actions and inputs required to implement the concluded and agreed MTR recommendations	Not implemented.
7	Complete assessment of monitoring indicators - Contract a competent institute to determine precise definitions of Indicators 1 and 2, methodologies, and determine indicator values within a month after MTR. - Seek assistance for technical support to complete the update of the Financial Sustainability Score Card at MTR level and complete the project monitoring framework with regard to indicators 12 and 13.	Not implemented
Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project		
8	Prepare MPA management plans for the existing MPAs: Moucha et Maskhali, Iles des sept frères, and D'Haramous. according to WCPA standards	Not implemented
9	Development of a SMART monitoring and surveillance approach considering the use of new technology including such as SMART, InReach and drones	Not implemented
Future directions underlining main objectives		
10	Elaborate a Protected Area Masterplan , spelling out long term ambitions, biodiversity values and conservation objectives, protected area network design, management and quality standards for protected areas, institutional arrangements, capacity requirements and resource needs.	Not implemented (beyond scope of the project)
11	Explore the development (benefits, failures, risks) of the establishment of a Protected Area Management Agency by comparing best practices in different countries.	Not implemented (beyond scope of the project)
12	Explore development of Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) for the management of protected areas by comparing best practices in other countries.	PPP adequately explored (but not finalized)
13	Promote the development and application of Strategic Environmental Assessment in planning processes by: - Engaging the MEDD in the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) - Training MEDD staff in the principles and application of SEA - Elaborating a SEA policy - Developing rules and regulations for the application of SEA	Not implemented (beyond scope of the project)
14	Establish an Environmental Policy Consultation Group supporting consultation, collaboration and synergy on environmental policy development and management in Djibouti involving Government and technical and financial partners, considering: - The possible and required roles of this platform - An evaluation of function of the National Commission on Climate Change in this regard - Requirements in terms of execution, partners and frequency of meetings	Not implemented (beyond scope of the project)

3.2.3) Project Finance and Co-finance

Table 9: GEF budget according to Project Document

	YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	TOTAL
Component1	\$163 401	\$113 400	\$109 400	\$89 400	\$79 400	\$555 001
Component 2	\$315 600	\$486 875	\$331 600	\$233 600	\$151 800	\$1 519 475
Component 3	\$85 000	\$85 000	\$65 000	\$65 000	\$55 000	\$355 000
Component 4	\$40 300	\$26 300	\$82 800	\$26 300	\$82 800	\$258 500
Management	\$33 598	\$26 200	\$25 200	\$25 200	\$24 200	\$134 398
TOTAL BUDGET	\$637 899	\$737 775	\$614 000	\$439 500	\$393 200	\$2 822 374

Table 10: Project expenditures and commitments as of October 2023

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 (Oct)	TOTAL
Component1	\$37 963	\$100 950	\$70 285	\$67 383	\$57 262.72	\$122 594.22	456 437.94
Component 2	\$26 002	\$714 807	\$296 526	\$134 653	\$58 759.56	\$65 168.88	1 295 916.44
Component 3		\$9 193	\$19 505	\$59 387	\$118 653.04	\$101 129.55	307 867.50
Component 4	\$8 519	\$19 068	\$56 907	\$45 909	\$60 283.55	\$37 018.12	227 704.67
Management	\$52 253	\$22 607	\$19 175	\$42 945	\$-18 122.29	\$-11 169.49	107 688.22
Total expenses	\$124 737	\$866 624	\$462 397	\$350 278	\$276 836.58	\$314 741.06	2 395 614.77

As shown above, the project total budget was of US\$2 822 374. As of October 2023, the total expenditures and commitments amounted to US\$2 395 615, equivalent to an acceptable delivery rate of 85%, and a remaining balance of US\$427 000, mostly for component 1 and 4.

Table 10 shows some incoherences, with negative numbers for management budget in 2022 and 2023. This point still needs to be clarified, also because one of the conclusions of the MTR was the that the total management budget had been overspent (108 %) one year before the end of the project.

Table 11: Co-financing as per project document

Government of Djibouti	USD 3 120 000
Government of Djibouti (PRAREV)	USD 6 520 000
Government of Djibouti (PRMSRVCP/Islamic Development Bank)	USD 1 500 000
World Food Programme	USD 750 000
IGAD-IUCN-Nature Djibouti (BMP)	USD 500 000
Total co-financing	USD 12 390 000

As shown in the table 11 above, a total amount of US\$12 390 000 was expected in the form of co-finance at the start of the project. This included direct contributions from the Government to the project, as well as Government contributions via the PRAREV project. Other contributions were committed through the PRMSRVCP project (Islamic Development Bank, World Food Programme (Food for Work on nationwide beach clean-up), and the IGAD-IUCN-Nature Djibouti Biodiversity Management Programme (EU funding).

Table 12: Confirmed Sources of Co-Financing at TE Stage

Sources of Co-Financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Amount (US\$)
Recipient Country Gov't	Government of Djibouti	In-kind	USD 3 120 000
Recipient Country Gov't	Government of Djibouti (PRAREV)	In-kind	USD 6 520 000
Donor Agency	World Food Program	In-kind	USD 750 000
Donor Agency	IGAD-IUCN-Nature Djibouti (BMP)	In-kind	USD 500 000
Total Co-Financing			USD 10 890 000

US\$ 10 890 00 co-finance has been confirmed. The cofinancing of US\$ 1 500 000 from the Islamic Development Bank through the PRMSRVCP project is unlikely to formalize.

3.2.4) Monitoring & Evaluation

The Monitoring & Evaluation was well-conceived, practical and well detailed in the project document. The project results framework was planned to be monitored annually and evaluated periodically during project implementation. The Outcome 4 on 'Gender mainstreaming, Knowledge Management & M&E' adequately detailed this important M&E aspect of the project. M&E oversight and monitoring responsibilities were well established and shared between the PMU, the project board, project implementing partner and the UNDP Country Office.

The Project Manager was adequately responsible for day-to-day project management and regular monitoring of project results and risks, including social and environmental risks. The Project Manager ensured that all project staff maintained a high level of transparency, responsibility and accountability in M&E and reporting of project results. He regularly informed the Project Board, the UNDP Country Office and the UNDP-GEF RTA of delays or difficulties as they arise during implementation so that appropriate support and corrective measures could be adopted. Good communication was possible thanks to appropriate monthly meetings between the MEDD and UNDP on the jointly implemented GEF funded projects, as well as meetings of the project management and the Cabinet of MEDD.

The PMU adequately developed annual work plans inspired by the multi-year work plan, including annual output targets to support the efficient implementation of the project. The Project Manager ensured that the standard UNDP and GEF M&E requirements were fulfilled to the highest quality.

The PMU satisfactorily prepared annual Project Implementation Reports (PIR), presenting an overall assessment of progress, project governance, risk management, knowledge management, communication and stakeholder engagement. No PIR covered the period from July 2018 (signature project) to June 2019, but following PIR are available covering the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2023. The quality of the PIR increased over time. The results framework indicators were partly monitored annually in time for evidence-based reporting in the GEF PIR, and that the monitoring of risks and the various plans/strategies developed to support project implementation (e.g. gender strategy) occurred on a regular basis.

Project Implementation Reports satisfactorily included the assessments of the indicators determined in the Results framework of the project document, even if the indicators of the monitoring framework have not been assessed systematically. Indicators 1 and 2 indicated respectively the status of biodiversity and habitat. A consistent methodology and baseline was supposed to be determined during the project inception by a competent institution such as CERD. However, this was not done and this omission has not been signalled before the MTR. Indicators 12 and 13 are results from the Financial Sustainability Scorecard. A baseline for these indicators had been determined during the PPG phase. During the Terminal Evaluation mission, Financial Sustainability ScoreCard (FSSC) were still unavailable, even if a national consultant has been commissioned for it.

The project document also proposed a well-detailed Monitoring Plan (in annex B) that adequately presented, for each indicator listed in the project result framework, the data source, frequency, responsibility of data collection, means of verification and risks associated. Unfortunately, the methodology for the assessment of some of these indicators was supposed to be elaborated by the project and the baseline of some indicators was to be determined. This was not done, and this fact was even reported in the various PIRs without taking the necessary action. The project documents states *"The Project Manager will collect results data according to the following monitoring plan, which is*

based on and refers to the Project Results Framework in Section VI, most notably for the indicator targets". This responsibility for project monitoring was not sufficiently well taken. As a consequence, the project never had the chance to monitor the following key indicators:

Table 13: Key indicators that were not monitored by the project

Monitoring	Indicator Description	Status (Terminal evaluation)
Objective: Enhance the resilience of Djibouti's marine biodiversity through increasing institutional capacity, enhancing financial sustainability and management effectiveness of the MPA system, and mainstreaming marine biodiversity into key maritime sectors	Indicator 1. Good status maintenance or positive trends in marine and coastal indicator species: records of whale sharks, population density and size of grouper species and napoleon wrasse, records of dugong, sea turtle nesting tracks and successful nesting attempts, and seabird numbers	Not monitored.
	Indicator 2. Coral reef health status in MPAs as measured by: Proportion of benthic habitat covered by live coral assemblages, versus bleached corals, algae and non-living substrate (transects); # of coral recruits per m2; grazer fish diversity and abundance.	Not monitored.
Outcome 3.1: National Environment Fund (or an alternative mechanism/ structure) is set up, captures income from national sources and disburses regular financing towards the national PA system, helping to reduce the financing gap.	Indicator 12. Funding gap for management of MPAs, as evidenced by the Financial Score Card	Not monitored (in progress)
	Indicator 13. Financial Scorecard Score	

The Project Board could probably have taken additional corrective actions to ensure the project achieved the desired results. Overall, the M&E remains satisfactory / moderately satisfactory.

Table 14: Monitoring & Evaluation - Ratings

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Rating
M&E design at entry	Satisfactory
M&E Plan Implementation	Moderately Satisfactory
Overall Quality of M&E	Moderately Satisfactory

3.2.5) UNDP implementation/oversight

The UNDP delivered satisfactorily on activities related to project identification, concept preparation, appraisal, preparation of detailed proposal, approval and start-up oversight, supervision, completion and evaluation. Stronger support could have been provided by UNDP on several fronts: firstly, by expediting procedures and payments more swiftly, and secondly, by better identifying the need for additional technical assistance to accelerate tangible results.

Oversight and guidance from the Implementing Partner was provided through the project director who was also the director of the Directorate in the Ministry housing the project. After the implementation of the reform within the Ministry, this has shifted to the Directorate of Communication, Information

and Documentation. This transition did not negatively impact the project. The Ministry has adequately supported the setting up of the protected area management unit (UGAP) which is attached to the Directorate of Sustainable Development in the new structure of the Ministry. The project directors have been supportive of the project and did everything they could to ensure its successful implementation.

Each implementing partner individually demonstrated appropriate performance, but there may have been a lack of communication regarding the project's difficulties, especially during project board meetings. The approach often involved ignoring or downplaying problems rather than addressing them and finding solutions. This resulted in excessive delays and a negative mid-term evaluation. Some corrective measures were subsequently implemented, but by then, time had become too limited to achieve all the expected outcomes.

Table 15: UNDP Implementation/Oversight & Implementation Partner Execution - Ratings

UNDP Implementation/Oversight & Implementation Partner Execution	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	Satisfactory
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	Satisfactory
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	Moderately Satisfactory

3.3) Project Results and Impacts

3.3.1) Relevance

The project is in line with national policies, including the “Djibouti Vision 2035” and the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP), more specifically its axis 1 on conservation policies, including the setting up of new Protected Areas and a group of ecoguards.

The project is consistent with Djibouti commitments under international multilateral agreements and conventions to which the country is a signatory (including the CDB, UNFCCC, and UNCDD).

The project is fully aligned with the Country Programme Document for Djibouti (2018–2022) that aimed to *“enhance the sustainable use of land, ecosystems and natural resources”* through an increased collaboration with the Ministries of Housing and Environment; Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries; Energy and Natural Resources; and Infrastructure and Transport, as well as with United Nations partners, civil society, and industry stakeholders. Well in line with the project’s objectives, the Country Programme Document also stated that, *“with support from the Global Environment Facility and other donors, a priority focus will be fragile marine ecosystems and coastal biodiversity, helping Djibouti develop capacities of marine protected area systems and mainstream biodiversity protection into industry sectors”*.

This project aimed at contributing to the Focal Area 3 country outcome included in the UNDAF/Country Programme Document on “Resilience of populations to natural hazards and food insecurity”. The UNDAF target is to increase the number of hectares of coastal and marine habitats that are managed sustainably under an in-situ conservation regime to 60,880 ha. The project is even more ambitious with a target of 83,555.

The project was well-aligned with the UNDP Biodiversity and Ecosystems Global Framework (2012-2020), namely:

- Signature Programme 1: “Integrating biodiversity and ecosystem management into development planning and production sector activities to safeguard biodiversity and maintain ecosystem services that sustain human wellbeing.”
- Signature Programme 2: “Unlocking the potential of protected areas, including indigenous and community conserved areas, to conserve biodiversity while contributing towards sustainable development.”

The project is also well-linked to the output 2.5 of the UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017: legal and regulatory frameworks, policies and institutions enabled to ensure the conservation, sustainable use, and access and benefit sharing of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems, in line with international conventions and national legislation.

The current MPA2 Project can be seen as a follow-up to the previous MPA1 Project, titled *“Etablir une gestion efficace des Aires Marines Protégées (AMP) à Djibouti”* (PIMS 4049), which was executed by the same implementation partner and concluded in 2015. The outcomes of the earlier project were rated as moderately satisfactory on average, but several critical deliverables, including the demarcation and gazettment of AMPs, the development of AMP management plans, the establishment of sustainable AMP funding mechanisms, and income-generating activities, remained unrealized.

The MPA2 project has built upon its predecessor but addresses a substantially increased threat to Djibouti's marine and coastal ecosystems. Additionally, new evidence has emerged, indicating the

presence of highly valuable coral communities within the Gulf of Tadjoura that could be more effectively protected than the three existing designated areas along the outer coast, two of which have already suffered significant degradation (Musha and Maskali) or are at risk (Haramous) due to coastal developments that the MHUPE/DEED could not prevent.

Key observations and lessons learned from the transition between the two projects include:

- Lack of continuity between various GEF biodiversity projects.
- The AMPs established during the first project, "MPA1," did not receive sustained support, leaving them without clear demarcation and implementation decrees.
- An insufficient assessment of the legal and policy framework for environmental conservation during the PPG phase of MPA2.
- Identification of a funding gap not adequately addressed in the Project Document.
- Insufficient alignment from best practice standards (WCPA/IUCN) in the MPA management planning process due to a lack of expertise.
- Failure to follow the BIOFIN approach due to a lack of appropriate guidance.

3.3.2) Effectiveness and progress towards objectives

The project has made progress towards achieving its objectives, although it is important to note that they will only be partially fulfilled. Here are some of the most notable results:

➤ **4 new MPAs (almost) established:**

- The Marine Protected Area (MPA) network now encompasses approximately 8% of Djibouti's territorial waters, inching closer to the Aichi target of 10%.
- Section 2 of the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT), as assessed in July 2023, gave encouraging results¹²:

MPA	Score obtained (out of 102)	Score (in %)
Ras-Ali/Sable Blanc	62	61%
Ghoubet	64	63%
Arta	71	70%
Kalaf/Sagalou	63	62%

- Significant legislative milestones were reached, unfortunately not finalized yet:
 - New law on Protected Areas was adopted in May 2023 by the Council of Ministers of Djibouti. This law adequately defines the measures and mechanisms necessary to preserve marine biodiversity and ensure responsible exploitation of resources.
 - Validation of the law by the Council of Ministers confirms the government's support and commitment to preserving the marine environment and

¹² METT section 3 (financial scorecard) was being assessed by a national consultant during the Terminal Evaluation.

protecting Djibouti's protected areas. It demonstrates the political will to strengthen conservation measures and ensure the sustainability of the country's precious marine ecosystems.

- Unfortunately, the legal process is not finalized yet. The new law still needs to be voted by the national assembly and promulgated by the President.
- The implementing decree (covering the 4 new MPAs, former MPAs are not covered) is drafted but not signed/implemented until the law is promulgated.

➤ **Improved MPA management**

- Accurate delimitation in line with the Marine Spatial Plan of Djibouti (but no buoys installed and no uploading of MPA delimitation into and no transposition to nautical charts).
- Validated 4 Management Plans but:
 - low appropriation/implementation
 - Management plans of the already existing 3 MPAs were not done (deviation from what was planned in the Project Document)
- Training of eco-guards and pilots has been provided by the Djibouti Coast Guard on various subjects including navigation, maritime safety, seamanship and first aid, participation in the establishment of an effective monitoring system of MPAs, maintenance and monitoring of boats, mechanics, support to eco-guards in the implementation of regulations on the protection of the marine and coastal environment. In 2023, training sessions were arranged for eco-guards, equipping them with the skills to conduct underwater dives for monitoring coral health.
- Informed fishermen and regional authorities

➤ **The project has succeeded in adopting a multisectoral approach to MPA management:**

- MoUs signed between the project and the following institutions:
 - Department of Maritime Affairs (Direction des Affaires Maritimes)
 - Coast Guard (Garde Côte)
 - Djibouti Study and Research Center (Centre d'étude et de recherche de Djibouti, CERD)
 - Djibouti National Tourist Office (Office National du Tourisme de Djibouti, ONTD)
 - Directorate of Fisheries (Direction de la Pêche)
 - National Women Union of Djibouti (UNFD)
- But the sustainability of these agreements is not yet certain, they should be renewed given the post-project situation.

➤ **Protected Areas Management Unit (UGAP) has been set up** with the MEDD, it is strengthened with the ongoing transfer of the project staff under this unit (see section on sustainability).

➤ **Reference study on biodiversity status conducted.** However, capacities are not sufficient for regular data updates.

➤ **Local development and gender:**

- Gender action plan elaborated
- Provision of equipment and infrastructure for women:
 - 4 workshops have been rehabilitated for women
 - 8 women were trained in sewing and craftsmanship (training of trainers)
 - 20 sewing machines and craft material are still expected to be delivered to the 4 beneficiary communities.

- The project contributed to the global strategic objectives of the GEF and UNDP, making contribution to the achievement of the following Sustainable Development Goals and Aichi Biodiversity Targets:

Table 16: Project's contribution to SDGs (at TE stage)

SDGs	Level of contribution
SDG 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	The project contributed to SDG1, first by promoting marine resource management and by sponsoring alternative income-generating activities.
SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	The project contributed to climate change adaptation by raising awareness and increasing, to a certain extent, resilience.
SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	This is the project's main contribution to SDGs. Even if the national network of MPA is not fully operational yet, significant progress has been made.
SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels	The project contributed to that objective too, especially by supporting the development of a stronger Protected Area Management Unit within the MEDD, the UGAP.

Table 17: Project's contribution to Aichi Biodiversity Targets (at TE stage)

SDGs	Level of contribution
ABT 1: By 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably.	Substantial contribution from the project.
ABT 6: By 2020 all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem based approaches, so that overfishing is avoided, recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species, fisheries have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems and the impacts of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits.	Noticeable contribution from the project.
ABT 11: By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based	Key contribution from the project, the extension of the total coverage of the MPA domain from 51,880 ha to 83,555 ha of seascape even if

conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes.	management efficiency of the MPAs is not fully secured yet.
ABT 14: By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.	Some contributions from the project.
ABT 19: By 2020, knowledge, the science base and technologies relating to biodiversity, its values, functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of its loss, are improved, widely shared and transferred, and applied.	Some contributions from the project.
ABT 20: By 2020, at the latest, the mobilization of financial resources for effectively implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 from all sources, and in accordance with the consolidated and agreed process in the Strategy for Resource Mobilization, should increase substantially from the current levels. This target will be subject to changes contingent to resource needs assessments to be developed and reported by Parties.	Some contributions from the project.

Table 18: Effectiveness - Ratings & Achievement Summary Table

Measure	Rating ¹³	Achievement description
Project strategy	Satisfactory	The overall project strategy is in line with national policy and remains highly relevant to marine biodiversity conservation in Djibouti. Lack of continuity with the former MPA project.
Objective Enhance the resilience of Djibouti's marine biodiversity through increasing institutional capacity, enhancing financial sustainability and management effectiveness of the MPA system, and mainstreaming marine biodiversity into key maritime sectors	Medium Satisfactory	Management capacity and effectiveness have been significantly improved by the project, but there are shortcomings with regard to mainstreaming biodiversity in key maritime sectors and serious shortcomings with regard to financial sustainability.
Outcome 1.1 A unit dedicated to the management of MPAs is institutionalized within the restructured MHUPE, has adequate capacities for planning, coordinating, managing, monitoring and evaluating the system of MPAs in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, and is supported in its mission by capacitated collaborators in line with their responsibilities, especially regarding law enforcement.	Satisfactory	Protected Areas Management Unit (UGAP) has been created and should be strengthened by the project team that will integrate it. Still work in progress but encouraging.
Outcome 1.2 Strengthened MPA management effectiveness allows engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including those economic sectors having adverse impacts on marine and coastal biodiversity related	Medium Unsatisfactory	Key MoUs have been concluded on collaboration with the main public stakeholders but the pursuit of those MoUs after the project is uncertain also because there is no multi-sector committee in place. Collaboration with the private sector has not

¹³HS (highly satisfactory), S (satisfactory), MS (medium satisfactory), MU (medium unsatisfactory), U (unsatisfactory), HU (highly unsatisfactory)

to port developments and operations, including maritime traffic		materialized (even if a PPP with a hotel is under negotiation). No stakeholder committee in place.
Outcome 2.1 Djibouti's MPA system expanded to add the Gulf of Goubet and the marine/ coastal stretch of Sagallou/ Kalaf to the adjacent already-existing Arta Plage MPA to form one large management unit; another unit of marine protected area will be established at Sable Blanc and Ras Ali.	Medium Satisfactory	A law was voted to cover in 4 new MPAs. Nevertheless, the legal process is not fully finalized. The law still needs to be promulgated by the Council of Ministers and by the President. The decree also need to be promulgated.
Outcome 2.2 Increased management effectiveness for Djibouti's MPAs provides greater protection to globally significant habitats and species over approx. 83,555 ha of seascape.	Medium Satisfactory	Equipments, infrastructures and training for PA staff provided. Management plans have been elaborated for the 4 new MPAs but their appropriation by the main stakeholders is limited and operationalisation of these plans has not started yet. Additionally, former MPAs are still without any management plan. Financial scorecards
Outcome 2.3 Direct and indirect benefits to local communities and stakeholders create tangible incentives to support marine biodiversity conservation objectives, most notably through the development of sustainable and MPA-compatible artisanal fisheries and tourism.	Unsatisfactory	Income-generating activities have been identified (sewing and craftsmanship). However, only 8 women benefited from a training (training of trainers) and the 20 sewing machines were not delivered to the communities at the time of the TE field visit.
Outcome 3.1 National Environment Fund (or an alternative mechanism/ structure) is set up, captures income from national sources and disburses regular financing towards the national PA system, helping to reduce the financing gap.	Highly Unsatisfactory	An early report recommended the setting up of a public environmental fund in 2020, but no actions were taken to implement this idea. Furthermore this report was judged insufficient, an additional study for a funding by the private sector was undergoing during TE but no sustain financing will be secured for MPAs in the short term (except national budget, lobby necessary).
Outcome 4.1 Rigorous M&E allows effective adaptive management during project implementation	Satisfactory	Participatory monitoring and planning applied in Project Board.
Outcome 4.2 Lessons learned by the project are made publicly available to national stakeholders and shared with international peer projects.	Medium Satisfactory	No knowledge management plan has been developed, but project lessons and other publications have been disseminated.
Outcome 4.3 Measurable socio-economic and equity benefits to women from short-term project activities and its long-term impacts.	Medium Satisfactory	Gender strategy and action plan have been elaborated, low number of direct beneficiaries (8 women, training of trainers).

3.3.3) Efficiency

a) Project management and timeliness

Overall, the project has been well-managed. A dedicated and motivated project team with no turnover and a well-trained team of 5 field eco-guards and 3 boat drivers has been established. The project's administrative management was satisfactory, and the project navigated through the restructuring of the Ministry of Environment. This included a smooth transition of the Project Management Unit (PMU) from the Directorate of Environment to the Directorate of Information and Communication, resulting in a change in project leadership.

However, there were significant technical shortcomings, especially in Component 1 and even more so in Component 3. This was partially attributed to:

- A lack of technical expertise within the team.
- Limited technical support from the Regional Technical Assistance, due to the fact that this role has been occupied by 3 different people over the course of the project.

The PMU lacked knowledge and experience in establishing and managing protected areas. This lack of expertise has been even more detrimental for identifying and implementing long-term financial solutions, which should have led to the setting up of an environmental fund.

The project did receive valuable support from the CTA (Chief Technical Advisor) and international experts, although their limited availability posed some challenges. In total, the CTA offered less than 100 man/days over 3 years, a significant lesser effort than what was established in the Project Document ("part-time over 5 years @ USD 50,000/year"). Additional technical support could have been beneficial, particularly given the low level of implication from the Regional Technical Assistance (RTA).

The support from the UNDP national office has been particularly key for the project. This included hiring a dedicated person for processing payments, and very useful monthly meetings between the PMU, UNDP, and the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development to follow up ongoing contracts and activities.

Delays were encountered at various stages, including a slow start in initiating activities. The first year and a half of the project saw limited progress, partly due to the impact of COVID-19. However, there was a noticeable acceleration of activities in 2021, particularly under Component 2.

A major source of delays has come from the negotiated procedures, which was not a fully-fledge National Implementation Modality (NIM), but an intermediate solution called "support to NIM", under which payments were made by UNDP. Consequently, payments underwent thorough verification processes, including alignment with the working plan, adherence to Standard Operating Procedures, and quality control of deliverables. These processes, although essential, resulted in systematic delays and frustrations. The transition of UNDP management system platform, from Atlas to Quantum that took place in early 2023, also resulted in additional delays.

Even more central for the overall success of the project, the legal processes for gazetting the new MPAs took much longer than expected, because the 2004 law on Protected Areas was not sufficiently flexible to allow the setting up of new Protected Areas. As a result, the MPA2 project had to work at the drafting of a new law on Protected Areas, which took a lot of time. The promulgation of this law remains pending at the time of the project Terminal Evaluation.

The mid-term Review (MTR) was also delayed, and the final report was released only August 2022. A first MTR mission was adequately commissioned in February 2021. However, divergent opinions on the mission's findings resulted in an impasse within the process. As a result, the decision was made to restart the MTR with an alternative team. As a consequence, remaining time before the end of the project was too limited and most of the recommendations made by the MTR consultants could not be implemented (see table 7 on Status of MTR recommendations).

b) Resource allocation and cost effectiveness

Several infrastructures have been successfully built or rehabilitated:

- For a reasonable price, 4 community workshops (for sewing and handcrafting) have been rehabilitated for women in 4 communities, 2 of them are shown here under:



- 2 ecoguards stations have been build in Tadjourah and Arta:



As shown in the picture above, the ecoguard station of Arta suffered damaged from a storm in 2023. It should be rehabilitated before the end of the project.

- The project successfully provided 2 vehicles, 3 boats, and necessary equipment for an improved MPA management such as navigation tools, binoculars, cameras, drones, and communication radios.
- These setbacks have had a negative impact as the MPAs lack the necessary visibility, making them too abstract and intangible in practice.
- Language posed challenges as Project Implementation Reports had to be drafted in English, creating unnecessary additional complexity. While the quality of PIRs improved over time, some technical reports were still in English, limiting stakeholder engagement. The Mid-Term Review recommended translating certain reports into French, but the efficiency of this effort was not optimized. Technical reports should have been systematically drafted in French for a better overall efficiency.

- The project played a crucial role in integrating environmental considerations into the development plan of the Arta region, even though it was not part of the Project Document. Additionally, the project took charge of workshops to formulate the national strategy for the blue economy. These additional efforts were very welcome and demonstrated the project's ability to provide efforts for important unforeseen outputs.
- The 6-month no-cost extension was justified and well-documented. Nevertheless, at the time of Terminal Evaluation, the project seemed to be missing time to finalize on time all expected deliverables.
- Ongoing work at the time of Terminal Evaluation included the following elements, with concerns about their implementation and appropriation by national stakeholders before the project ends:
 - Development of a Financial Sustainability Scorecard (METT) to assess the funding gap for the MPA network.
 - Ongoing supplementary study on private sector financing, including the implementation of a whale shark observation fee
 - Installation of mooring buoys (see under)

Table 19: Challenges faced in buoys and signage panels installation.

The project could not install any buoys, which is quite indicative of some challenges it faced. Buoys are vital for MPAs because they clearly define MPA boundaries, deter illegal activities, facilitate scientific monitoring, support research and education, preventing anchor damage, and contribute to effective MPA management.

The Project Document originally included plans for the installation of the following buoys:

- 35 demarcation buoys to demarcate the MPAs (at a cost of USD 84,000).
- 20 mooring buoys (at a cost of USD 80,000)

However, at the time of the Terminal Evaluation, no buoys had been installed yet.

Given that the legal process for the creation of the MPAs had not been finalized, the **demarcation buoys** could not be installed.

However, there was no justification for the delays in the installation of the **mooring buoys**. A contract for the purchase and installation of these mooring buoys was being processed during the Terminal Evaluation, but their installation of the 20 mooring buoys by the project's conclusion was still uncertain.

For similar reasons, the commissioning of the **100 signage panels** (USD 50,000) was also postponed, MPAs won't have any signage panels by the end of the project, which can be considered as a lost opportunity.

Table 20: Progress towards results matrix

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 st PIR ¹⁴ (self-reported) - PIR 2020	Midterm Target	End-of-project Target	Terminal Evaluation Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
Objective: Enhance the resilience of Djibouti's marine biodiversity through increasing institutional capacity, enhancing financial sustainability and management effectiveness of the MPA system, and mainstreaming marine biodiversity into key maritime sectors	Indicator 1. Good status maintenance or positive trends in marine and coastal indicator species: records of whale sharks, population density and size of grouper species and napoleon wrasse, records of dugong, sea turtle nesting tracks and successful nesting attempts, and seabird numbers	To be defined at project start, considering also recent surveys from Cousteau Society and KAI Marine.	Baseline level in marine and coastal indicator species has not been established yet. Baseline studies have just started to be conducted.	Maintained	Maintained to +10%	No appropriate data available	Not possible	This indicator should have been re-defined based on data availability in the biodiversity assessment
	Indicator 2. Coral reef health status in MPAs as measured by: Proportion of benthic habitat covered by live coral assemblages, versus bleached corals, algae and non-living substrate (transects); # of coral recruits per m ² ; grazer fish diversity and abundance.	To be defined at project start, considering also recent surveys from Cousteau Society and KAI Marine.	Baseline level in coral reef health has not been established yet. Baseline studies have just started to be conducted in complement of surveys from Cousteau Society, KAI Marine and more recent surveys on 3 sites conducted under PRAREV.	Maintained	Maintained to +10%	No appropriate data available	Not possible	This indicator should have been re-defined based on data availability in the biodiversity assessment
Outcome 1.1: A unit dedicated to the management of MPAs is institutionalized	Indicator 3. Scores of the Capacity Development Scorecard (CDS) for PA Systems	Systemic capacity: 9/27 (33.3%)	There are no new scores yet for the CDS.	+15% over baseline	+30% over baseline	Systemic capacity: 19/27 (70%) Institutional capacity: 29/45 (69%)	S	The indicator values are very positive, the UGAP is well positioned to adequately

¹⁴ PIR 2020 has been used here as PIR 2019 was not available

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 st PIR ¹⁴ (self-reported) - PIR 2020	Midterm Target	End-of-project Target	Terminal Evaluation Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
within the restructured MHUPE, has adequate capacities for planning, coordinating, managing, monitoring and evaluating the system of MPAs in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, and is supported in its mission by capacitated collaborators in line with their responsibilities, especially regarding law enforcement.	(individual, institutional and systemic capacities in PA management)	Institutional capacity: 17/45 (37.8 %) Individual capacity: 5/21 (23.8%) Total: 31/93 (33.3%)				Individual capacity: 17/21 (79%) Total: 65/93 (72%)		manage the national network of Protected Areas (with uncertainties regarding its financial capacity)
	Indicator 4. Established management structures and gender HR (a) MPA management unit officially established (b) Number of professional staff (male/female)	(a) No Unit (b) Female: 0 Male: 0	An MPA unit has been newly established within MUET, as a sub-unit and an integral part of the Biodiversity Unit of the DEDD. 4 DEDD staff have been transferred to the MPA Unit. (a) A PA management unit has been established as part of MUET restructuring. (b) Male: 4 Female : 0	(a) Unit operational (b) Female: 2 Male: 2	(a) Unit operational and with recurrent budget (b) Female: >4 Male: >4	(a) A PA management unit has been established as part of MUET restructuring. (b) 4 engineers, 5 eco-guards, 3 pilots and 2 drivers + PMU staff		
Outcome 1.2: Strengthened MPA management effectiveness allows engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including those economic sectors having adverse impacts on marine and coastal biodiversity related to port developments and operations,	Indicator 5. Number of key impact sector partners (a) participating in multi stakeholder committee (b) contributing to sustainable financial mechanism	(a) No multi-stakeholder committee in place. (b) No partners supporting PA finance	a) A multi-stakeholder committee is already in place since 1997. However, the committee did not hold frequent meetings in the last few years. Hence, the project will revitalize the committee and reinstate the periodic meetings of the committee members. This is planned for the end of October 2020. The project involved some partners like the coastal guards, the directorate of	(a) 5 partners actively involved (b) 3 financing partners	(a) 10 partners actively involved (b) 6 financing partners	a) No multistakeholder committee b) No key impact sector partners supporting PA finance	U	No multi stakeholder committee has been created and no sustainable financial mechanism has been developed Except the EU in Arta Plage, no financing partners are identified for the after project.

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 st PIR ¹⁴ (self-reported) - PIR 2020	Midterm Target	End-of-project Target	Terminal Evaluation Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
including maritime traffic.			maritime affairs, the directorate of fishery. All these institutions participated to the meeting of steering committee and are regularly consulted. b) 3 partners supporting MPA finance.					
	Indicator 6. # of partners in key impact sectors who are effectively implementing and enforcing sectoral management plans in accordance with the Marine Spatial Plan including marine BD and MPA considerations	0 partners in key impact sectors	1 as of now. The Marine Spatial Plan is implemented by the MUET. The DESD use the delimitations for the establishment of the MPAs for example.	5 partners in key impact sectors	15 partners in key impact sectors	6 MoUs signed with institutional partners.	MU	Several MoUs signed with the PMU, no guarantee of sustainability but the number of partners still significantly below target
	Indicator 7. Key impact sector policies/ strategies/ regulatory frameworks that <i>effectively</i> incorporate the Marine Spatial Plan and marine biodiversity and MPA considerations (a) # adopted (b) # effectively implemented	(a) 0 adopted (b) 0 effectively implemented	(a) 0 (b) 0 A national Blue Economy strategy, that will incorporate the Marine Spatial Plan, is being prepared. All preliminary studies were carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture's PRAREV project. The development of the strategy is scheduled for first quarter 2021 due to the delays imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.	(a) 2 adopted (b) 1 effectively implemented	(a) 4 adopted (b) 2 effectively implemented	(a) 4 MPA management plan adopted (b) No effective implementation	MS	Target almost met. Normally PA management planning based on MSP just starting implementation

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 st PIR ¹⁴ (self-reported) - PIR 2020	Midterm Target	End-of-project Target	Terminal Evaluation Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
Outcome 2.1: Djibouti's MPA system expanded to add the Gulf of Ghoubet and the marine/ coastal stretch of Sagallou/ Kalaf to the adjacent already-existing Arta Plage MPA to form one large management unit; another unit of marine protected area will be established at Sable Blanc and Ras Ali.	Indicator 8. Area (ha) of coastal and marine habitats (coral reef, mangrove, seascapes, etc.) covered by the legally designated marine PA system of Djibouti	51,880 ha in 3 already-gazetted MPAs	Technical, administrative and legal procedures to add the potential MPAs are underway.	1 new area legally added to the MPA estate (new MPA of Arta Plage), expanding the MPA estate by 7,040 ha to a total coverage of 58,920 ha	3 further new areas legally added to the MPA estate, expanding the MPA estate by a total of 31,675 ha to a total coverage of 83,555 ha	51,880 ha in 3 existing MPAs A decree is preparation to cover in 4 new MPAs with an area of 72 610 ha	MS	Target met but the legal process is not yet finalized.
Outcome 2.2: Increased management effectiveness for Djibouti's MPAs provides greater protection to globally significant habitats and species over approx. 83,555 ha of seascape.	Indicator 9. Improved management effectiveness of MPAs evidenced by increased METT Score	Septs-Freres: 34/96. Moucha-Maskali: 34/96. Haramous-Douda: 36/96; Arta: 31/96. Ghoubet El Karab: 21/96. Sagallou-Kalaf: 19/96. Sable Blanc: 24/96	There are currently no management structures in place in any of Djibouti's MPAs. Management plans are in the process of being designed by the consulting firm (consortium Hydroterra/CORDIO) recruited in March 2020. As mentioned above, the tender for the recruitment of a firm to design the MPAs management plans, including their zoning, was awarded to a consortium Hydroterra/CORDIO in March 2020.	Septs-Freres: 40/96. Moucha-Maskali: 40/96. Haramous-Douda: 40/96. Arta: 40/96. Ghoubet El Karab: 35/96. Sagallou-Kalaf: 35/96	Septs-Freres: 55/96. Moucha-Maskali: 55/96. Haramous-Douda: 55/96. Arta: 55/96. Ghoubet El Karab: 45/96. Sagallou-Kalaf: 45/96. Sable Blanc: 45/96.	Septs-Freres: -- Moucha-Maskali: -- Haramous-Douda: -- Arta: 43/96. Ghoubet El Karab: 36/96. Sagallou-Kalaf: 35/96. Sable Blanc: 40/96	MS	Results in new MPA are satisfactory, scores in existing MPAs not yet assessed (under process)
Outcome 2.3: Direct and indirect benefits to local communities and	Indicator 10. Number and revenue of	To be defined at project start (a) 0	(a) 0 - Activities in this area have not started yet.	Numbers increased by 5+5	Numbers increased by 10+10	(a) 0 - Activities in this area have not started yet.	U	Income generating activities proposed in gender action plan, but

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 st PIR ¹⁴ (self-reported) - PIR 2020	Midterm Target	End-of-project Target	Terminal Evaluation Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
stakeholders create tangible incentives to support marine biodiversity conservation objectives, most notably through the development of sustainable and MPA-compatible artisanal fisheries and tourism.	(a) biodiversity-friendly artisanal fishermen and (b) community based tourism businesses	(b) 0 Revenues have not been determined by the project	(b) 0 - Activities in this area have not started yet	Revenue represents one regular monthly salary per fishermen and tourism business	Revenue represents 3 regular monthly salaries per fishermen and tourism business	(b) 0 - Activities in this area have not started yet.		implementation not yet started
	Indicator 11. Number of male and female beneficiaries	0	0 Not applicable yet	300 males+300 female	1000 male+1000 female	8 females have received a training (maybe 100 more will benefit from it). Artisanal fishers benefitted in Arta and Tadjourah (around 70 men).	U	According to UNFD activities have not yet started. MTR level has not been achieved, so it is the question if final project target will be achieved
Outcome 3.1: National Environment Fund (or an alternative mechanism/ structure) is set up, captures income from national sources and disburses regular financing towards the national PA system, helping to reduce the financing gap.	Indicator 12. Funding gap for management of MPAs, as evidenced by the Financial Score Card	\$100,623/yr gap under Basic Scenario \$2,996,623/yr gap under Optimal Scenario	Funding gap is still as baseline. An international consultant has been recruited to provide assistance to the 3 ongoing GEF financed projects in Djibouti and make proposals to support initiatives related to biodiversity and climate change. A draft report to establish a Fund for Environment and Climate Change (FECC) to support on-going initiatives related to biodiversity and climate change. has just been submitted for review by MUET. The reports analyses the fund feasibility in Djibouti.	\$0/yr gap under Basic Scenario \$2,000,000/yr gap under Optimal Scenario	\$0/yr gap under Basic Scenario \$1,000,000/yr. gap under Optimal Scenario	Funding gap is not known but, whatever the gap is, it won't be reduced by an Environmental Fund which has not been set up.	HU	Funding gap will be hard to establish, a proper business plan should have been done, on the basis of the Management plans.

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 st PIR ¹⁴ (self-reported) - PIR 2020	Midterm Target	End-of-project Target	Terminal Evaluation Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
	Indicator 13. Financial Scorecard Score	22/225 (10%)	No change from baseline.	40/225	80/225	Data not available	U	Financial score card not known yet.
Outcome 4.1. Rigorous M&E allows effective adaptive management during project implementation	Indicator 14. Project Implementation Report/PIR (a) PIR quality as per independent evaluator (b) RTA PIR recommendations reflected in project management	N/A	Not applicable - This is the first PIR	At least S RTA rating positive	HS RTA rating positive	(a) PIR quality satisfactory (b) unknown	S	Quality of PIR has improved during the course of time. The last PIR 2023 was satisfactory. No assessment PIR by RTA available
	Indicator 15. # and % of recommendations that were integrated in annual project planning and implemented (a) from annual internal reviews of project performance (b) from the independent MTR	N/A	(a) 10 and 71% (b) Not applicable	(a) at least 5 and 50% (b) N/A	(a) at least 10 and 100% (b) at least 5 and 80%	(a) 80% (b) 60% of MTR recommendations were implemented	MS	60% of MTR recommendations were implemented. 80% of the recommendations made by the CTA or others in the annual or other reviews are taken into consideration in the implementation of the project.
Outcome 4.2: Lessons learned by the project are made publicly available to national stakeholders and shared with	Indicator 16. Number of project lessons published and disseminated on mitigating sector pressures on marine and coastal biodiversity and	0	Not applicable as project implementation has just started. Significant project field activities have only recently started.	2	5	2	MS	No details on publications shared, and lack of knowledge management strategy seems to be hampering shared learning

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 st PIR ¹⁴ (self-reported) - PIR 2020	Midterm Target	End-of-project Target	Terminal Evaluation Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
international peer projects.	strengthening national MPA systems							
Outcome 4.3: Measurable socio-economic and equity benefits to women from short-term project activities and its long-term impacts.	Indicator 17. # of items achieved of Gender Action Plan	0	Gender Action Plan is ongoing. An adequate monitoring and evaluation framework for gender equality has been put in place through the recruitment of 2 consultants within MUET.	50%	100%	Action plan just completed and activities being implemented	MS	Gender action plan completed and implemented at 80% but low impact.
	Indicator 18. % of women among all participants of the project activities, including M&E	5%	Around 30% of women among all participants of the project activities, including M&E: - Steering Committee: 33%. - Regional workshops: 25%. -M&E: 1 woman/2	>20%	>30%	30%	S	Result just reached target, and gender action plan is ready and implemented

3.3.4) Overall Outcome

Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	Satisfactory
Effectiveness	Medium Unsatisfactory
Efficiency	Medium Unsatisfactory
Overall Project Outcome Rating	Medium Unsatisfactory

3.3.5) Sustainability

a) Financial sustainability

The financial sustainability of the project is a key element for the future of the Djiboutian network of MPAs. At the time of drafting the Terminal Evaluation, it can be considered as “moderately unlikely” but there are some encouraging signs that it could improve soon, if national authorities agree to a request made by the MEDD to allocate a sufficient operational budget to the UGAP.

Initially, the MPA2 project document rightly identified the financial sustainability as a central risk, and the UNDP risk log stated that *“The absence of reliable financial flows to the MPA system undermines the effectiveness of MPA management beyond the duration of the project intervention”*. The mitigation measures identified at the time indicated that best practices on PA finance point to an approach involving several modalities rather than relying solely on government funds or on a unique trust fund. Several solutions were mentioned, including a multi-source strategy for the government, donors, NGOs and the private sector to invest according to a focused and coherent plan to maintain a financial flow that will ensure the viability of the PA system beyond the lifetime of the project. This strategy was supposed to address the financing from both sides of reducing managing costs and leveraging new financial sources. Costs were supposed to be reduced by involving communities in various aspects of site management which should also reduce costs related to enforcement of regulations. The approach also meant to leveraging new financial resources from various sources, including by involving the private sector through corporate social responsibility, user-pays and polluter-pays principles.

Most importantly, the project adequately dedicated the component 3 to the financial sustainability, which was very appropriate, with the objective to set up a *“National Environment Fund to capture income from national sources and disburses regular financing towards the national PA system, helping to reduce the financing gap”*.

During the first year of the project, a feasibility study for the setting up of the National Environmental Fund was produced but the quality of this report was average, for the following reasons:

- The report did not explore the possibility to set up a Conservation Trust Fund, which are private institutions generally considered to be more agile than a public funds.
- The report did not sufficiently explore solutions for the capitalization of the fund.
- The report was drafted in English and not easily accessible for French-speaking partners.
- The report did not include an action plan for the setting up of the Fund, so the PMU and the MEDD did not know what steps to undertake to bring the idea to fruition.

As a result, the component 3 of the project has been neglected until the MTR spotted this central weakness and produced constructive recommendations. Some progresses have been made afterwards, mostly:

- An additional report has been commissioned in 2023 to explore the possibilities offered by the private sector to participate to MPA funding. At the time of the Terminal Evaluation, this work was still in progress. In any case, there won't be sufficient time to implement the conclusions of this new report before the project ends.
- Discussions are ongoing for the implementation of a whale shark observation fee that could be charged to the numerous tourists. The financial potential of this mechanism is still unknown, but it could be substantial. It should also be well-accepted by tourists. The major difficulty is the channeling of the funds and the repartition of the funds raised between the different stakeholders.
- In 2023, the project is still trying to negotiate a 10-year PPP agreement between 2 hotels and the MEDD to entrust the 2 private entities with full responsibility for the operational

management of RASALI Protected Area. The contract adequately details the delegation of a series of AP management responsibilities, but it does not include any financial arrangements or any other compensatory measures for the hotels to accept such agreement. Management responsibilities mentioned in the contract include:

- Set up and manage an efficient system to ensure compliance with the laws and regulations applicable in the Protected Area;
- Develop, build, rehabilitate and maintain in good working order the infrastructure and equipment required to manage the Protected Area;
- Strengthen the involvement of local communities in the management of the Protected Area;
- Promote sustainable development in and around the Protected Area, in particular through the development and enhancement of green industries and ecotourism;
- Support socio-economic players operating in and around the Protected Area to reconcile their activities with the area's conservation and management objectives.
- Promote the values and heritage of the Protected Area and ensure its national and international visibility.

The contract proposal does not convincingly describe why the private entities should legally commit to manage a PA without having a clear interest in doing so (the contract mentions that the ministry will ease administrative procedures to obtain visas or any required permit). This attempt to negotiate a PPP goes in the right direction but should have been assessed more accurately for such initiative to be successful.

The financial sustainability of the MPA system has not been secured by the MPA2 project but the following elements are encouraging:

- A project financed by the EU around Arta plage MPA is under negotiation, it is likely to secure a reasonable level of funding for this particular area over the medium term.
- Most importantly, the UGAP is pushing for an increased operational budget, currently under discussion with the Ministry of Finance and Budget.
- Initial effort for the establishment of an environmental fund, which may incorporate a Conservation Trust Fund, went in the right direction and should be pushed further.
- The upcoming GEF project focusing on biodiversity, titled "*Conserving Biodiversity and Restoring Ecosystem Functions in and around the Day Forest National Protected Area*" could provide funding for enhancing capacity and capabilities of UGAP.

b) Socio-political sustainability

The socio-political sustainability of the project can be considered as "moderately likely". As for its financial sustainability, this scoring could improve in the short term if the Unit for the Management of Protected Areas (UGAP) benefits from the strengthening it is currently negotiating with Ministry of Finance and Budget. The completion of the legal process for MPA creation is also key for the future of the MPA system.

The creation the UGAP, on February 2020, can be considered as very promising. Further reorganization of the Ministry took place in 2022, when a new law transformed the MUET into the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD). The UGAP is now attached to the Blue Economy Sub-Direction. This achievement was well in line with the project's outcome 1.1 which aimed at institutionalizing a unit dedicated to the management of MPAs within the restructured Ministry.

With only 4 agents working for it, the UGAP team remained relatively small during the time of the project, but well lead by the visionary woman running the Blue Economy Sub-Direction of the MEDD. UGAP staff have been trained in several participated in various deliverables:

- The realization of awareness-raising work on the protection and preservation of biodiversity among private operators and fishermen.
- The management unit of the marine protected areas have been installed in each site of the project to ensure effective monitoring of MPAs
- The project has built monitoring sites for the MPAs allowing the ecoguards to be close to the project intervention areas
- Training on communication tools, cartography, drone and radar mapping techniques for the project to reduce sectoral pressures on marine and coastal biodiversity and strengthen the national system of marine protected areas in Djibouti.
- The UGAP staff also has the role of training the eco-guards. These trainings will also continue on the side of the eco-guards in order to make this unit fully operational in their actions.

Scores obtained by the UGAP during the MTR for the “Capacity Development Scorecard” were encouraging:

- Systemic capacity:	23/27 (85%)
- Institutional capacity:	34/45 (75%)
- Individual capacity:	19/21 (90%)
- Total:	65/93 (81%)

The above elements are positive, but the UGAP is still facing important weaknesses. For the moment, the unit does not have a budget independent of that of the project. Office space for UGAP agents at the MEDD is very limited. This point is essential, also because the UGAP is likely to grow substantially in the short term. If confirmed, the inclusion of the project staff to the UGAP, very likely to occur but still under discussion at the time of drafting the Terminal Evaluation, would certainly give a great sense of institutional sustainability for the after project.

In short, the socio-political sustainability of the project will be achieved if the following recommendations are implemented:

- ✓ Conclude the formal publication of the new law on Protected Areas.
- ✓ Enact the "implementation decree" to officially establish the operational status of the four new protected areas.
- ✓ The UGAP should perceive, every year, a consistent allocation within the national budget for its operational expenses.
- ✓ Construct office facilities for the UGAP (a proposal has already been sent to the Minister).
- ✓ Renew the six MoUs that were originally signed within the mere framework of the project. To facilitate a seamless transition, these MoUs should be updated to better reflect the new institutional arrangements.
- ✓ Enhance the capacity of the UGAP team by having all PMU members transition into civil service roles within the UGAP. Also, consider the recruitment of additional staff to further strengthen the team.
- ✓ Carefully weigh the pros and cons before embarking on the creation of a National Agency for Protected Areas.

c) Environmental sustainability

Overall, the environmental sustainability of the project is quite likely, primarily due to the fact that the core objectives of the project were environmental in nature. The project was designed with a strong focus on addressing environmental challenges and promoting conservation efforts. This strategic alignment with environmental goals from the outset has contributed significantly to its overall environmental sustainability.

From the establishment of MPAs to the conservation of coral reefs and marine fauna, the project's fundamental objectives revolved around safeguarding the natural environment. These objectives demonstrate a clear commitment to environmental sustainability and reflect a good understanding of the importance of preserving fragile ecosystems.

Furthermore, the project's emphasis on capacity building, scientific monitoring, and adaptive management further bolsters its environmental sustainability. By enhancing the knowledge and skills of local stakeholders and establishing mechanisms for ongoing monitoring, the project has set a foundation for the continued protection of the environment.

In summary, the project's robust alignment with environmental objectives and its proactive approach to capacity development and monitoring contribute to an overall favourable assessment of its environmental sustainability.

While the network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) has been established, it still remains relatively fragile, and there is a risk of seeing them slide towards being 'paper parks' rather than well-managed Marine Protected Areas.

There are potential environmental factors that could undermine the future flow of project environmental benefits. One of the key concerns is the limited capacity for ongoing scientific monitoring of coral reefs and marine fauna, which may lead to a lack of up-to-date information on the state of these ecosystems. Indeed, a scientific reference study was produced, but it was conducted by private consulting firms without the participation of CERD. The national capacity to regularly update this study is non-existent. This responsibility falls under the Ministry of Environment, but its technical and financial implementation appears challenging.

In terms of environmental sustainability, there are 2 main recommendations :

- The UGAP should take responsibility, in the future for ecological monitoring. This is particularly true if the UGAP is strengthened with 25 additional agents.
- In the absence of comprehensive studies, it would be advisable for the UGAP to focus on simple scientific monitoring on the main identified hotspots.

Table 21: Overall likelihood of sustainability

Sustainability	Rating
Financial resources	Moderately Unlikely
Socio-political/economic	Moderately Likely
Institutional framework and governance	Moderately Likely
Environmental	Moderately Likely
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	Moderately Likely

3.3.6) Country ownership

The project has demonstrated a good level of country ownership through active involvement of government and civil society representatives, financial commitment, some level of policy alignment, and some coordination mechanisms. However, there is room for further integration of project outcomes into national plans and enhanced involvement of relevant stakeholders in project implementation to strengthen country ownership.

The evaluation of country ownership of the project can be discussed as follows:

- The project concept did have its origin within national sectoral and development plans, well-aligned with Djibouti's environmental goals.
- The outcomes of the project, particularly the establishment of MPAs, have the potential to align with Djibouti's national sectoral and development plans related to environmental conservation. However, as of the evaluation, full incorporation into these plans had not been realized.
- The government has demonstrated financial commitment to the project, in terms of co-financing and contributions. This reflects a degree of ownership and commitment to the project's objectives. However, a national environmental fund has not been yet put in place.
- Governmental officials and civil society representatives were actively involved in project identification and planning. They participated in discussions and provided input during project design. The level of involvement in project implementation, including participation in the Project Board was satisfactory.
- The project could negotiate MoUs with several key national institutions but could not put in place the multi-stakeholder committee which would have been relevant for the MPA system.
- The creation of the UGAP, associated with its likely strengthening (still to be confirmed), shows a good level of country commitment for the future of MPA management in Djibouti.
- The sustainability of authorities' involvement for MPA management over the long term is likely but can't be taken for granted yet.
- The government has taken steps to align policies and regulatory frameworks with the project's objectives, particularly to secure the legal framework for the new MPAs. However, this process was not fully finalized at the time of Terminal Evaluation, it will hopefully be the case in the short term.
- Civil society representatives have been involved in various aspects of project implementation. However, the level and continuity of this involvement could be improved to secure best levels of MPA management over the long term.

3.3.7) Gender equality and women's empowerment

The 'Gender Results Effectiveness' of the project could be considered as "Gender responsive", meaning that the project adequately tried to address differential needs between men and women and tried to equitably distribute benefits, but the root causes of inequalities were not tackled.

The component 4 of the project had an appropriate focus on "gender mainstreaming". The project included a gender analysis of the project strategy, prepared during the Project Preparation Grant, which informed gender mainstreaming actions across all project components. The Results Framework incorporated gender-disaggregated indicators.

During year 1 of the project, a convincing gender strategy and robust action plan were elaborated. This Action Plan was implemented, achieving approximately 80% of its objectives according to the last PIR (2023). A dedicated team member within the Project Management Unit was responsible for monitoring and evaluating the plan's implementation, ensuring that measures to promote gender equality were integrated into project activities.

Marine protected areas have been planned to include infrastructure adapted to women's needs. For example, premises and facilities have been built to house income-generating activities. As part of the gender action plan, mechanisms have been put in place to facilitate women's access to the economic resources they need to develop their income-generating activities. Some of them have been trained to access credit, loans, subsidies and microfinance. Finally, the gender strategy has also included awareness-raising campaigns to change social norms that may hinder the full participation of women in the management of marine protected areas and in the maritime sector in general. The aim is to promote gender equality and combat stereotypes that limit the role of women.

The active inclusion of women in various project activities reflects a commitment to gender equality but, at the same time, the number of women participating to Project Board meeting systematically remained under the parity. The project secured a good participation of women in natural resource governance by organizing workshops for consultation and validation of management plans, where women actively participated.

As shown in the following graph, the overall participation of women either in workshops or training sessions was of 34%.

Number of women / men participating to project activities



The participation of women was particularly high for some specific segments related to gender.

Table 22: Participants to workshops and training sessions under the MPA2 project, by gender

Workshops	PARTICIPANTS
Workshop for consultation and discussion with stakeholders in the Arta region on lessons learned from MPA1 project	48 participants 38 men 10 women
Workshop for consultation and discussion with stakeholders in the Tadjourah region on lessons learned from MPA1 project	30 participants 17 men 13 women
Workshop for consultation on the preservation of marine and coastal biodiversity with tourism operators in Djibouti	28 participants 20 men 8 women
Workshop for consultation on the preservation of marine and coastal biodiversity with private and tourism operators in Arta	33 participants 23 men 10 women
Workshop for consultation on the preservation of marine and coastal biodiversity with tourism and hotel operators in Tadjourah	29 participants 21 men 8 women
Workshop for validation of the report on marine and coastal biodiversity baseline studies in Djibouti and the management plans for Marine Protected Areas	30 participants 18 men 12 women
Workshop for validation of management plans for Marine Protected Areas	27 participants 15 men 12 women
Workshops to raise awareness among local authorities about the importance of marine biodiversity protection and preservation in Arta	23 participants 18 men 5 women
Workshops to raise awareness among local authorities about the importance of marine biodiversity protection and preservation in Tadjourah	19 participants 14 men 5 women
Gender equality awareness workshop	30 participants 22 women 8 men
Workshops to assess the training needs of rural women and plan AMP management activities	25 participants 23 women 2 men
Training sessions	PARTICIPANTS
Training of Eco-guards and Pilots on seamanship, maritime navigation, rescue, and first aid by the Djiboutian Coast Guard	15 Participants 15 men
Training on drone piloting techniques for the project	22 participants 19 men 3 women
Training on AMP cartographic data acquisition techniques by drone	23 participants 20 men 3 women
Training on scuba diving	15 participants 15 men
Training of trainers in sewing and craftsmanship	8 participants 8 women
Training on: (i) Sensitive elements of AMPs to protect, especially endangered fish species, corals, and other invertebrates, (ii) Prohibited activities, (iii) Communication and awareness techniques in Tadjourah	35 participants 33 men 2 women
Training on: (i) Sensitive elements of AMPs to protect, especially endangered fish species, corals, and other invertebrates, (ii) Prohibited activities, (iii) Communication and awareness techniques in Arta	29 participants 27 men 2 women
Training on the structuring and management of an association in Tadjourah	33 participants

	<i>33 women</i>
Training on the structuring and management of an association in Arta	19 participants <i>15 men</i> <i>4 women</i>
Training on integrating gender dimensions into environmental projects	38 participants <i>17 men</i> <i>21 women</i>
Training on sustainable and biodiversity-friendly fishing techniques in Djibouti	25 participants <i>22 men</i> <i>3 women</i>
Training on sustainable and biodiversity-friendly fishing techniques in Arta	17 participants <i>16 men</i> <i>1 woman</i>
Training on sustainable and biodiversity-friendly fishing techniques in Tadjourah	23 participants <i>19 men</i> <i>4 women</i>

Furthermore, it's worth highlighting that the project successfully negotiated a partnership with the UNFD (Union Nationale des Femmes Djiboutiennes). This collaboration has been key for the 4th component of the project. The UNFD played an important role in project implementation. This network is expected to contribute significantly to the sustainability of the project's gender-related efforts, ensuring that the positive impacts continue to benefit the communities in the long term. The partnership with the UNFD has enriched the project's approach to gender equality and women's empowerment.

It is nevertheless important to note that, while the project made substantial efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, only 8 women directly benefited from income-generating trainings, on sewing and craftsmanship, a rather low number when considering the amount of upfront work and expected impact. While these 8 women are expected to become trainers in their respective communities, offering a multiplier effect still difficult to evaluate at this stage, the total number of women who directly benefited from the project is likely to remain rather limited. At the time of the TE, 4 tailoring workshops had just been rehabilitated in 4 communities, equipped with solar-powered lamps but no other form of access to electricity (no fans nor AC). The 4 communities were also still hoping to receive soon a total of 20 sewing machines and tailoring/handicraft fabrics, several months after the end of the training sessions. Their delivery should have happened right after the training sessions but, as it regularly happened during MPA2 project, delays were observed in the implementation of contracts and orders.

Another important remark is the fact that the income-generating trainings offered by the project were not necessarily in line with some women's aspirations. During several interviews led during the TE field mission, some women commented that their dreams was to engage in local businesses and that sewing and craftsmanship was the only thing offered. This leads to the conclusion that the UNDP/GEF could support alternative ways of promoting income-generating activities. Instead of identifying these activities for the women, access to small grants (for the case of group initiatives) or direct cash transfers (for the case of individual initiatives) would probably be more impactful. Interestingly, the Project Document envisioned the establishment of a small grants mechanism (see annex R of the Project Document on small grant facility / micro-capital grants policy). Unfortunately, this initial vision was not implemented, also because it might have been technically more complex. It would nevertheless have been, most likely, a convincing strategy to adopt, which is an important lesson learned of the project.

5.3.1) Cross-cutting Issues

These assessments demonstrate the project's commitment to addressing cross-cutting issues and its overall positive impact on the well-being of local populations while aligning with broader development priorities and sustainability goals.

- **Limited but positive effects on local populations**

The project mostly had positive, even if limited, effects on local populations. It has contributed to income generation and job creation, especially through training programs and income-generating activities. It has also improved natural resource management arrangements by involving local groups in conservation efforts.

- **Alignment with UNDP Country Programme Document**

As expressed in the relevance section (3.1 and 3.3.1), the project objectives align with the agreed priorities in the UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) and other country program documents. It addresses key environmental and sustainability issues outlined in these documents, ensuring consistency with national development goals.

- **Disaster preparedness, risk mitigation, and climate change**

To a certain degree, the project outcomes have contributed to better disaster preparedness and risk mitigation in the project area. Climate change awareness raising was part of the discussions with local stakeholders and beneficiaries. It has addressed climate change adaptation through various activities, such as sustainable resource management practices and some level of promotion of climate-resilient livelihoods. The importance of natural resource management, and risks associated with their overuse, have been subjects of capacity-building efforts and exchanges, especially by offering trainings on sustainable and biodiversity-friendly fishing techniques to fishers.

- **Benefit to disadvantaged or marginalized groups**

The project has made efforts to benefit disadvantaged or marginalized groups, including indigenous communities, persons with disabilities, and women. These groups have been targeted in specific training and capacity-building initiatives to ensure their inclusion and participation in project activities.

- **Poverty-environment nexus**

The project's environmental conservation activities have contributed positively to poverty reduction and sustaining livelihoods. By promoting sustainable resource management, it has enhanced the income-generating capacity of local communities, thus addressing the poverty-environment nexus.

- **Human Rights-Based Approach**

The project has incorporated a human rights-based approach into its activities. It emphasized the rights of local populations, particularly in terms of access to and control over natural resources. The project's processes aligned with principles of human rights, with a particular focus on gender equality.

5.3.2) GEF Additionality

In December 2018, the GEF Council approved 'An Evaluative Approach to Assessing GEF's Additionality'. GEF's additionality is evaluated accordingly, following the six suggested factors, as shown in the following table:

Table 23: 6 areas of GEF additionality

GEF's Additionality	Description	Observations (TE)
Specific Environmental Additionality	The GEF provides a wide range of value-added interventions/services to achieve the Global Environmental Benefits (e.g. CO2 reduction, Reduction/avoidance of emission of POPs).	Yes. The project has generated Global Environmental Benefits that would not happened without GEF's intervention. New MPA were set up for the benefit of global biodiversity protection.
Legal/Regulatory Additionality	The GEF helps stakeholders transformational change to environment sustainable legal / regulatory forms.	Yes. The project led to legal or regulatory reforms that would not have occurred in the absence of the project.
Institutional Additionality/Governance additionality	The GEF provides a support the existing institution to transform into efficient/sustainable environment manner.	Yes. To a certain extent the MEDD has been strengthened to provide a supportive environment for achievement and measurement of environmental impact.
Financial Additionality	The GEF provides an incremental cost which is associated with transforming a project with national/local benefits into one with global environmental benefits.	Not yet. The involvement of the GEF has not yet led to greater flows of financing than would otherwise have been the case from private or public sector sources. Financial sustainability of the network of MPAs is not yet secured (but could take place in the in the short term).
Socio-Economic Additionality	The GEF helps society improve their livelihood and social benefits thorough GEF activities	Marginally yes. At the TE stage, improvements in living standard among population groups affected by environmental conditions were existing but rather marginal.
Innovation Additionality	The GEF provides efficient/sustainable technology and knowledge to overcome the existing social norm/barrier/practice for making a bankable project.	Marginally yes. The GEF involvement has led to the adoption of new technologies (drones, etc) but no "demonstration of market-readiness for technologies that had not previously demonstrated their market viability" (which was not the purpose of the project).

5.3.3) Catalytic / Replication Effect

The catalytic and replication of the project mostly still need to be proven but can be considered as promising.

The MPA2 project has successfully scaled up the national network of MPAs, which is a great achievement, also paving the way for future additional extensions of the national MPA network. Such additional extension might be relevant in the future, especially if Djibouti commits to achieving the 30x30 target¹⁵, as designed in the Global Biodiversity Framework negotiated in November 2022 at the 15th Convention of Parties of the Convention Biological Diversity.

The establishment and improved capacity building of a the UGAP, a newly set up national institution in charge of national network of PAs, will offer the institutional foundations for an adequate MPA management by national authorities. This can be considered as a catalytic effect of the project.

The improved management of the network of MPAs is ongoing and a small team of ecoguards and boat drivers has been successfully trained. The processes are now in place for the integration of additional members into the UGAP team which could reach up to 35 staff in 2024.

4 MPAs now have a management plan of good quality, and similar management plans could be elaborated for all the MPAs. The adequate implementation of management plans could become the norm to follow in the country, together with sufficient operating funding regularly made available by national authorities.

Djibouti's improved management of its network of MPAs still needs be consolidated further but, if it continues the current positive trend, it could become a good model to follow for neighboring countries facing similar conservation challenges. The established national know-how could be showcased to regional and international forum.

To some extent, the Component 4 on Knowledge Management & M&E has facilitated learning and ensured knowledge was shared and disseminated to support the scaling up and replication of project results. Good practices in engaging local communities and public authorities have been identified. They could be replicated in the future, and possibly extended to other more impactful modalities.

Steps have been taken to catalyze the public good, through the development of demonstration sites and training. Key knowledge products include scientific studies, training materials, and documentation of project activities and results have been produced. They should be regularly reviewed. Reports on biodiversity status, management plans, and gender strategies are among the knowledge products.

¹⁵ “Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities including over their traditional territories.”

5.3.4) Progress to Impact

Table 24: Progress to impact

Expected Impacts (ToC in Project Document)	Impacts achieved by the project (October 2023)
Component 1: Through strengthening systemic, institutional, and individual capacities at MHUPE and amongst other relevant partners, MPA management effectiveness will be strengthened greatly (objective outcome). Impacts through increased development activities in Djibouti's maritime space will be minimized, and marine biodiversity and living resources will be protected from negative impacts.	- A Protected Areas Management Unit (UGAP) has been established, which is a key achievement of the project. It currently has a small staff of 4 individuals, but the project's staff is very likely to integrate the UGAP (project coordinator, 2 administrative staff, 5 eco-guards and 3 boat drivers). Furthermore, in October 2023, the Ministry of Finance reportedly decided to increase the UGAP with an additional 25 staff members (to be confirmed). - The UGAP has some capacities for planning, coordinating, managing, monitoring and evaluating the system of MPAs in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, but its functioning budget is still to be negotiated. - Some encouraging degree of high-level political support to secure effective MPA management have been achieved (MoUs signed with the PMU) but such support will need to be reaffirmed with the UGAP. - Environmental stress reduction has not yet been achieved, first because the environmental constraints have not decreased, second because the MPA network is not yet fully operational (see under).
Component 2: i) Improved management effectiveness of existing and newly established MPAs in Djibouti, contribute to the conservation of globally relevant marine biodiversity and habitats, and contribute to increasing the global area of seascapes under improved management (GEB).	The management effectiveness of MPAs has slightly increased but the tangible impact MPAs remains so far quite limited for various reasons: - The legal process for establishing 4 new MPAs has turn out to be more complex than anticipated. This process is still on track but not fully finalized. The negative consequences of this setback are important, for instance MPAs could not delimited by buoys and no transposition of MPA boundaries into the nautical charts. - Good management plans have been elaborated for the 4 new MPAs, unfortunately their appropriation and implementation remain limited. - Contrary to the initial project's strategy, the management plans were not elaborated for the older 3 MPAs that were set up during the prior MPA project.
Component 2: ii) Giving more benefits from MPAs and marine resources to local communities will enhance their commitment to sustainable management and conservation, and increase MPA effectiveness (GEB).	Communities have received some tangible direct benefits in the form of trainings, workshops, or infrastructures but the magnitude of these benefits were quite limited (low number of direct beneficiaries) and the link between those benefits and the MPAs was not very clear to the beneficiaries interviewed during the TE field mission.
Component 3: Increased revenue for (marine) PAs will help meet the total expenditures for their	The expected financial impact has not been achieved in its envisioned format:

management, contributing to the more effective management of marine biodiversity and resources in Djibouti (Objective, Outcome and GEB).	- the financial needs for the MPA system have not been established, the funding gap for an effective management of the network of MPAs remains unknown - A study for the setting up of a National Environmental Fund has been elaborated but not implemented Nevertheless: - Some additional work for a greater participation of the private sector is undergoing (tourism fees could play a positive role if fees can be appropriately channeled), impact can't be measured yet - The UGAP is strengthening and has adequately requested an operating budget (to be confirmed when the national budget is voted, in January 2024, and then every year from then)
Component 4: Thus, effect of the project will be strengthened and multiplied leading to an improvement of MPA management effectiveness (Mid-Term Impact) and a stabilization of marine biodiversity and resources (Long-Term Impact)	- Effective collaboration with UNDP and UNFD contributed to project success, even if gender mainstreaming efforts had some limited impacts - MPA management effectiveness has improved but, at this stage, the tangible impact remains difficult to measure accurately.

4. MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS LEARNED

4.1) Main findings

- The project's objectives were in line with local and national priorities and strategies. The project aligned with the strategic priorities of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and it was consistent with the priorities and strategies of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for Djibouti.
- The project objectives were likely to be met to a significant extent. Several key factors contributed to this success, including collaboration with local communities and authorities, effective partnerships with national stakeholders, and strong support from UNDP.
- Some underachievement occurred due to initial delays in project implementation, primarily caused by factors like the COVID-19 pandemic and lengthy administrative processes.
- The project successfully contributed to the expansion of Djibouti's national network of Marine Protected Areas to include 7 sites, covering 8% of the Exclusive Economic Zone. This achievement is a significant milestone for marine conservation in the country. However, the legal process for MPA creation is not fully finalized.
- Good management plans have been elaborated for the 4 new MPAs, unfortunately their appropriation and implementation remain limited.
- A Protected Areas Management Unit (UGAP) has been established within the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD), which is a key achievement of the project.
- The UGAP has some capacities for planning, coordinating, managing, monitoring and evaluating the system of MPAs in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, but its functioning budget is still to be negotiated.
- The financial needs for the MPA system have not been established, the funding gap for an effective management of the network of MPAs remains unknown. The MPA system financial sustainability is not secured and will now mostly rely on national authorities.
- Challenges in setting up an Environmental Fund and limited technical guidance affected outcomes.
- The project was cost-effective overall, with expenditures generally aligned with international standards and norms. However, some delays in project implementation impacted cost-effectiveness.
- The planned outputs have been partly produced, offering a great space for continued impact if national authorities take over adequately.
- The likelihood of required financial resources being available to sustain project results once GEF assistance ends depends on the commitment of national authorities and their ability to secure funding from various sources, including government budgets, grants, and partnerships.
- The sustainability of project results is closely tied to institutional frameworks and governance. The newly established UGAP and its integration into existing institutions will play a critical role in this regard.
- The project was adequately gender-focused but may not have reached the level of social impact that was initially expected.

4.2) Conclusions

In summary, the project "*Mitigating key sector pressures on marine and coastal biodiversity and further strengthening the national system of marine protected areas in Djibouti*" (MPA2) has made notable progress but also encountered challenges on its journey towards full success. While significant legislative advancements were achieved for the establishment of new MPAs, notably with the approval of a law regulating new MPAs by the Council of Ministers in Djibouti in May 2023, this legal process remains unfinished. Furthermore, challenges persist, including the absence of demarcation buoys and incomplete integration of the MPAs into nautical charts, rendering the MPAs somewhat abstract in their current state.

The actions taken have increased the effective approach to marine conservation. Activities such as stakeholder awareness initiatives, specialized training for eco-guards, the elaboration of management plans for 4 MPAs and the upcoming installation of mooring buoys have most likely improved the protection of the marine ecosystem, even if such improved conservation still can't be accurately monitored. These efforts pave the way for a more sustainable future for this valuable coastal region.

The project also faced significant challenges, including the impact of COVID-19, which halted most activities for several months and resulted in limited progress in the initial project years. Despite these setbacks, project activities accelerated in 2021 and benefited from a well-justified 6-month no-cost extension. Overall, the project's management has been commendable, with active oversight from UNDP, effective governance mechanisms, and positive commitment from partners, as evidenced by multiple Memoranda of Understanding and their involvement in project activities. As of October 2023, 85% of committed finances have been executed, which is a reasonable delivery rate.

MPA2 project has revitalized and facilitated enhanced coordination and integration among various institutions, which took the form of signed agreements between the Ministry of Environment and partner institutions including: Department of Maritime Affairs, Coast Guard, Djibouti Study and Research Center (CERD), Djibouti National Tourist Office, Directorate of Fisheries and National Women Union of Djibouti (UNFD).

Without negatively impacting the project, the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development has undergone significant transformations. Importantly, the project played a role in structuring the new Marine Protected Areas Management Unit (UGAP), which could become the key institution for the improved management of the PA system over the long term. The success and sustainability of these protected areas now largely depend on the UGAP's capacity to effectively carry out its mission, including specialized functions related to regulation and scientific research. As such, the continued development and strengthening of the UGAP will be critical in ensuring the long-term viability and success of Djibouti's marine conservation efforts. The likely integration of the project staff into the UGAP is a positive sign that things could go well.

Even if financial sustainability could become a critical limiting factor, the overall sustainability of the project can overall be considered as "moderately likely". There are some encouraging signs that it could improve soon, if national authorities agree to a request made by the MEDD to allocate a sufficient operational budget to the UGAP.

The 'Gender Results Effectiveness' of the project could be considered as "Gender responsive", meaning that the project adequately tried to address differential needs between men and women and tried to equitably distribute benefits, but the root causes of inequalities were not tackled. While the project made substantial efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, only 8 women directly benefited from income-generating trainings, on sewing and craftsmanship, a rather low number

when considering the amount of upfront work and expected impact. While these 8 women are expected to become trainers in their respective communities, offering a multiplier effect still difficult to evaluate at this stage, the total number of women who directly benefited from the project is likely to remain rather limited.

The national network of MPA is now covering 8%, which is a great accomplishment. The project's successes and challenges provide essential insights into the complexities of MPA establishment and management the experiences and lessons learned from the project will serve as valuable guidance for national authorities as they pursue the ambitious target of achieving a 30% coverage for the national network of MPAs. This target, set forth in the Global Biodiversity Framework negotiated at the CBD CoP 15, in November 2022, represents a significant commitment to marine conservation on a global scale. The project's legacy will surely extend beyond its implementation phase, serving as a source of inspiration for future efforts to protect Djibouti's marine ecosystems.

4.3) Recommendations

#	TE Recommendations	Entity responsible	Timeframe
A	Category 1: Finalization of the legal process for MPA creation		
A.1	Conclude the formal publication of the new law on Protected Areas	National Assembly, Presidency, MEDD, PMU	Short term
A.2	Enact the "implementation decree" to officially establish the operational status of the four new protected areas.	Presidency, MEDD, PMU	Short term
B	Category 2: Support the MEDD in its efforts to strengthen the UGAP		
B.1	Allocate a sufficient annual operating budget to the UGAP (the request has been sent to the Ministry of Budget and Finance)	Ministry of Budget and Finance / UNDP	Recurrent, every January
B.2	Construct office facilities for the UGAP (a proposal already made to the minister)	MEDD	Short term
B.3	Renew the six MoUs that were originally signed within the mere framework of the project. To facilitate a seamless transition, these MoUs should be updated to better reflect the new institutional arrangements.	MEDD / Blue Economy Sub-Direction / UGAP	Short term
B.4	Enhance the capacity of the UGAP team by having all PMU members transition into civil service roles within the UGAP. Also, consider the recruitment of additional staff to further strengthen the team.	Ministry of Budget and Finance / MEDD / Blue Economy Sub-Direction / UGAP	Short and medium terms
B.5	Keep supporting the Ministry of Environment to achieve a positive evaluation for the "Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers" (HACT), which will allow fully-fledge national implementation procedures (NIM).	UNDP / MEDD	Short and medium terms
C	Category 3: Recommendations regarding future GEF projects in Djibouti		
C.1	Carefully weigh the pros and cons before embarking on the creation of a National Agency for Protected Areas	UNDP/GEF/MEDD	Medium term
C.2	Persist in examining the potential establishment of an environmental fund, which may incorporate a Conservation Trust Fund	UNDP/GEF/MEDD	Medium / long terms
C.3	Ensure that the upcoming GEF project focused on biodiversity ("Conserving Biodiversity and Restoring Ecosystem Functions in and around the Day Forest National Protected Area") significantly enhances the capacity and capabilities of UGAP.	UNDP/GEF/MEDD	Short term
D	Category 4: PMA2 project closure		
D.1	Rehabilitate the Arta ecoguard station	UNDP/PMU	Short term
D.2	Transfer ownership of the 2 project vehicles and 3 project boats to UGAP	UNDP/PMU/MEDD	Short term
D.3	Engage in discussions with the Coast Guard to have them assume the operational and maintenance expenses of the 3 boats	Coast Guard/MEDD/UGAP	Short term

D.4	If there is any remaining project balance, allocate it for UGAP's operating activities	UNDP/PMU/MEDD	Short term
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4.4) Lessons learned

- Securing the sustainability of protected area networks demands a long-term commitment involving various stakeholders. While significant progress has been made, the sustainability of the expanded MPAs network in Djibouti is not guaranteed. Prolonged and committed efforts from both national authorities and international stakeholders will be essential over the long term to secure the continued conservation of these vital marine ecosystems.
- Exit strategies should be considered and initiated early in project planning to ensure a smooth transition and long-term project impact.
- Maintaining continuity between different GEF biodiversity projects is vital. Effective strategies for transitioning from one project to another should be implemented from the project's inception.
- Systematic planning for electrification of PNUD construction sites should be incorporated into project design.
- Setting up an Environmental Fund can be more complex than initially anticipated. Clear Terms of Reference (ToRs) from the project's outset, aligned with BIOFIN methodology, are essential. Strong technical support for financial sustainability matters is crucial.
- The project demonstrated the importance of actively involving local communities, authorities, and stakeholders in conservation efforts. Their engagement contributes to the success and sustainability of conservation initiatives.
- Collaborative efforts with UNDP and national stakeholders played a significant role in the project's success. Building strong partnerships and maintaining effective communication are key to achieving project goals.
- Delays in project implementation during the early stages, including those caused by factors such as COVID-19 and administrative processes, can impact project timelines and outcomes. Adequate contingency planning is essential.
- The project highlighted the need for comprehensive technical guidance, particularly in Components 1 and 3, to address potential shortcomings and ensure project effectiveness.
- Challenges were encountered in updating the reference study on biodiversity due to a lack of capacity and technical support. Future projects should prioritize capacity building in relevant areas.
- To enhance ownership and impact, technical reports of GEF projects should be systematically drafted in the national language, ensuring accessibility to key stakeholders.
- While there has been progress in local development and gender integration, it has been relatively modest. To further enhance these aspects, it is essential to give them more substantial attention in future conservation efforts.
- The project experience suggests that exploring the possibility of direct cash transfers as part of conservation strategies could be beneficial.

Annex 1: Terms of Reference of the Terminal Evaluation

1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full- and medium-sized UNDP-supported GEF-financed projects are required to undergo a Terminal Evaluation (TE) at the end of the project. This Terms of Reference (ToR) sets out the expectations for the TE of the *full-sized* project titled Mitigating key sector pressures on marine and coastal biodiversity and further strengthening the national system of marine protected areas in Djibouti (*PIMS 5560*) implemented through the *Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development*. The project started on the July 24, 2018, and is in its 5 years of implementation. The TE process must follow the guidance outlined in the document 'Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects'.

http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/GEF/TE_GuidanceforUNDP-supportedGEF-financedProjects.pdf

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Republic of Djibouti is a small coastal country in the Horn of Africa, with a total area of 23,200 km², a coastline of 372 km and, within a maritime territory area of 7,200 km². Djibouti's economy is largely dependent on its service sector (76.3% of GDP) connected with the country's strategic location as a deep-water port at the intersection of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Over the last years, led by the vision to turn the country into a platform for commercial and logistics services for the Horn of Africa, the Government has started to undertake vast projects for the development of port, rail and road infrastructure, aimed at facilitating and increasing access to markets in the region.

While the Government of Djibouti has made investments to protect some of its unique and biodiversity rich marine habitats, these achievements risk to become precarious given the magnitude and speed of new developments of port infrastructure in Djibouti, most notably in the Gulfs of Tadjourah and Goubet. There are major risks (e.g. pollution due to accidents or cleaning) associated with the new shipping routes and increased traffic of oil tankers and other ships transporting noxious substances through this vulnerable environment.

This GEF project has the objective to "Enhance the resilience of Djibouti's marine biodiversity through increasing institutional capacity, enhancing financial sustainability and management effectiveness of the MPA system, and mainstreaming marine biodiversity into key maritime sectors" (often referred as the MPA 2 project). The project Objective will be achieved through implementation of four components that address the key barriers identified for effective MPA and marine ecosystem services management:

The project Objective will be achieved through implementation of four components that address the key barriers identified for effective MPA and marine ecosystem services management.

- **Component 1:** Strengthening the effectiveness of Djibouti's MPA system through enhanced capacity of all stakeholders, including dialogue to mainstream biodiversity into maritime sectors;
- **Component 2:** Expanding the national MPA network and strengthening MPA management at site level;
- **Component 3:** Sustainable financing mechanism for marine biodiversity and the national protected areas system;
- **Component 4:** Gender Mainstreaming, Knowledge Management and M&E.

The total cost of the project is USD \$15,212,374. This is financed through a GEF grant of USD 2,822,374 and USD 12,390,000 in parallel co-financing from Government of Djibouti (GoD), GoD PRAREV project, GoD (PRMSRVCP/Islamic Development Bank), World Food Programme and IGAD-IUCN-Nature Djibouti. UNDP, as the GEF Implementing Agency, is responsible for the execution of the GEF resources and the cash co-financing transferred to UNDP bank account only. The project's main stakeholders include government authorities, MPA management agencies, local communities living near marine protected areas,

biodiversity-related civil society organizations and maritime sector players. Particular attention will be paid to building the capacity of all stakeholders to ensure effective management of the MPA system. The project integrates cross-cutting aspects such as the vulnerability of marginalized groups, gender equality and respect for human rights. It aims to ensure equitable and inclusive management of marine biodiversity, considering the needs and rights of vulnerable groups. The biodiversity project is closely aligned with the Djibouti government's marine biodiversity conservation strategies and priorities, such as the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and the National Action Plan for the Environment (PANE). It contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 14 on aquatic life. The project is also aligned with the objectives of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in terms of environmental conservation and sustainable development.

The implementation of the project was affected to some extent due to the COVID-19 pandemic as the country was under confinement for eight weeks. With the announcement of the nationwide lockdown, the businesses-both formal and informal were badly affected. People were forced to stay-put inside their houses until the lockdown was lifted on May 17, 2020.

A request for a 6-month extension of the project was approved to extend the project until 31 December 2023. The implementation of the project, which included activities mainly related to training workshops and the request for international expertise, was not possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The country was quarantined, and internet access was limited throughout the country, so the digital option was not feasible.

3. TE PURPOSE

The TE report will assess the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved and draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming. The TE report promotes accountability and transparency and assesses the extent of project accomplishments. The final evaluation report will assess the progress and achievement of the project's objectives and outcomes as specified in the project document. The TE will also examine the project strategy and its risks to sustainability.

This evaluation is the first one, in this regard, the results and recommendations of the final review will be essential to know the achievements and main accomplishments of the project.

The results of the evaluation will allow donors, UNDP, and the government to draw lessons learned from the project. These results will be used to improve future programs, in particular by using the evaluation report as a tool to guide future actions.

Completion of the final evaluation process is scheduled for October 2023.

4. TE APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

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

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

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

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful TE. Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to the following list of executing agencies, senior officials and task team/component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project beneficiaries, academia, local government and CSOs, etc.

Additionally, the TE team is expected to conduct field missions to 2 regions in Djibouti (Tadjourah, Arta), including the following project sites (Arta plage, La baie de Ghoubet El Kharab , Sagallou-Kalaf, Sable Blancs & Ras Ali) :

List 1: Stakeholders to be consulted/interviewed:

1. Directorate of Environment and Sustainable Development (DEDD) / MUET
2. Directorate of Fisheries / Ministry of Agriculture, Water, Fisheries, Livestock and Marine Resources (MAWFLM)
3. Directorate of Maritime Affairs / Ministry of Equipment and Transport (MET)
4. Ports Authority / MET
5. National Scientific Research Institution: CERD / Ministry of Higher Education and Research
6. National Coast Guard
7. Prefecture councils of Arta, Tadjourah and
8. National Union of Women of Djibouti
9. Transport Management
10. Djibouti Telecom
11. Arta and Tadjourah Fishermen's Association
12. Djibouti-Nature Associatio

The specific design and methodology for the TE should emerge from consultations between the TE team and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the TE purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and data. The evaluation should employ a combination of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods and instruments. The TE team must use gender-responsive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the TE report. This needs to be elaborated in the evaluation report, including how data-collection and analysis methods integrated gender considerations, use of disaggregated data and outreach to diverse stakeholder's groups. All evaluation results should be based on evidence. The findings of the evaluation should lead to the elaboration of specific, practical, achievable recommendations that should be directed to the intended users.

Suggested methodological tools and approaches may include:

- **Document review.** (see annex B Project Information Package to be reviewed by TE team)
- **Interviews and meetings** with key stakeholders (men and women) such as key government counterparts, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organizations, United Nations country team (UNCT) members and implementing partners:
 - Semi-structured interviews, based on questions designed for different stakeholders based on evaluation questions around relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.
 - Key informant and focus group discussions with men and women, beneficiaries and stakeholders.
 - All interviews with men and women should be undertaken in full confidence and anonymity. The final evaluation report should not assign specific comments to individuals.
- **Surveys and questionnaires** including male and female participants in development programmes, UN Country Team members and/or surveys and questionnaires to other stakeholders at strategic and programmatic levels.
- **Field visits and on-site validation** of key tangible outputs and interventions as mentioned above.
- Other methods such as outcome mapping, observational visits, group discussions, etc.
- **Data review and analysis of monitoring;** financial and funding data, and other data sources and methods. To ensure maximum validity, reliability of data (quality) and promote use, the evaluator will ensure triangulation of the various data sources.

The methodology should be robust and innovative¹⁶ enough to ensure high quality, triangulation of data sources, and verifiability of information. The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation must be clearly outlined in the TE Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders, and the TE team.

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

5. DETAILED SCOPE OF THE TE

The TE will assess project performance throughout the project period (2018- 2023) against expectations set out in the project's Logical Framework/Results Framework (see ToR Annex A). All project components and outputs should be included in the evaluation covering all project areas.

The evaluation project will be carried out over a period of 3 months from the date of contract signature. The scope of the evaluation should include assessment of the project's key components, namely:

- Component 1: Strengthening the effectiveness of Djibouti's marine protected area (MPA) system through capacity building of all stakeholders, including dialogue for the integration of biodiversity in the maritime sectors.
- Component 2: Expansion of the national MPA network and strengthening of MPA management at site level.
- Component 3: Sustainable financing mechanism for marine biodiversity and the national system of protected areas.
- Component 4: Gender mainstreaming, knowledge management and monitoring-evaluation.

The geographical coverage of the project will include Djibouti's marine and coastal target areas indicated in the project document (Arta plage, La baie de Goubet El Kharab , Sagallou-Kalaf, Sable Blancs & Ras Ali), including specific existing marine protected area sites. The target population will include local communities dependent on marine ecosystems, MPA managers, government authorities and relevant stakeholders listed below.

The evaluation will provide an understanding of the project's effectiveness in achieving its objectives, identify successes and challenges encountered, and provide recommendations for improving the management of marine protected areas and the preservation of marine biodiversity in Djibouti. The TE will assess results according to the criteria outlined in the Guidance for TEs of UNDP-supported [GEF-financed Projects](#).

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

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

Findings

i. Project Design/Formulation

- National priorities and country driven-ness
- Theory of Change
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)
- Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators
- Assumptions and Risks

¹⁶ ¹⁶ UNDP encourage evaluators to follow innovative evaluation approaches. Examples on Innovation in Evaluation Approaches can be found in the following links: [23059_AEA_Flyer_v02_MM_HQ \(undp.org\)](#)

- Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g. same focal area) incorporated into project design
 - Planned stakeholder participation.
 - Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
 - Management arrangements
- ii. Project Implementation
- Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
 - Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements
 - Project Finance and Co-finance
 - Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry (*), implementation (*), and overall assessment of M&E (*)
 - Implementing Agency (UNDP) (*) and Executing Agency (*), overall project oversight/implementation and execution (*)
 - Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)
- iii. Project Results
- Assess the achievement of outcomes against indicators by reporting on the level of progress for each objective and outcome indicator at the time of the TE and noting final achievements
 - Relevance (*), Effectiveness (*), Efficiency (*) and overall project outcome (*)
 - Sustainability: financial (*), socio-political (*), institutional framework and governance (*), environmental (*), overall likelihood of sustainability (*)
 - Country ownership
 - Gender equality and women's empowerment
 - Cross-cutting issues (poverty alleviation, improved governance, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster prevention and recovery, human rights, capacity development, South-South cooperation, knowledge management, volunteerism, etc., as relevant)
 - GEF Additionality
 - Catalytic Role / Replication Effect
 - Progress to impact

Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

- The TE team will include a summary of the main findings of the TE report. Findings should be presented as statements of fact that are based on analysis of the data.
- The section on conclusions will be written in light of the findings. Conclusions should be comprehensive and balanced statements that are well substantiated by evidence and logically connected to the TE findings. They should highlight the strengths, weaknesses and results of the project, respond to key evaluation questions and provide insights into the identification of and/or solutions to important problems or issues pertinent to project beneficiaries, UNDP and the GEF, including issues in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Recommendations should provide concrete, practical, feasible and targeted recommendations directed to the intended users of the evaluation about what actions to take and decisions to make. The recommendations should be specifically supported by the evidence and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation.
- The TE report should also include lessons that can be taken from the evaluation, including best practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success that can provide knowledge gained from the particular circumstance (programmatic and evaluation methods used, partnerships, financial leveraging, etc.) that are applicable to other GEF and UNDP interventions. When possible, the TE team should include examples of good practices in project design and implementation.
- It is important for the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned of the TE report to incorporate gender equality and empowerment of women.

The TE report will include an Evaluation Ratings Table, as shown below:

Evaluation Ratings Table for Mitigating key sector pressures on marine and coastal biodiversity and further strengthening the national system of marine protected areas in Djibouti.	
Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Rating¹⁷
M&E design at entry	
M&E Plan Implementation	
Overall Quality of M&E	
Implementation & Execution	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	
Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	
Effectiveness	
Efficiency	
Overall Project Outcome Rating	
Sustainability	Rating
Financial resources	
Socio-political/economic	
Institutional framework and governance	
Environmental	
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	

6. TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the TE will be approximately 35 working days over a period of 3-month period beginning July 17, 2023. The tentative schedule for the TE is as follows:

Timeframe	Activity
10 July 2023 (2 weeks)	Application closes
17 July 2023 (1 weeks)	Selection of TE team
31 July 2023 (2 weeks)	Preparation period for TE team (handover of documentation)
10 August 2023. (5 days)	Document review and preparation of TE Inception Report
15 August 2023, (5 days)	Finalization and Validation of TE Inception Report; latest start of TE mission
05 September 2023 (1 weeks)	TE mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits, etc.
10 September 2023 (1 day)	Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings; earliest end of TE mission
10 October (1 weeks)	Preparation of draft TE report
15 October 2023, 2023 (1 weeks)	Circulation of draft TE report for comments
25 October 2023, 2023 (3 days)	Incorporation of comments on draft TE report into Audit Trail & finalization of TE report
30 October 2023, (1 day)	Preparation and Issuance of Management Response

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

10 October 2023, (1 day)	Concluding Stakeholder Workshop (optional)
30 October 2023 (3 days)	Expected date of full TE completion

Options for site visits should be provided in the TE Inception Report.

7. TE DELIVERABLES

#	Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
1	TE Inception Report	TE team clarifies objectives, methodology and timing of the TE	15 August 2023	TE team submits Inception Report to Commissioning Unit and project management
2	Presentation	Initial Findings	10 September 2023	TE team presents to Commissioning Unit and project management
3	Draft TE Report	Full draft report (<i>using guidelines on report content in ToR Annex C</i>) with annexes	10 October 2023	TE team submits to Commissioning Unit; reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFP
5	Final TE Report + Audit Trail	Revised final report and TE Audit trail in which the TE details how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final TE report (<i>See template in ToR Annex H</i>)	30 October 2023	TE team submits both documents to the Commissioning Unit
6	Evaluation brief and knowledge product	4-pages knowledge product summarizing the findings and lessons learned		

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

8. TE ARRANGEMENTS

The Commissioning Unit will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the TE team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the TE team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits. The consultants will report directly to the designated evaluation manager and focal point and work closely with the project team. Project staff will not participate in the meetings between consultants and evaluands. Limited administrative and logistical support will be provided. The consultant will use his own laptop and cell phone.

The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach that ensures close engagement with the evaluation managers, implementing partners and the project stakeholders. The evaluation manager will convene an evaluation reference group comprising of technical experts from UNDP, donors, GEF RTA and implementing partners. This reference group will review the inception report and the draft evaluation report and provide detailed comments related to the quality of methodology, evidence collected, analysis and reporting. The reference group will also advise on the conformity of

¹⁸ Access at: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/section-6.shtml>

processes to the GEF, UNDP and UNEG standards. Comments and changes by the evaluator in response to the draft report should be retained by the evaluator to show how they have addressed comments (audit trail). The ERG will also provide input to the development of the management responses and key actions recommended by the evaluation.

The final report will be approved by the evaluation commissioner.

9. TE TEAM COMPOSITION

A team of two independent evaluators will conduct the TE.

The international consultant will be the team leader. He/she will be responsible for conducting stakeholder interviews, conducting field visits, and preparing and finalizing all initial and final evaluation reports in English. The international consultant is responsible for the timely delivery of all reports and will ensure the quality of the report in accordance with GEF and UNDP evaluation guidelines.

The CO office will assist in identifying stakeholders and organizing bilateral and group consultations with stakeholders.

The international should not have been involved in the preparation, formulation, and/or implementation of the project (including the drafting of the project document) and should not have any conflict of interest with the project activities. The selection of evaluators will aim to maximize the overall qualities of the "team" in the following area:

Education

- Master's degree or Phd in Natural Resources Management, Conservation or Marine Protected Areas Management, Fisheries, Coastal Zone Management, Environmental Sciences, or related fields of expertise

Experience

- Relevant experience with results-based management evaluation methodologies.
- Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios.
- Competence in adaptive management, as applied to Climate Change, and Biodiversity.
- Experience in evaluating GEF projects.
- Experience working in east Africa.
- Experience in relevant technical areas for at least 7 years.
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and environment, experience in gender responsive evaluation and analysis.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Demonstrable analytical skills.
- Project evaluation/review experience within United Nations system will be considered an asset.

Language

- Fluency in written and spoken English.
- *Proficiency in French* with good report-writing skills is essential. Samples of previously written work should be submitted with the application.

Required Competencies

- Demonstrates commitment to the UN values and ethical standards.
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality, and age sensitivity and adaptability.
- Treats all people fairly and with impartiality.
- Good communication, presentation and report writing skills,
- Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines.
- Experience managing research and evaluation teams.

Client-oriented and open to feedback

10. EVALUATOR ETHICS

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

11. PAYMENT SCHEDULE

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

Criteria for issuing the final payment of 40%¹⁹:

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

12. APPLICATION PROCESS²⁰

Recommended Presentation of Proposal:

- Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** using the [template](#)²¹ provided by UNDP;
- CV** and a **Personal History Form** ([P11 form](#)²²);
- Brief description of **approach to work/technical proposal** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)
- Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the [Letter of Confirmation of Interest template](#). If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a

¹⁹ The Commissioning Unit is obligated to issue payments to the TE team as soon as the terms under the ToR are fulfilled. If there is an ongoing discussion regarding the quality and completeness of the final deliverables that cannot be resolved between the Commissioning Unit and the TE team, the Regional M&E Advisor and Vertical Fund Directorate will be consulted. If needed, the Commissioning Unit's senior management, Procurement Services Unit and Legal Support Office will be notified as well so that a decision can be made about whether or not to withhold payment of any amounts that may be due to the evaluator(s), suspend or terminate the contract and/or remove the individual contractor from any applicable rosters. See the UNDP Individual Contract Policy for further details:

https://poppp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/PSU_Individual%20Contract_Individual%20Contract%20Policy.docx&action=default

²⁰ Engagement of evaluators should be done in line with guidelines for hiring consultants in the POPP <https://poppp.undp.org/SitePages/POPPRoot.aspx>

²¹ <https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bom/psu/Support%20documents%20on%20IC%20Guidelines/Template%20for%20Confirmation%20of%20Interest%20and%20Submission%20of%20Financial%20Proposal.docx>

²² http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11_Personal_history_form.doc

management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

All application materials should be submitted to the address (insert mailing address) in a sealed envelope indicating the following reference “Consultant for Terminal Evaluation of Mitigating key sector pressures on marine and coastal biodiversity and further strengthening the national system of marine protected areas in Djibouti” or by email at the following address ONLY: proc.dji@undp.org by **July 13, 2023 12:00 PM New York time** Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

Criteria for Evaluation of Proposal: Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted at 70% and the price proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring. The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score that has also accepted UNDP’s General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

13.TOR ANNEXES

- ToR Annex A: Project Logical/Results Framework
- ToR Annex B: Project Information Package to be reviewed by TE team
- ToR Annex C: Content of the TE report
- ToR Annex D: Evaluation Criteria Matrix template
- ToR Annex E: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators
- ToR Annex F: TE Rating Scales
- ToR Annex G: TE Report Clearance Form
- ToR Annex H: TE Audit Trail

Annex 2: Project Logical/Results Framework

This project will contribute to the following Sustainable Development Goal (s): Goal 1 ending poverty: through rural development opportunities provided by community-engagement and livelihood improvement interventions at several MPAs and adjacent areas e.g. through community-management, learning, income generating activities from eco-tourism, possibly sustainable reef fish collection, mariculture food-for-work opportunities a.o.. Furthermore the project touches on Goal 2 - food security and Goal 8 -decent work and economic growth. Goals 12 Sustainable Consumption and Production patterns will address both, reducing demand for unsustainable fishing, pollution and other threats posed in the maritime areas of Djibouti and the port. Goal 14 Life below Water: Numerous efforts are made through the project to improve marine ecosystem and biodiversity management through the improvement of management effectiveness of existing MPAs as well as the expansion of the MPA network and area. Goal 16 Peaceful and inclusive development: is especially embedded into project through brokering a multi-stakeholder interface, including local communities, government and private sector, national and international.					
This project will contribute to the following country outcome included in the UNDAF/Country Programme Document: Focal Area 3: Resilience of populations to natural hazards and food insecurity					
This project will be linked to the following output of the UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017: Output 2.5: Legal and regulatory frameworks, policies and institutions enabled to ensure the conservation, sustainable use, and access and benefit sharing of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems, in line with international conventions and national legislation.					
	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target	Assumptions
Objective: Enhance the resilience of Djibouti's marine biodiversity through increasing institutional capacity, enhancing financial sustainability and management effectiveness of the MPA system, and mainstreaming marine biodiversity into key maritime sectors	Indicator 1. Good status maintenance or positive trends in marine and coastal indicator species: records of whale sharks, population density and size of grouper species and napoleon wrasse, records of dugong, sea turtle nesting tracks and successful nesting attempts, and seabird numbers	To be defined at project start, considering also recent surveys from Cousteau Society and KAI Marine.	Maintained	Maintained to +10%	Science teams can be mobilised using same survey standards Maintenance of the largely good conservation status would be a success given the mounting pressures
	Indicator 2. Coral reef health status in MPAs as measured by: Proportion of benthic habitat covered by live coral assemblages, versus bleached corals, algae and non-living substrate (transects); # of coral recruits per m2; grazer fish diversity and abundance.	To be defined at project start, considering also recent surveys from Cousteau Society and KAI Marine.	Maintained	Maintained to +10%	Science teams can be mobilised using same survey standards Maintenance of the largely good conservation status would be a success given the mounting pressures
Outcome 1.1: A unit dedicated to the management of MPAs is institutionalized within the restructured MHUPE, has adequate capacities for planning, coordinating,	Indicator 3. Scores of the Capacity Development Scorecard (CDS) for PA Systems (individual, institutional and systemic capacities in PA management)	Systemic capacity: 9/27 (33.3%) Institutional capacity: 17/45 (37.8 %)	+15% over baseline	+30% over baseline	Improved operational and HR investments will add significantly to improving CDS.

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target	Assumptions
managing, monitoring and evaluating the system of MPAs in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, and is supported in its mission by capacitated collaborators in line with their responsibilities, especially regarding law enforcement.		Individual capacity: 5/21 (23.8%) Total: 31/93 (33.3%)			
	Indicator 4. Established management structures and gender HR (a) MPA management unit officially established (b) Number of professional staff (male/female)	(a) No Unit (b) Female: 0 Male: 0	(c) Unit operational (d) Female: 2 Male: 2	(c) Unit operational and with recurrent budget (d) Female: >4 Male: >4	Gender strategy will be implemented within MHUPE.
Outcome 1.2: Strengthened MPA management effectiveness allows engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including those economic sectors having adverse impacts on marine and coastal biodiversity related to port developments and operations, including maritime traffic.	Indicator 5. Number of key impact sector partners (c) participating in multi stakeholder committee (d) contributing to sustainable financial mechanism	(a) No multi-stakeholder committee in place. (b) No partners supporting PA finance	(c) 5 partners actively involved (d) 3 financing partners	(c) 10 partners actively involved (d) 6 financing partners	Partners are actively participating and giving this project and its subject matter a high priority. Highest political support is rendered to increase convening power.
	Indicator 6. # of partners in key impact sectors who are effectively implementing and enforcing sectoral management plans in accordance with the Marine Spatial Plan including marine BD and MPA considerations	0 partners in key impact sectors	5 partners in key impact sectors	15 partners in key impact sectors	MSP is successfully finalized and expanded in scope from initial IUCN-IGAD-BMP study.
	Indicator 7. Key impact sector policies/ strategies/ regulatory frameworks that <i>effectively</i> incorporate the Marine Spatial Plan and marine biodiversity and MPA considerations (c) # adopted (d) # effectively implemented	(a) 0 adopted (b) 0 effectively implemented	(c) 2 adopted (d) 1 effectively implemented	(e) 4 adopted (f) 2 effectively implemented	Development/ review cycles of key instruments fall within the project implementation period.
Outcome 2.1: Djibouti's MPA system expanded to add the Gulf of Ghoubet and the marine/ coastal stretch of Sagallou/ Kalaf to the adjacent already-existing Arta Plage	Indicator 8. Area (ha) of coastal and marine habitats (coral reef, mangrove, seascapes, etc.) covered by the legally designated marine PA system of Djibouti	51,880 ha in 3 already-gazetted MPAs	1 new area legally added to the MPA estate (new MPA of Arta Plage), expanding the MPA estate by 7,040 ha to	3 further new areas legally added to the MPA estate, expanding the MPA estate by a total of 31,675 ha to a total	Formal gazettement of new MPAs will be fast tracked. Political willingness to declare these new CMPAs remains

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target	Assumptions
MPA to form one large management unit; another unit of marine protected area will be established at Sable Blanc and Ras Ali.			a total coverage of 58,920 ha	coverage of 83,555 ha	
Outcome 2.2: Increased management effectiveness for Djibouti's MPAs provides greater protection to globally significant habitats and species over approx. 83,555 ha of seascape.	Indicator 9. Improved management effectiveness of MPAs evidenced by increased METT Score	Septs-Freres: 34/96. Moucha-Maskali: 34//96. Haramous-Douda: 36/96; Arta: 31/96. Ghoubet El Karab: 21/96. Sagallou-Kalaf: 19/96. Sable Blanc: 24/96	Septs-Freres: 40/96. Moucha-Maskali: 40/96. Haramous-Douda: 40/96. Arta: 40/96. Ghoubet El Karab: 35/96. Sagallou-Kalaf: 35/96	Septs-Freres: 55/96. Moucha-Maskali: 55/96. Haramous-Douda: 55/96. Arta: 55/96. Ghoubet El Karab: 45/96. Sagallou-Kalaf: 45/96. Sable Blanc: 45/96.	Improved infrastructure, management and surveillance investments will add significantly to improving METT. MPAs considered important management tools for seascape and not degraded to paper parks. Political support of MPAs increased.
Outcome 2.3: Direct and indirect benefits to local communities and stakeholders create tangible incentives to support marine biodiversity conservation objectives, most notably through the development of sustainable and MPA-compatible artisanal fisheries and tourism.	Indicator 10. Number and revenue of (c) biodiversity-friendly artisanal fishermen and (d) community based tourism businesses	To be defined at project start	Numbers increased by 5+5 Revenue represents one regular monthly salary per fishermen and tourism business	Numbers increased by 10+10 Revenue represents 3 regular monthly salaries per fishermen and tourism business	
	Indicator 11. Number of male and female beneficiaries	0	300 male+300 female	1000 male+1000 female	Demonstration projects are executed with partners and beneficiaries esp. from local communities.
Outcome 3.1: National Environment Fund (or an alternative mechanism/ structure) is set up, captures income from national sources and disburses regular financing towards the national PA system, helping to reduce the financing gap.	Indicator 12. Funding gap for management of MPAs, as evidenced by the Financial Score Card	\$100,623/yr gap under Basic Scenario \$2,996,623/yr gap under Optimal Scenario	\$0/yr gap under Basic Scenario \$2,000,000/yr gap under Optimal Scenario	\$0/yr gap under Basic Scenario \$1,000,000/yr gap under Optimal Scenario	Stand-alone and independent funding mechanism will be pursued, or at least a dedicated financing line for marine (protected) areas will be included in overall National Environmental Fund.
	Indicator 13. Financial Scorecard Score	22/225 (10%)	40/225	80/225	
Outcome 4.1.	Indicator 14. Project Implementation Report/PIR	N/A	At least S RTA rating positive	HS	

	Objective and Outcome Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End of Project Target	Assumptions
Rigorous M&E allows effective adaptive management during project implementation	(c) PIR quality as per independent evaluator (d) RTA PIR recommendations reflected in project management			RTA rating positive	
	Indicator 15. # and % of recommendations that were integrated in annual project planning and implemented (c) from annual internal reviews of project performance (d) from the independent MTR	N/A	(c) at least 5 and 50% (d) N/A	(c) at least 10 and 100% (d) at least 5 and 80%	
Outcome 4.2: Lessons learned by the project are made publicly available to national stakeholders and shared with international peer projects.	Indicator 16. Number of project lessons published and disseminated on mitigating sector pressures on marine and coastal biodiversity and strengthening national MPA systems	0	2	5	Other stakeholders are interested in the lessons learned by this project
Outcome 4.3: Measurable socio-economic and equity benefits to women from short-term project activities and its long term impacts.	Indicator 17. # of items achieved of Gender Action Plan	0	50%	100%	
	Indicator 18. % of women among all participants of the project activities, including M&E	5%	>20%	>30%	Women are interested to participate in the project directly

Annex 3: TE Mission itinerary, including summary of field visits

Dates et heures	Institutions / Personnes concernées	
Mardi 03 octobre 2023		
10h30	Arrivée du consultant à l'aéroport de Djibouti	Benjamin,
Mercredi 04 octobre 2023		
09h00	Security briefing avec UNDSS	Benjamin, Idleh UNDSS
10H00	Réunion avec le PNUD, RR	Benjamin,Idleh
11h30	Réunion avec le directeur du projet	PNUD, Benjamin, Idleh et directeur
15h00	Réunion de revue du projet avec l'équipe de projet	Benjamin, équipe de projet
17h00	Call avec Jean-Louis Kromer (Ancien CTA)	CTA , Benjamin,Idleh
Jeudi 05 octobre 2023		
08h00 - 16h00	Mission de terrain, Rencontre avec les associations, préfectures, conseil régional, bénéficiaires...	Benjamin, Idleh , équipe de projet
Vendredi 06 octobre 2023		
08h00 - 16h00	Mission de terrain, Rencontre avec les associations, préfectures, conseil régional, bénéficiaires...	Benjamin, Idleh , équipe de projet
Samedi 07 octobre 2023		
08h00-16h00	Mission de terrain, Rencontre avec les associations, préfectures, conseil régional, bénéficiaires...	Benjamin, Idleh , équipe de projet
Dimanche 08 octobre 2023		
10h00	Agence nationale du tourisme (ONTD / MEDD)	Benjamin, Idleh , équipe de projet
11h00	Union Nationale des Femmes Djiboutiennes	Benjamin, Idleh , équipe de projet
15h00	Direction de la pêche / Ministère de l'agriculture, de l'eau, de la pêche, de l'élevage et des ressources marines (MAWFLMR)	Benjamin, Idleh , équipe de projet
Lundi 09 octobre 2023		
9h00	Direction des affaires maritimes / Ministère de l'équipement et des transports (MET)	Benjamin, Idleh , équipe de projet
11h00	Garde côtière nationale	Benjamin, Idleh , équipe de projet
15h00	Réunion avec le RTA du projet, Min	Benjamin, Idleh , équipe de projet
Mardi 10 octobre 2023		
9h00	Institution nationale de recherche scientifique : CERD / Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche	Benjamin, Idleh , équipe de projet
11h00	Djibouti-Nature Association	Benjamin, Idleh , équipe de projet
15h00	Djibouti Telecom	Benjamin, Idleh , équipe de projet
Mercredi 11 octobre 2023		
09h00	Rénion Union Européene	Benjamin, Idleh , équipe de projet
10h00	Scéance de travail	Benjamin, Idleh , équipe de projet
Jeudi 12 octobre 2023 - Restitution		
11h00	Restitution de la mission et présentation des points clés	Benjamin, Idleh , équipe de projet

Annex 4: List of interviewed people

Institutions	List of interviewed people	Where
Direction de la communication, de l'information et de la documentation	M. Ahmed Mohamed Ali- Directeur national du projet- Directeur de la communication, de l'information et de la documentation	Djibouti
Equipe du projet AMP 2	M. Mahamoud Houssein Ali – Coordinateur du projet	Djibouti
Centre de Recherche et des Etudes de Djibouti CERD	Dr. Moussa Omar – Point focal du projet AMP 2 au CERD.	Djibouti
Préfecture d'Arta	M. Elmi Bouh Préfet de la région d'Arta	Arta
UNDP	Ms. Emma N'Gouan-Anoh, UNDP Resident Representative in Djibouti	Djibouti
UNDP	Ms. Hibo Mohamed Expert, Climate Change / Energy / Environment Portfolio	Djibouti
UNDP	M. Artan Said, Programme Officer	Djibouti
UNDP	M. Min Htut Yin, Regional Technical Advisor	Conserence call
Association des pêcheurs d'Arta	➤ M. Abdourahman Ibrahim - Président des Association des pêcheurs d'Arta ➤ M. Souleiman Ahmed Eco-garde	Arta
Direction des Affaires Maritimes	M. Ali-Mirah Chehem Daoud - Directeur des Affaires Maritimes	Djibouti
Rasali /Tadjourah	➤ M. Mohamed Ebo: Eco-garde ➤ M. Hassan Houmed: Eco-garde ➤ M. Youssouf Ali: Pilote	Tadjourah
Association des Femmes artisanes de Sagalou/ Tadjourah	Community members	Tadjourah
Association des Femmes artisanes du Lac Assal/ Tadjourah	Community members	Tadjourah
Union Nationale des Femmes Djiboutiennes	➤ Ms. Hasna Houmed Bilil – Vice-présidente de l'UNFD ➤ Mme Fatouma Moussa Abdi- Secrétaire générale de l'UNFD ➤ Mme Roukiya Ali Djama – Coordinatrice des projets	Djibouti
Garde côtière nationale	➤ Capitaine Mohamed Abdoukader ➤ Adjudant chef Saad Ibrahim Ali	Djibouti
Direction de la pêche / Ministère de l'agriculture, de l'eau, de la pêche, de l'élevage et des ressources marines (MAWFLMR)	M. Adam Ibrahim – Cadre de la direction de la pêche et également point focal du projet AMP 2.	Djibouti
Direction du Développement Durable – ministère de l'Environnement et du Développement Durable	➤ Mme Bilan Hassan - Directrice du Développement Durable. ➤ Hassan Moussa Rayaleh – Membre du comité de gestion des AMP	Djibouti
ALIEL Consulting	M. Moussa Omar Youssouf	Djibouti
Independant consultant	Ms. Fabiana Issler (in charge of the finalization of the new GEF project on biodiversity)	Conference call
Independant consultant	M. Jean-Louis Kromer (former CTA of MPA2)	Conference call

Annex 5: List of documents reviewed

- Project Document
- CEO Endorsement Request
- PIR 2020, 2021
- PTA 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022
- Progress reports 2019, 2020, 2021
- METT
- CDS
- CDR 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021
- Audit reports
- Minutes Project Board 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021
- CTA mission reports 2018-2021
- Marine Spatial Plan
- Project Communication Strategy
- Stratégie Genre et Plan d'Action
- Report National Fund For Environment And Climate Change
- Draft Protected rea Law
- Draft Decree new protected areas
- Report on geographical limits of MPAs
- Marine biology assessment for new MPAs (CORDIO)
- Etude de Référence sur la biodiversité
- Plans de gestion des AMP
- Eco-design mooring
- Eco-mooring light
- Note de service création UGAP
- TDR expert genre, maritime resource advisor, legal expert, financial expert, AGR, financial and administrative
- assistants, community mobilization, PA mapping expert, communication strategy
- UNDAF 2022
- Plan stratégique PNUD
- Djibouti CPD 2022
- MoU s with Fisheries Department, National Women Association, National Office for Tourism, Marine Affaires
- Department, Coast Guards
- Décret 20004 Aires Protégées Djibouti
- Loi Cadre Environnement (2000) Djibouti
- Loi environnement 2009
- Code maritime
- Code de pêche
- Plan de gestion intégrée de la zone côtière

Annex 6: Evaluation Question Matrix

As presented in the *inception report*, the evaluation matrix was as follow:

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Relevance			
Does the project's objective align with the priorities of the local government and local communities?	Level of coherence between project objective and stated priorities of local stakeholders	- Local stakeholders - Document review of local development strategies, environmental policies, etc.	- Local level field visit interviews - Desk review
Does the project's objective fit within the national environment and development priorities?	Level of coherence between project objective and national policy priorities and strategies, as stated in official documents	National policy documents, such as National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, National Capacity Self-Assessment, etc.	- Desk review - National level interviews
Did the project concept originate from local or national stakeholders, and/or were relevant stakeholders sufficiently involved in project development?	Level of involvement of local and national stakeholders in project origination and development (number of meetings held, project development processes incorporating stakeholder input, etc.)	- Project staff - Local and national stakeholders - Project documents	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Does the project objective fit GEF strategic priorities?	Level of coherence between project objective and GEF strategic priorities (including alignment of relevant focal area indicators)	- GEF strategic priority documents for period when project was approved - Current GEF strategic priority documents	Desk review
Was the project linked with and in-line with UNDP priorities and strategies for the country?	Level of coherence between project objective and design with UNDAF, CPD	UNDP strategic priority documents	Desk review
Does the project's objective support implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity? Other relevant MEAs?	Linkages between project objective and elements of the CBD, such as key articles and programs of work	- CBD website - National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan	Desk review
Effectiveness			
Are the project objectives likely to be met? To what extent are they likely to be met?	Level of progress toward project indicator targets relative to expected level at current point of implementation	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
What are the key factors contributing to project success or underachievement?	Level of documentation of and preparation for project risks, assumptions and impact drivers	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
What are the key risks and barriers that remain to achieve the project objective and generate Global Environmental Benefits?	Presence, assessment of, and preparation for expected risks, assumptions and impact drivers	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Are the key assumptions and impact drivers relevant to the achievement of Global Environmental Benefits likely to be met?	Actions undertaken to address key assumptions and target impact drivers	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Efficiency			

Is the project cost-effective?	- Quality and adequacy of financial management procedures (in line with UNDP, UNOPS, and national policies, legislation, and procedures) - Financial delivery rate vs. expected rate - Management costs as a percentage of total costs	- Project documents - Project staff	- Desk review - Interviews with project staff
Are expenditures in line with international standards and norms?	Cost of project inputs and outputs relative to norms and standards for donor projects in the country or region	- Project documents - Project staff	- Desk review - Interviews with project staff
Is the project implementation approach efficient for delivering the planned project results?	- Adequacy of implementation structure and mechanisms for coordination and communication - Planned and actual level of human resources available - Extent and quality of engagement with relevant partners / partnerships - Quality and adequacy of project monitoring mechanisms (oversight bodies' input, quality and timeliness of reporting, etc.)	- Project documents - National and local stakeholders - Project staff	- Desk review - Interviews with project staff - Interviews with national and local stakeholders
Is the project implementation delayed? If so, has that affected cost-effectiveness?	- Project milestones in time - Planned results affected by delays - Required project adaptive management measures related to delays	- Project documents - Project staff	- Desk review - Interviews with project staff
What is the contribution of cash and in-kind co-financing to project implementation?	Level of cash and in-kind co-financing relative to expected level	- Project documents - Project staff	- Desk review - Interviews with project staff
To what extent is the project leveraging additional resources?	Amount of resources leveraged relative to project budget	- Project documents - Project staff	- Desk review - Interviews with project staff
Results			
Have the planned outputs been produced? Have they contributed to the project outcomes and objectives?	- Level of project implementation progress relative to expected level at current stage of implementation - Existence of logical linkages between project outputs and outcomes/impacts	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Are the anticipated outcomes likely to be achieved? Are the outcomes likely to contribute to the achievement of the project objective?	Existence of logical linkages between project outcomes and impacts	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Are impact level results likely to be achieved? Are the likely to be at the scale sufficient to be	- Environmental indicators - Level of progress through the project's Theory of Change	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review

considered Global Environmental Benefits?			
Sustainability			
To what extent are project results likely to be dependent on continued financial support? What is the likelihood that any required financial resources will be available to sustain the project results once the GEF assistance ends?	- Financial requirements for maintenance of project benefits - Level of expected financial resources available to support maintenance of project benefits - Potential for additional financial resources to support maintenance of project benefits	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Do relevant stakeholders have or are likely to achieve an adequate level of “ownership” of results, to have the interest in ensuring that project benefits are maintained?	Level of initiative and engagement of relevant stakeholders in project activities and results	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Do relevant stakeholders have the necessary technical capacity to ensure that project benefits are maintained?	Level of technical capacity of relevant stakeholders relative to level required to sustain project benefits	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
To what extent are the project results dependent on socio-political factors?	Existence of socio-political risks to project benefits	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
To what extent are the project results dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance?	Existence of institutional and governance risks to project benefits	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Are there any environmental risks that can undermine the future flow of project impacts and Global Environmental Benefits?	Existence of environmental risks to project benefits	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Gender equality and women’s empowerment			
How did the project contribute to gender equality and women’s empowerment?	Level of progress of gender action plan and gender indicators in results framework	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
In what ways did the project’s gender results advance or contribute to the project’s biodiversity outcomes?	Existence of logical linkages between gender results and project outcomes and impacts	- Project documents - Project staff - Project stakeholders	- Field visit interviews - Desk review
Cross-cutting and UNDP Mainstreaming Issues			
How were effects on local populations considered in project design and implementation?	Positive or negative effects of the project on local populations.	Project document, progress reports, monitoring reports	- Field visit interviews - Desk review

Annex 7: TE Rating scale

Table 15. Outcome Ratings Scale - Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency

Rating	Description
6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Level of outcomes achieved clearly exceeds expectations and/or there were no shortcomings
5 = Satisfactory (S)	Level of outcomes achieved was as expected and/or there were no or minor shortcomings
4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Level of outcomes achieved more or less as expected and/or there were moderate shortcomings.
3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Level of outcomes achieved somewhat lower than expected and/or there were significant shortcomings
2 = Unsatisfactory (U)	Level of outcomes achieved substantially lower than expected and/or there were major shortcomings.
1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Only a negligible level of outcomes achieved and/or there were severe shortcomings
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the level of outcome achievements

Table 16. Sustainability Ratings Scale

Ratings	Description
4 = Likely (L)	There are little or no risks to sustainability
3 = Moderately Likely (ML)	There are moderate risks to sustainability
2 = Moderately Unlikely (MU)	There are significant risks to sustainability
1 = Unlikely (U)	There are severe risks to sustainability
Unable to Assess (UA)	Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability

Monitoring & Evaluation Ratings Scale

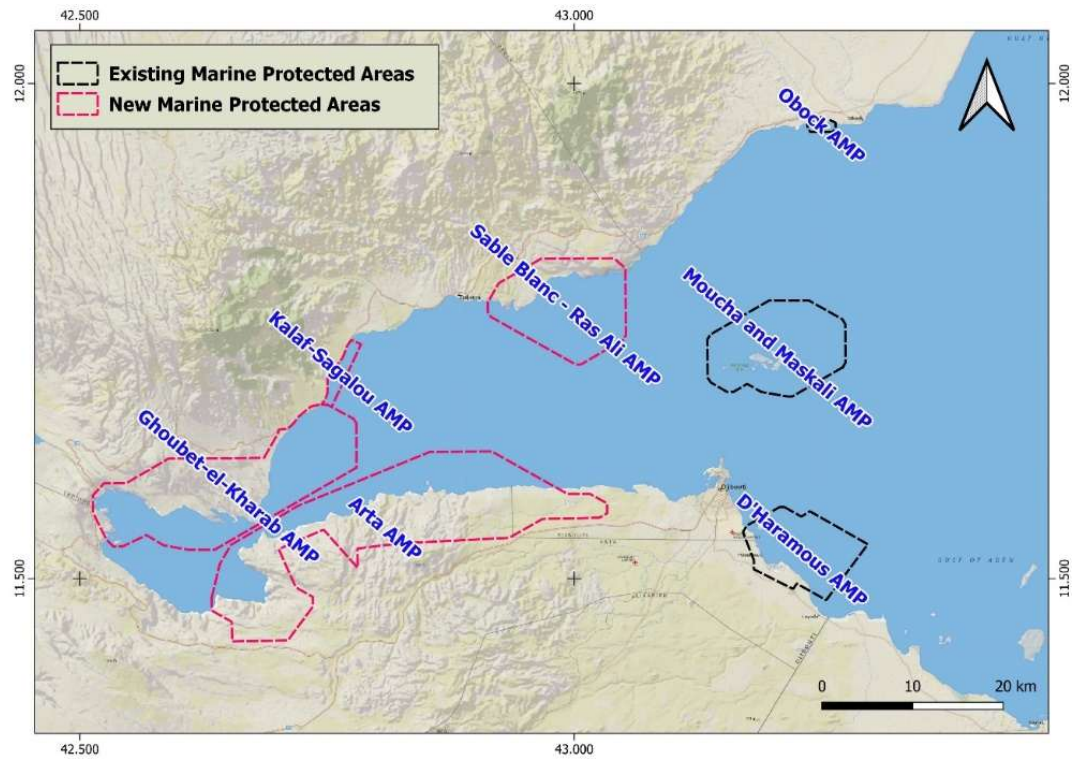
Rating	Description
6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS)	There were no short comings; quality of M&E design/implementation exceeded expectations
5 = Satisfactory (S)	There were minor shortcomings; quality of M&E design/implementation met expectations
4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	There were moderate shortcomings; quality of M&E design/implementation more or less met expectations
3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings; quality of M&E design/implementation was somewhat lower than expected
2 = Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings; quality of M&E design/implementation was substantially lower than expected
1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe shortcomings in M&E design/implementation
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of M&E design/implementation.

Implementation/Oversight and Execution Ratings Scale

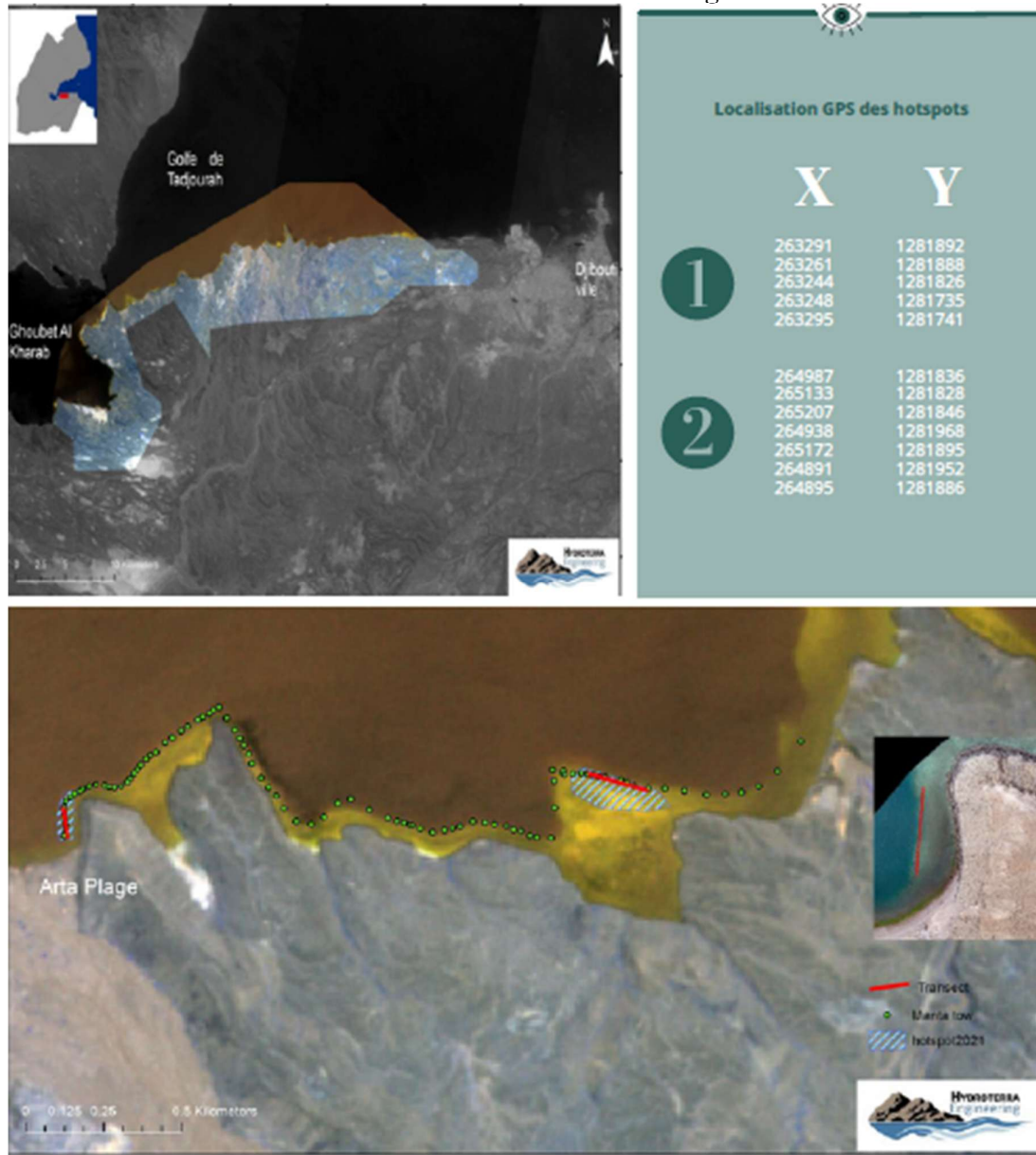
Rating	Description
6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS)	There were no shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution exceeded expectations
5 = Satisfactory (S)	There were no or minor shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution met expectations.
4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	There were some shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution more or less met expectations.
3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution was somewhat lower than expected
2 = Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings; quality of implementation/execution was substantially lower than expected
1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe shortcomings in quality of implementation/execution
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of implementation and execution

Annex 8: Maps of the newly created Marine Protected Areas

Location of existing Marine Protected Areas and MPAs created under the GEF project as determined in the draft Decree on the creation of the AMPs

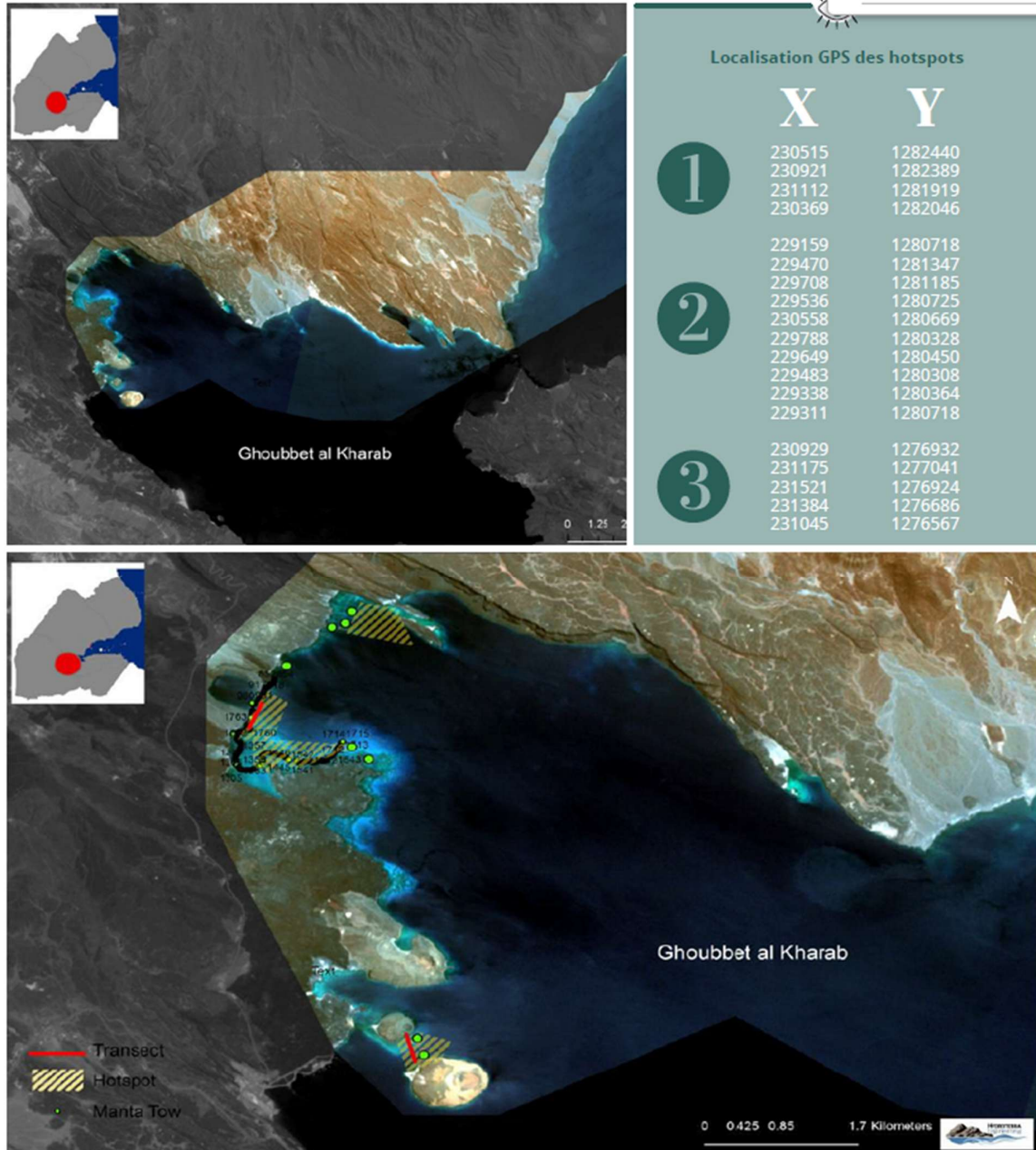


Localisation de l'AMP d'Arta Plage



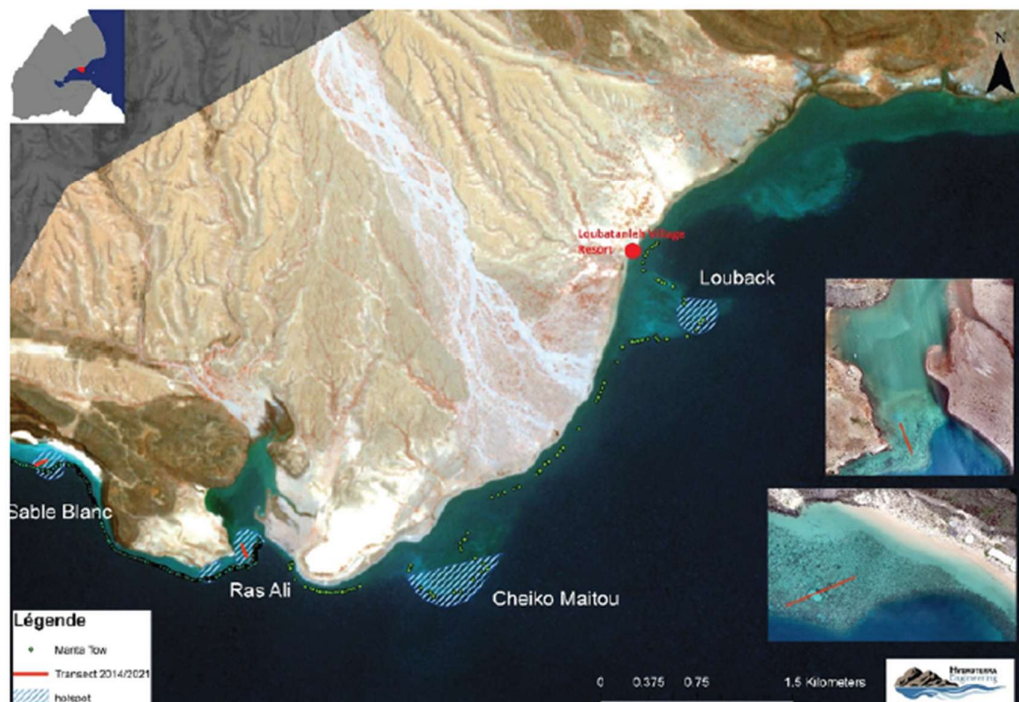
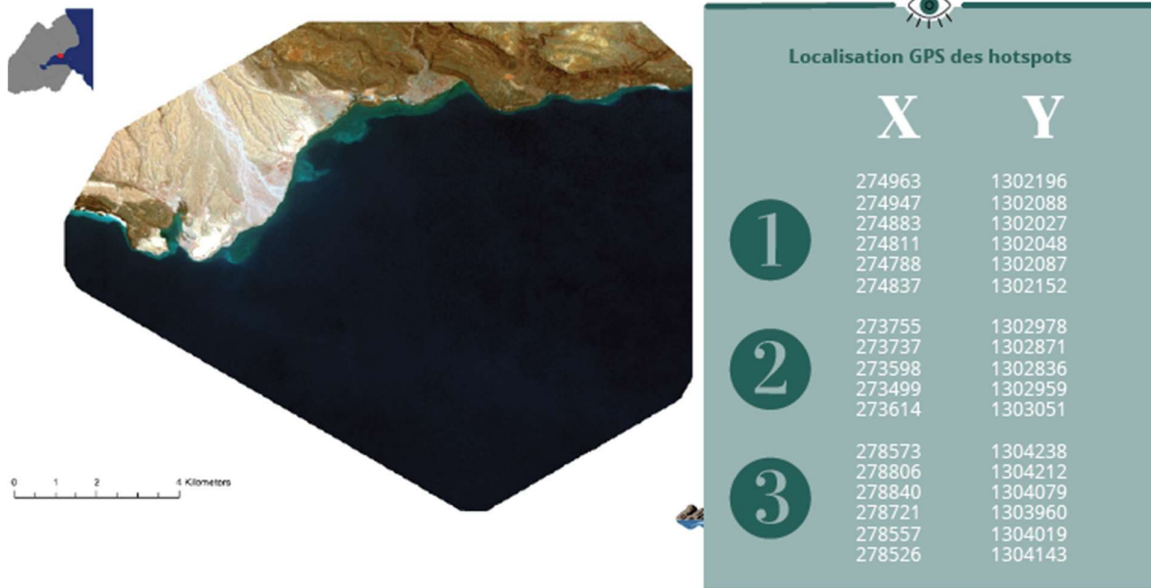
Source : Plan de gestion des Aires marines protégées du Golfe de Tadjourah

Localisation de l'AMP du Ghoubet



Source : Plan de gestion des Aires marines protégées du Golfe de Tadjourah

Localisation de l'AMP des Sables Blancs / Ras Ali



Source : Plan de gestion des Aires marines protégées du Golfe de Tadjourah

Localisation de l'AMP de Kalaf / Sagalou



Localisation GPS des hotspots

X

Y

X

Y

1

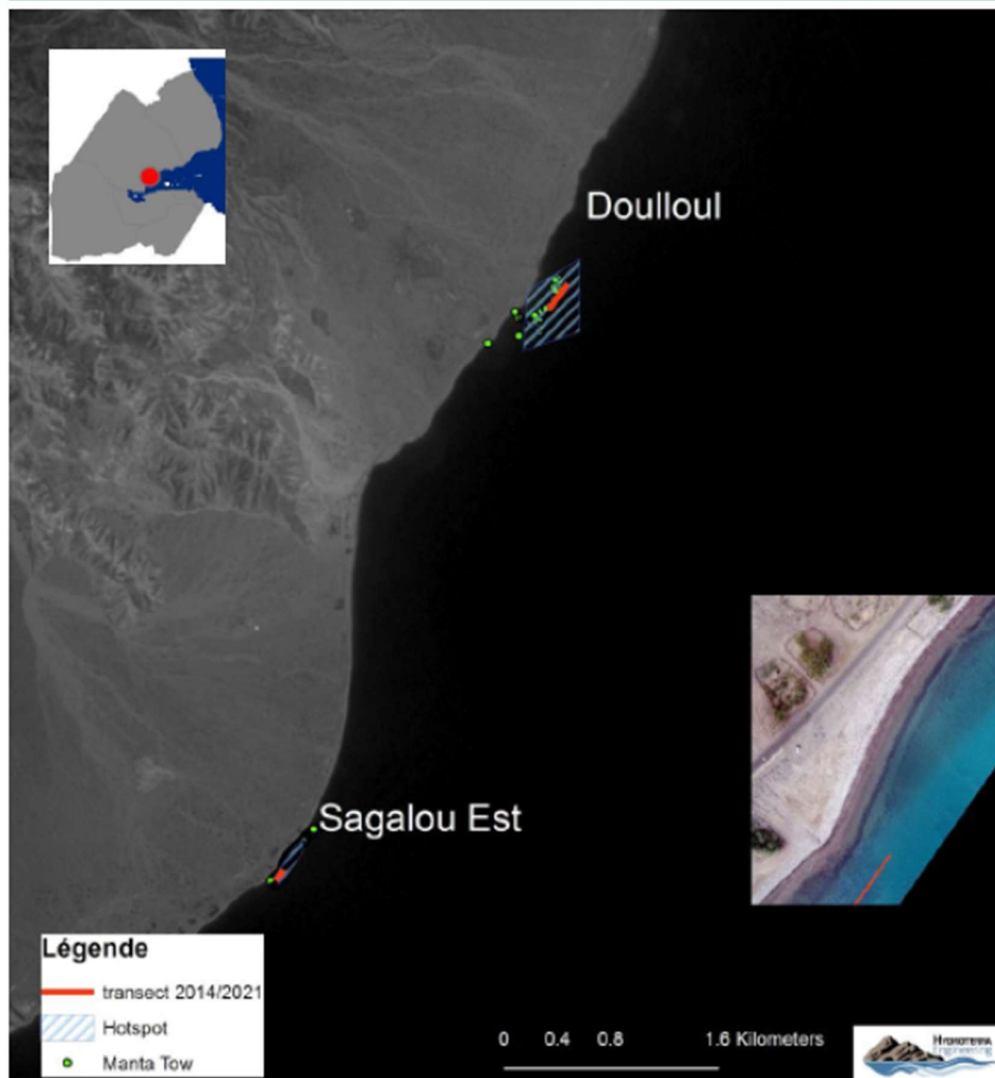
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256519

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1296252
1291822
1295934

2

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254266
254436
254441
254384

1291822
1291775
1292006
1292108
1292060



Source : Plan de gestion des Aires marines protégées du Golfe de Tadjourah

Annex 9: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form

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

Evaluators/Consultants:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study imitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.
8. Must ensure that independence of judgement is maintained, and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
9. Must confirm that they have not been involved in designing, executing or advising on the project being evaluated and did not carry out the project's Mid-Term Review.

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of Evaluator: Benjamin Landreau

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

Signed at Versoix (Switzerland) on September 15th, 2023

Signature:



Annex 10: Details on stakeholders

Stakeholder	Expected roles in project implementation
Institutions of the Djibouti Government	
Directorate of Environment and Sustainable Development (DEDD) / Ministry of Housing, Urban Planning and Environment (MHUPE)	- The ministry develops and implements the government's policy on environment, notably through the design of a regional planning scheme jointly with competent ministries, the development of normative texts, control of environmental standards in the areas of infrastructure, housing, equipment, transport, energy in partnership with the concerned ministries, and the realization of environmental impact studies. - The ministry has the national mandate over natural resources conservation and sustainable management and for the overall coordination and management of the PA/MPA system, - The ministry through the DEDD is also involved in fisheries management as it is responsible for the implementation of the CBD and PERSGA conventions on species and protected areas. Law No. 45 of 2004 establishes three marine protected areas where collection of corals and shells, as well as spearfishing, are prohibited and where fishing is allowed but regulated by DEDD, in consultation with the FD. - As the national implementing partner/agency of the project, DEDD will be accountable for the project results, will designate a National Project Director among its members and chair the Steering Committee, and will allocate appropriate work premises for the project management team, including water and electricity, - Leadership for institutional reforms related to the management of the national PA system and for the national consultation process engaging key public and private sector stakeholders; - Contribution to project monitoring and evaluation, responsible for technical and financial reporting to UNDP - Be the overall coordinator and convener of the high-level multi-stakeholder committee
Directorate of Fisheries / Ministry of Agriculture, Water, Fisheries, Livestock and Marine Resources (MAWFLMR)	- As regards fisheries, the Ministry is responsible for policy development and planning over the entire national territory, for the development of fisheries, exploitation of fishery resources and industrialization of the sector. - As the Department of Fisheries is responsible for licensing fisheries permits, it will participate in the elaboration of a strategy to implement an effective surveillance of marine protected areas and to ensure enforcement of laws and regulations, namely regarding illegal fishing by foreign fishers - Will contribute to building synergies between this project and others related to marine and coastal biodiversity and resilience, - Will develop a consultancy proposal for fisheries research (sustainability of fisheries, diamond back squid, etc.) and become part of the high-level multi-stakeholder committee
Directorate of Maritime Affairs / Ministry of Equipment and Transport (MET)	- The Ministry of Equipment and Transport is responsible for the implementation and coordination of road, rail, sea and air transportation policy as well as the national meteorology. It is also in charge of the management, operation, maintenance and renovation of public facilities. It is responsible for designing and implementing the government's policy on road, port and airport infrastructure. All Ports of Djibouti are under this ministry which is also responsible for licensing maritime traffic. - Will be invited to participate in the MPA spatial planning proposal, buoy network, etc. - Collaboration to prepare an action for the development of an environmental contingency plan adequate for the TSS Bab el Mandeb and the port infrastructure expected for Djibouti in coming years. - Become a partner in the high-level multi-stakeholder committee, identify research and knowledge needs, and participate in technical discourses
Ports Authority / MET	- Will be invited to participate in the MPA spatial planning proposal, buoy network, etc. - Participation in the elaboration of a strategy to implement an effective surveillance of MPAs and to ensure enforcement of regulations, namely in environmental protection - Become a partner in the ell high-level multi-stakeholder committee, identify research and knowledge needs, and participate in technical discourses
Minister of Economy and Finance	- The Ministry is responsible for the implementation and coordination of economic and financial policy, [...] to develop and implement, jointly with the Ministry of the Budget, the government's policy to mobilize domestic financial resources and external financing for development. - Become a partner in the high-level multi-stakeholder committee, identify research and knowledge needs, and participate in technical discourses

Stakeholder	Expected roles in project implementation
	- Support the development of a strategy to operationalize the Environmental Fund and mobilize financing from various sources (compensation for habitat destruction, voluntary contributions following social responsibility, <i>polluter pays</i> and <i>user pays</i> principles.)
National Tourism Office, Ministry of Economy and Finance, in charge of Trade, SMEs, Handicrafts, Tourism and Formalization	- The Ministry develops and implements government policy to develop tourism and ensure its regulation. It also has authority over Djibouti Tourist National Office and can intervene through it regarding fishing in the touristic coastal and island areas, protected or not, especially for ecotourism. - Issues and controls licenses for tourism operators, including - Contribution to the planning of ecotourism across the MPA system as part of the strategy to raise funds for the management of MPAs and for the development of IGAs for local communities concerned by MPAs; - Contribution for the development of a strategy to avoid/reduce negative impacts and enhance the sustainability of MPA-related tourism, including whale shark and coral diving, distribution of recycling containers, organisation of beach and seafloor clean-ups; - Collaboration in planning the building of the ARTA Plage AMP base using the abandoned buildings on site; - Contribution to identify activities needed to devise and implement an awareness and communication strategy in collaboration with environmental associations/NGOs (working towards a “Whale shark Week”; commemorating World Ocean Day on 08 June); - Participation in the assessment of the effectiveness of MPAs management and of the impact of the project interventions (baselines) - Whale shark tourism control / collaboration in the building of the ARTA Plage AMP base using the abandoned buildings on site / working towards a “Whale shark Week” to start the 2015 whale shark season with everything in place (MPA, code of conduct, licenses, regulations, spatial planning, mooring buoys, MARPOL containers, recycling containers, beach and seafloor clean up, etc.) - Become a partner in the high-level multi-stakeholder committee, identify research and knowledge needs, and participate in technical discourses
National Scientific Research Institution: CERD / Ministry of Higher Education and Research	- Participation in the development and implementation of monitoring programs for biodiversity, in the assessment of the effectiveness of protected areas management and in the planning of the project interventions (baselines), - Development of proposals to implement long term monitoring of reefs, sea turtles, whale sharks, and other priority biodiversity elements, - Participation in the identification of the database structure for the long-term monitoring of MPAs - Become a partner in the high-level multi-stakeholder committee, identify research and knowledge needs, and participate in technical discourses
National Coast Guard	- Participation in the elaboration of a strategy to implement an effective surveillance of marine protected areas and to ensure enforcement of laws and regulations, namely regarding illegal fishing by foreign fishers - Become a partner in the high-level multi-stakeholder committee, identify research and knowledge needs, and participate in technical discourses
MPAs managers and ecoguards	- Managers of and Sept-Frères MPAs will be required to ensure that the ecoguards are fully involved in the construction of the buoy network - Participation in the identification of capacity development needs for the effective management of MPAs - Participation in the assessment of the effectiveness of MPAs management and of the impact of the project interventions (baselines) - Participation in the elaboration of a strategy to implement an effective surveillance of MPAs and to ensure enforcement of regulations
Regional authorities and representatives	
Prefecture councils	- The prefecture is the first interlocutor at the regional level and has a direct link with people; - Will be informed of the project development and objectives and invited to participate in baseline surveys and workshops to identify priorities/ strategies for interventions, to participate in identification and planning of interventions at the local level, including the selection of intervention sites at the local and community levels
Regional development councils	- Regional councils are elected and therefore the legitimate representatives of the interests of local communities - recently established as part of the decentralization process; - Will be informed of the project development and objectives and invited to participate in baseline surveys and workshops to identify priorities / strategies for interventions, to

Stakeholder	Expected roles in project implementation
	participate in identification and planning of interventions at the local level, including the selection of intervention sites at the local and community levels
Civil society	
IUCN-IGAD// Nature Djibouti / CORDIO / Fondation Cousteau	- Key co-financing partner for marine research, monitoring and capacity development, as well as for the development of the seascape management plan - Contribution to define awareness and communication strategy - Expertise for trainings, professional updating and seminars for Djiboutian stakeholders; - Become a partner in the high-level multi-stakeholder committee, identify research and knowledge needs, and participate in technical discourses
National Union of Women of Djibouti	- Contribution to define awareness and communication strategy; - Contribution to identify priority / strategies for interventions - Participation in the assessment of the effectiveness of MPAs management and of the impact of the project interventions (baselines) - Partners in implementing demonstration projects - Become a partner in the high-level multi-stakeholder committee, identify research and knowledge needs, and participate in technical discourses
Professional associations (fishers association, tour operators association)	- Active participation in the identification and development of income generating activities including profitable ecotourism, fishing and mariculture activities to the benefit of local communities - Become a partner in the high-level multi-stakeholder committee, identify research and knowledge needs, and participate in technical discourses
Media (print and radio media)	- Invited to contribute to the dissemination of main events related to project preparation - Contribution to develop a communication and awareness strategy for the project
Academic and scientific institution: Djibouti University/ Faculty of Science / Ministry of Higher Education and Research	- Contribution to the identification of priorities for the development of programs / training modules in biodiversity conservation, adaptive management of PAs, and for their integration into the university curriculum; - Participation in the assessment of the effectiveness of MPAs management and of the impact of the project interventions (baselines); - Contribution to the establishment a national platform for sharing knowledge on marine biodiversity and MPAs - Become a partner in the high-level multi-stakeholder committee, identify research and knowledge needs, and participate in technical discourses
Village communities concerned by MPAs	
Users of natural resources from local communities in/around MPAs (local fishers, tour guides, etc.)	- Key stakeholders and beneficiaries; - Active participation in the identification and development of income generating activities including profitable ecotourism, fishing and mariculture to the benefit of local communities;
Local community leaders / including representatives of elders, women and youth	- Members (representatives) of the teams during field missions; - Participation in defining local communities' role in monitoring biodiversity and surveillance programs, in discussing local communities' involvement in restoration works such as mangrove restoration and beach clean-ups in the context of WFP "Food for Assets" agreements - Participation in the assessment of the effectiveness of MPAs management and of the impact of the project interventions (baselines)
Community-based organizations, such as active co-management committees	- Participation in defining CBOs' role in monitoring and participatory research programs on biodiversity; - Contribution to community mobilization for the identification of IGAs and level of participation to restoration works.
Private sector / Other	
National Chamber of Commerce and Industry	- Become a partner in the high-level multi-stakeholder committee, identify research and knowledge needs, and participate in technical discourses
Tourism operators/ investors, incl. Dolphin Dive/ Coubeche Sable Blanc	- Will be informed of the project development and objectives and invited to participate in baseline surveys and workshops to identify priorities/ strategies for interventions - Collaboration with regards to ecotourism development, tourism impact reduction, buoy network, MPA base construction, MARPOL containers, recycling – cleaning up of beach and sea floor - Use of tourism concessions as source of MPA financing - Contribution to the identification and planning of IGAs related to ecotourism for local communities
Merchant shipping companies, users of the Gulf of Tadjourah and Ghoubet	- Will be informed of the project development and objectives and invited to participate in baseline surveys and workshops to identify priorities for interventions
Military (users of MPAs coastal zones)	- Informed of the project objectives and invited to participate in baseline surveys and workshops to identify strategies to reduce pressures on marine/coastal biodiversity

