



PROJECT DOCUMENT

Regional Project – Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Iran, Turkmenistan

Project Title: Addressing Marine Litter and Marine Plastics – A Systemic Approach in the Caspian Sea
Project Number: 00129817

ANNEXES

- 1. Project Quality Assurance Report**
- 2. Social and Environmental Screening Report**
- 3. Risk Analysis**
- 4. Project Theory of Change**
- 5. Project Steering Committee Terms of Reference and TORs of key management positions.**
- 6. Stakeholder Engagement Plan**
- 7. Gender Analysis and Plan**

ASM-06673 - Quality Assurance - Design

Procedure Year: 2024

Procedure Status: Approved

Procedure Department: HQ - Reg Centre - Istanbul

Record Owner: Rayza Oblitas

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Overall Project Risk Categorization: ● Highly Satisfactory

Procedure Name: ASM-06673

Procedure Type: Design

Last Modified by: Abusabeeb Elsadig,9/16/2024, 6:01 AM

Decision:

QA Summary/Project Board Comments:

RELATED PROJECTS(1)					
NAME	DEPARTMENT	STATUS	ATLAS PROJECT NUMBER	START DATE	END DATE
00129817	HQ - Reg Centre - Istanbul	On Going	00140799	12/20/2021	12/31/2027

RELATED SESPS(1)		
PARENT PROCEDURE	PROCEDURE TYPE	PROCEDURE YEAR
ASM-06674	SESP (Social and Environmental Screening Procedure)	2024

Approval History

Approval Date: Mon Sep 16 00:00:00 GMT 2024

Approved By: Abusabeeb Elsadig <abusabeeb.elsadig@undp.org>

APPROVAL HISTORY			
STEP NAME	DATE	STATUS	ASSIGNED TO
Submitted for Approval	2024-09-16 06:01:52	Approved	Abusabeeb Elsadig
Approval Request Submitted	2024-09-12 02:29:40	Started	Vladimir Mamaev

QA Questionnaire:

Strategic

Status: Complete

Quality Rating: Highly Satisfactory

1. Does the project specify how it will contribute to higher level change through linkage to the programme's Theory of Change?

☒ 3: The project is clearly linked to the programme's theory of change. It has an explicit change pathway that explains how the project will contribute to outcome level change and why the project's strategy will likely lead to this change. This analysis is backed by credible evidence of what works effectively in this context and includes assumptions and risks.

☐ 2: The project is clearly linked to the programme's theory of change. It has a change pathway that explains how the project will contribute to outcome-level change and why the project strategy will likely lead to this change.

☐ 1: The project document may describe in generic terms how the project will contribute to development results, without an explicit link to the programme's theory of change.

*Note: Projects not contributing to a programme must have a project-specific Theory of Change. See alternative question under the information icon for these cases.

*Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1.

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The project design describes the development challenges and a Theory of Change (TOC) is presented in the ProDoc – Annex 4. The TOC is based on the logical links between outputs, outcomes and expected impacts taking into account the barriers, risks and assumptions identified.

2. Is the project aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan?

- ☐ 3: The project responds to at least one of the development settings as specified in the Strategic Plan and adapts at least one Signature Solution. The project's RRF includes all the relevant SP output indicators. (all must be true)
- ☒ 2: The project responds to at least one of the development settings as specified in the Strategic Plan. The project's RRF includes at least one SP output indicator, if relevant. (both must be true)
- ☐ 1: The project responds to a partner's identified need, but this need falls outside of the UNDP Strategic Plan. Also select this option if none of the relevant SP indicators are included in the RRF.

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The project is linked with the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022-2025, and the Integrated Results and Resources Framework (IRRF). It lines up with Signature Solution 4: Environment, Result 4.1: Natural resources protected and managed to enhance sustainable productivity and livelihoods and Result 4.2 Public and Private Investment Mechanisms mobilized for biodiversity, water, oceans and climate solutions. The Project is relevant to the Regional Programme Outcome 3: Resilience built to respond to systemic uncertainty and risk/ Output 3.4: Natural resources protected and managed to enhance sustainable productivity and livelihoods.

The Project Results Framework has indicators and targets that are relevant to the UNDP SP and IRRF. This project will contribute to the following Sustainable Development Goals: SDG 6, SDG 11, SDG 13, SDG 15. The project is consistent with national country programmes.

3. Is the project linked to the programme outputs? (i.e., UNSDCF/CPD, RPD or Strategic Plan IRRF for strategic interventions not part of a programme)

- ☒ YES
- ☐ NO

***Note: Project QA cannot be approved by Project QA Approver when the response is "No".**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

Within the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022-2025, the project is contributing to the Development Outputs, inked to Result 4.1 (Indicator 4.1.2 Natural resources that are managed under a sustainable use, conservation, access, and benefit-sharing regime) and Result 4.2 (Indicator 4.2.1 Number of people directly benefitting from mechanisms for biodiversity, water, oceans, and climate solutions funded by public and/or private sector resources). The project contributes to the Regional Programme Outcome 3: Resilience built to respond to systemic uncertainty and risk/ Output 3.4: Natural resources protected and managed to enhance sustainable productivity and livelihoods (SP Output 4.1)/ Output indicator 3.4.1: Natural resources that are managed under a sustainable use, conservation, access, and benefit-sharing regime.

Relevant

Status: Complete

Quality Rating: Highly Satisfactory

4. Does the project identify target groups, and particularly those marginalized, vulnerable and left further behind (LNOB)

- ☐ 3: The LNOB target groups are clearly specified, prioritising discriminated, and marginalized groups left furthest behind, identified through a rigorous process based on evidence.
- ☒ 2: The LNOB target groups are clearly specified, prioritizing groups left furthest behind.
- ☐ 1: The LNOB target groups are not clearly specified.

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1. Projects that build institutional capacity should still identify targeted groups to justify support.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

Annexes to the Project Document provide Stakeholder analysis and engagement plans and a Gender Analysis and Action Plan.

5. Have knowledge, good practices, and past lessons learned of UNDP and others informed the project design?

- ☐ 3: Knowledge and lessons learned backed by credible evidence from sources such as evaluation, corporate policies/strategies, and/or monitoring have been explicitly used, with appropriate referencing, to justify the approach used by the project.
- ☒ 2: The project design mentions knowledge and lessons learned backed by evidence/sources but have not been used to justify the approach selected.
- ☐ 1: There is little, or no mention of knowledge and lessons learned informing the project design. Any references made are anecdotal and not backed by evidence.

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

Through Component 6 (Proactive communication and stakeholder awareness on reducing plastic waste – to be executed by UNEP Tehran Convention Secretariat) a detailed plan will be prepared during project inception. It is planned to use the UNDP experience from the Black Sea project, as well as coordinate with relevant national activities in the project beneficiary countries. Where appropriate the project will also make links with the GEF IW:LEARN programme and the GEF Integrated Programme on Circular Economy to address plastic waste.

6. Does UNDP have a clear advantage to engage in the role envisioned by the project vis-à-vis national / regional / global partners and other actors?

- ☒ 3: An analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area where the project intends to work, and credible evidence supports the proposed engagement of UNDP and partners through the project, including identification of potential funding partners. It is clear how results achieved by partners will complement the project's intended results and a communication strategy is in place to communicate results and raise visibility vis-à-vis key partners. Options for south-south and triangular cooperation have been considered, as appropriate. (all must be true)
- ☐ 2: Some analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area where the project intends to work, and relatively limited evidence supports the proposed engagement of and division of labour between UNDP and partners through the project, with unclear funding and communications strategies or plans.
- ☐ 1: No clear analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area that the project intends to work. There is risk that the project overlaps and/or does not coordinate with partners' interventions in this area. Options for south-south and triangular cooperation have not been considered, despite its potential relevance.

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

UNDP has Country Office representation in all the Caspian Sea countries who will be responsible for project execution of Components 3, 4 and 5. IRH office has experience with implementation of the marine regional projects (the Black Sea). The project will also be supported via the UNEP administered Tehran Convention Secretariat (executing Components 1, 2 and 6). The Tehran Convention serves as an overarching governance framework which lays down the general requirements and the institutional mechanism for environmental protection and sustainable development in the Caspian Sea region.

Principled

Status: Complete

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

7. Does the project apply a human rights-based approach?

- ☐ 3: The project is guided by human rights and incorporates the principles of accountability, meaningful participation, and non-discrimination in the project's strategy. The project upholds the relevant international and national laws and standards. Any potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were rigorously identified and assessed as relevant, with appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into project design and budget. (all must be true)
- ☒ 2: The project is guided by human rights by prioritizing accountability, meaningful participation and non-discrimination. Potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were identified and assessed as relevant, and appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into the project design and budget. (both must be true)
- ☐ 1: No evidence that the project is guided by human rights. Limited or no evidence that potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were considered

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

Human rights issues were considered during project development and potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were identified and assessed under the SESP process. A safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment is integral to the full enjoyment of a wide range of human rights, including the rights to life, health, food, water and sanitation. Therefore, the project fits well in the overall concept of human rights.

8. Does the project use gender analysis in the project design?

- ☐ 3: A participatory gender analysis has been conducted and results from this gender analysis inform the development challenge, strategy and expected results sections of the project document. Outputs and indicators of the results framework include explicit references to gender equality, and specific indicators measure and monitor results to ensure women are fully benefitting from the project. (all must be true)
- ☒ 2: A basic gender analysis has been carried out and results from this analysis are scattered (i.e., fragmented and not consistent) across the development challenge and strategy sections of the project document. The results framework may include some gender sensitive outputs and/or activities but gender inequalities are not consistently integrated across each output. (all must be true)
- ☐ 1: The project design may or may not mention information and/or data on the differential impact of the project's development situation on gender relations, women and men, but the gender inequalities have not been clearly identified and reflected in the project document.

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

A gender analysis has been carried out and results of this analysis are provided in the form of project recommendations (incorporated into project design) and a gender action plan. Both are provided in Annex 7 of the ProDoc. The project results framework includes targets for women's meaningful participation in the project.

9. Did the project support the resilience and sustainability of societies and/or ecosystems?

- ☐ 3: Credible evidence that the project addresses sustainability and resilience dimensions of development challenges, which are integrated in the project strategy and design. The project reflects the interconnections between the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Relevant shocks, hazards and adverse social and environmental impacts have been identified and rigorously assessed with appropriate management and mitigation measures incorporated into project design and budget. (all must be true)
- ☒ 2: The project design integrates sustainability and resilience dimensions of development challenges. Relevant shocks, hazards and adverse social and environmental impacts have been identified and assessed, and relevant management and mitigation measures incorporated into project design and budget. (both must be true)

☐ 1: Sustainability and resilience dimensions and impacts were not adequately considered.

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The project is building capacity to assist with reducing the quantity of ML (and specifically plastic waste) discharge to water courses and marine locations. This will assist with enhancing the environmental status of the marine environment that will benefit ecosystem services provided and reduce impacts on human health from plastic waste (micro plastics and additives -e.g. POPs) reduced.

10. Has the Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) been conducted to identify potential social and environmental impacts and risks? The SESP is not required for projects in which UNDP is Administrative Agent only and/or projects comprised solely of the preparation and dissemination of reports and communication materials; organization of events, workshops, or training; strengthening capacities of partners to participate in international negotiations and conferences; partnership coordination (including UN coordination) and management of networks; and global/regional projects with no country-level activities as well as Development Effectiveness projects and Institutional Effectiveness projects. [If yes, upload the completed checklist. If SESP is not required, Select all exemption criteria that apply.]

- ☒ Yes
☐ No
☐ SESP not required because project consists solely of (Select all exemption criteria that apply)

***Applicable only to option "SESP not required"**

- ☐ 1: Preparation and dissemination of reports, documents and communication materials
☐ 2: Organization of an event, workshop, training
☐ 3: Strengthening capacities of partners to participate in international negotiations and conferences
☐ 4: Partnership coordination (including UN coordination) and management of networks
☐ 5: Global/regional projects with no country level activities (e.g. knowledge management, inter-governmental processes)
☐ 6: UNDP acting as Administrative Agent
☐ 7: Development Effectiveness projects and Institutional Effectiveness projects

***Note: Project QA cannot be approved by Project QA Approver when the response is "No".**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The SESP has been carried out during the project preparation and relevant SESP Report is included as Annex 2 of the ProDoc. Environmental Social Management Framework (ESMF) and other SES frameworks/plans will be developed as needed.

Management & Monitoring

Status: Complete

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

11. Does the project have a strong results framework?

- ☐ 3: The project's selection of outputs and activities are at an appropriate level. Outputs are accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators that measure the key expected development changes, each with credible data sources and populated baselines and targets, including gender sensitive, target group focused, sex-disaggregated indicators where appropriate. (all must be true)
☒ 2: The project's selection of outputs and activities are at an appropriate level. Outputs are accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators, but baselines, targets and data sources may not yet be fully specified. Some use of target group focused, sex-disaggregated indicators, as appropriate. (all must be true)
☐ 1: The project's selection of outputs and activities are not at an appropriate level; outputs are not accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators that measure the expected change and have not been populated with baselines and targets; data sources are not specified, and/or no gender sensitive, sex-disaggregation of indicators. (if any is true)

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The project results framework specifies outcome-level targets and indicators. The project results framework is populated by result-oriented and SMART indicators. The baseline is specified in all cases unless the outcome indicator is designed to measure the introduction of something that does not yet exist. The project also includes gender sensitive, target group-focused, and sex-disaggregated indicators. The results framework will be reviewed during the inception phase and might be refined as needed.

12. Is the project's governance mechanism clearly defined in the project document, including composition of the project board?

- ☐ 3: The project's governance mechanism is fully defined. Individuals have been specified for each position in the governance mechanism (especially all members of the project board.) Project Board members have agreed on their roles and responsibilities as specified in the terms of reference. The ToR of the project board has been attached to the project document. (all must be true)
☒ 2: The project's governance mechanism is defined; specific institutions are noted as holding key governance roles, but individuals may not have been specified yet. The project document lists the most important responsibilities of the project board, project director/manager and quality assurance roles. (all must be true)
☐ 1: The project's governance mechanism is loosely defined in the project document, only mentioning key roles that will need to be filled at a later date. No information on the responsibilities of key positions in the governance mechanism is provided.

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The project's Governance and Management Arrangements are provided in the Chapter VIII of the Project Document. It specifies the role of the UNDP IRH, COs and UNEP (Responsible party), overall organizational structure considering the Project Quality Assurance, Project

Management Unit, Expert Groups and Country teams. The ProDoc also lists the roles and responsibilities of the project board, the project manager, and quality assurance roles for both UNDP and the implementing partner.

13. Have the project risks been identified using the risk assessment tools (Project Quality Assurance, Social and Environmental Screening Procedure, Partner Capacity Assessment Tool, Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer, Private Sector Due Diligence, etc., if applicable), with clear plans stated to manage and mitigate each risk?

- ☐ 3: Project risks related to the achievement of results are fully described in the project risk register, based on comprehensive analysis drawing on the programme's theory of change, Social and Environmental Standards and screening, situation analysis, capacity assessments and other analysis such as funding potential and reputational risk. Risks have been identified through a consultative process with key internal and external stakeholders, including consultation with the UNDP Security Office as required. Clear and complete plan in place to manage and mitigate each risk, including security risks, reflected in project budgeting and monitoring plans. (both must be true)
- ☒ 2: Project risks related to the achievement of results are identified in the initial project risk register based on a minimum level of analysis and consultation, with mitigation measures identified for each risk.
- ☐ 1: Some risks may be identified in the initial project risk register, but no evidence of consultation or analysis and no clear risk mitigation measures identified. This option is also selected if risks are not clearly identified, no initial risk log is included with the project document and/or no security risk management process has taken place for the project.

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

Project risks related to the achievement of results are fully described in the project risk log. Risks have been identified based on stakeholder consultation and on results from the SESP. Mitigation measures are provided for each risk identified. Potential means to monitor and manage risks, will be the responsibility of the Project Manager, supported by appropriate technical support... e.g. consultants responsible to SESP, Gender Action Plan and technical experts.

Efficient

Status: Complete

Quality Rating: Highly Satisfactory

14. Have specific measures for ensuring cost-efficient use of resources been explicitly mentioned as part of the project design?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

***Note: Risk management must be done when the response is "No".**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

UNDP IRH has specific experience with implementation of marine environmental projects (current EU funded EU4EMBLAS – for the Black Sea, as well as GEF funded Black Sea Large Marine Ecosystems project). UNEP as a Responsible Party in the project is implementing 3 regional components related to data collection, development of policies and stakeholder awareness. UNEP is administering the Tehran Convention Secretariat, which is currently the coordinating body for the implementation of the Tehran Convention on Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea. Therefore, DIM modality, as well as selection of the UNEP as the RP is a cost efficient option to implement present project.

15. Is the budget justified and supported with valid estimates?

- ☐ 3: The project's budget is at the activity level with funding sources, and is specified for the duration of the project period in a multi-year budget. Realistic resource mobilisation plans are in place to fill unfunded components. Costs are supported with valid estimates using benchmarks from similar projects or activities. Cost implications from inflation and foreign exchange exposure have been estimated and incorporated in the budget. Adequate costs for monitoring, evaluation, communications and security have been incorporated.
- ☒ 2: The project's budget is at the activity level with funding sources, when possible, and is specified for the duration of the project in a multi-year budget, but no funding plan is in place. Costs are supported with valid estimates based on prevailing rates.
- ☐ 1: The project's budget is not specified at the activity level, and/or may not be captured in a multi-year budget.

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The project budget is provided at the component/activity level, with funding source and is specified for the duration of the project in a multi-year budget. Currently the funding is secured by 75%. The regional components are expected to be implemented in full, while the nationally implemented components are currently foreseen as partially implemented, depending on funds availability. Costs are supported with estimates using benchmarks from similar projects. Additional planning will take place during project inception and subject to approval by the Project Board/Steering Committee.

16. Is the Country Office / Regional / Global Project fully recovering the costs involved with project implementation?

- ☒ 3: The budget fully covers all project costs that are attributable to the project, including programme management and development effectiveness services related to strategic country programme planning, quality assurance, pipeline development, policy advocacy services, finance, procurement, human resources, administration, issuance of contracts, security, travel, assets, general services, information and communications based on full costing in accordance with prevailing UNDP policies (i.e., UPL, LPL)
- ☐ 2: The budget covers significant project costs that are attributable to the project based on prevailing UNDP policies (i.e., UPL, LPL) as relevant.
- ☐ 1: The budget does not adequately cover project costs that are attributable to the project, and UNDP is cross-subsidizing the project.

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1. The budget must be revised to fully reflect the costs of implementation before the project commences.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The project is implemented under DIM, therefore its budget fully covers all project costs attributable to the project and in accordance with prevailing UNDP policies, including all costs related to the project management, quality assurance, procurement, finance & administration, etc..

Effective

Status: Complete

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

17. Have targeted groups, and particularly those marginalized, vulnerable, and left further behind (LNOB), been engaged in the design of the project?

- ☐ 3: Credible evidence that all targeted groups, prioritising discriminated, vulnerable and marginalized populations that will be involved in or affected by the project, have been actively engaged in the design of the project. The project has an explicit strategy to identify, engage and ensure the meaningful participation of target groups as stakeholders throughout the project, including through monitoring and decision-making (e.g., representation on the project board, inclusion in samples for evaluations, etc.)
- ☒ 2: Some evidence that key targeted groups have been consulted in the design of the project.
- ☐ 1: No evidence of engagement with targeted groups during project design.
- ☐ Not Applicable

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The key stakeholders, national and international were involved in project preparation and inputs have been considered in the Project Document. Further consultations and refinement of the project activities is expected during project inception phase and where necessary will be the subject of updates to the SESP and approval by the Project Board/Steering Committee.

18. Does the project plan for adaptation and course correction if regular monitoring activities, evaluation, and lesson learned demonstrate there are better approaches to achieve the intended results and/or circumstances change during implementation?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

***Note: Risk Management must be done when the response is "No".**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The Monitoring & Evaluation plan is set in the Project Document – Chapter VI. The project provides for the collection of lessons learned and communication of these results to project management and other stakeholders during project implementation. Adaptive management is an essential feature of all UNDP projects. The principal mechanism for this is through meetings of the project steering committee (board) which can make modifications to the project design.

19. The gender marker for all project outputs are scored at GEN2 or GEN3, indicating that gender has been fully mainstreamed into all project outputs at a minimum.

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

***Note: Risk management must be done when the response is "No".**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The gender marker for all project outputs is scored at GEN 1 with potential for GEN2, depending on the budgetary allocations, activities targeting and encouraging gender mainstreaming are fully considered in the project.

20. Have societal digital risks and opportunities been taken into account when designing the project's approach and have digital or data technology solutions been considered to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness and scalability of project results?

- ☐ 3: To the extent possible, societal digital risks and opportunities have been investigated when designing the strategy and Theory of Change, and the potential use of digital or data technologies in project activities has been considered in line with UNDP's digital standards and data principles. (All must be true)
- ☒ 2: Only the potential use of digital or data solutions in project activities has been considered in line with UNDP's digital standards and data principles, but there is no or limited evidence that aspects of inclusive digital societies have been considered in the design of the strategy or Theory of Change.
- ☐ 1: Neither societal digital risks and opportunities, nor digital or data technology solutions were specifically considered in the project design or, UNDP's digital standards and data principles are not taken into account when intending to use digital or data technology solutions in project activities.
- ☐ Digital considerations are not relevant to this project.

***Applicable only to option "Digital considerations are not relevant"**

- ☐ 1: Societal digital transformation is not a government or contextual priority
- ☐ 2: A non-digital approach yields higher effectiveness and efficiency
- ☐ 3: Other (specify in the "Evidence" section)

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The project (Component 6) will involve the establishment of knowledge management and awareness raising activities (under the coordination of UNEP TC). The linkages with existing systems within UNEP TC will be further elaborated during project inception, including review of the potential use of digital or data solutions in project activities.

Sustainability & National Ownership

Status: Complete

Quality Rating: Exemplary

21. Have national / regional / global partners led, or proactively engaged in, the design of the country / regional / global project, respectively?

- ☒ 3: National / regional / global partners have full ownership of the country / regional / global project and led the process of the development of the project jointly with UNDP.
- ☐ 2: The project has been developed by UNDP in close consultation with national / regional / global partners.
- ☐ 1: The project has been developed by UNDP with limited or no engagement with national partners.

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The 4 beneficiary countries in the project have full ownership of the project and contributed to the process of the development of the Project Document. Further fine-tuning of the project activities is foreseen during the inception phase. The role of UNEP TC. This is key to the long term sustainability of the results within the region through the Commission.

22. Are key institutions and systems identified, and is there a strategy for strengthening specific / comprehensive capacities based on capacity assessments conducted?

- ☐ 3: The project has a strategy for strengthening specific capacities of national institutions and/or actors based on a completed capacity assessment. This strategy includes an approach to regularly monitor national capacities using clear indicators and rigorous methods of data collection, and adjust the strategy to strengthen national capacities accordingly.
- ☐ 2: A capacity assessment has been completed. There are plans to develop a strategy to strengthen specific capacities of national institutions and/or actors based on the results of the capacity assessment.
- ☐ 1: Capacity assessments have not been carried out
- ☒ Not Applicable

***Note: Risk management must be done for criteria with score of 1.**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The project does not specify particular institutions, where the capacity building will be needed. However, during the inception phase or during project implementation relevant institutions may be identified.

23. Is there is a clear strategy embedded in the project specifying how the project will use national systems (i.e., procurement, monitoring, evaluations, etc.,) to the extent possible?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☒ Not Applicable

***Note: Risk management must be done when the response is "No".**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

Not applicable to this regional project. The project is DIM, therefore UNDP administrative and financial rules and procedures will be applied. Where relevant, UNEP as a responsible party will use own financial and admin procedures, as UN agency. At the same time, UNDP and UNEP will work closely with national partners as needed.

24. Is there a clear transition arrangement / phase-out plan developed with key stakeholders in order to sustain or scale up results (including resource mobilisation and communications strategy)?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

***Note: Risk management must be done when the response is "No".**

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The project will support the strengthening of the capacities of the beneficiary countries, as well as the capacities of the Tehran Convention Secretariat. Involvement of the TC Secretariat will ensure that that countries will agree the results/recommendations made by the project and through the role of UNEP TC in the region the sustainability of the project results and follow-up actions where relevant will be facilitated.

ASM-06674 - SESP (Social and Environmental Screening Procedure)

Procedure Year: 2024

Overall Project Risk Categorization: Moderate

Procedure Status: Approved

Procedure Name: ASM-06674

Procedure Type: Design

Procedure Department: HQ - Reg Centre - Istanbul

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RELATED PROJECTS(1)					
NAME	DEPARTMENT	STATUS	ATLAS PROJECT NUMBER	START DATE	END DATE
00129817	HQ - Reg Centre - Istanbul	On Going	00140799	12/20/2021	12/31/2027

RELATED QAS(1)		
PARENT PROCEDURE	PROCEDURE TYPE	PROCEDURE YEAR
ASM-06673	Quality Assurance - Design	2024

Triggered Requirements:

Assessment

Status: Incomplete

Is assessment required? (Question only required for Moderate, Substantial and High Risk projects)

Targeted assessment(s) required?

Yes

If yes, please indicate the status of required assessment(s)?

Planned

Comments (for instance, please indicate the assessment type) (10000 Characters maximum)

Project will ensure that recommendations it provides for improving the plastic waste management policy and legal framework, and proposed solutions for plastic waste management are screened against the UNDP SES screening criteria, and consequently subject to targeted SE impact assessment. This will be conducted during project implementation.

Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) required?

No

If yes, please indicate the status?

Comments (10000 Characters maximum)

Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) required?

No

If yes, please indicate the status?

Comments (10000 Characters maximum)

Management Plans

Status: Incomplete

Are management plans required? (Question only required for Moderate, Substantial and High Risk projects)

Targeted management plan(s) required?

Yes

If yes, please indicate the status of required management plan(s)?

Completed

Comments (for instance, please indicate the type of management plan) (10000 Characters maximum)

To be elaborated during the development of the full proposal: Gender Action Plan, Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) required?

No

If yes, please indicate the status?

Comments (10000 Characters maximum)

Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) required?

No

If yes, please indicate the status?

Comments (10000 Characters maximum)

Identified Risks & Treatments:

Principle & Standard: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Risk Significance: Moderate

Triggered Principles:

Risk Significance: Moderate

Event:

There is a risk that the Project may insufficiently involve women in their design and implementation or may not provide women with sufficient opportunities to utilize the benefits offered through them.

P2.9 adverse impacts on gender equality and women and girls' situation

P2.10 discrimination against women

Causes:

This risk applies horizontally throughout the project.

Women are not informed and involved in the project activities, as well as not sufficiently informed about the health impact of plastics pollution, relevant waste management practices, etc.

Impact:

The project might not be implemented in a gender-responsive manner, and sufficiently tackle structural changes of gender inequality.

The project might discriminate against women or girls or reinforce gender-based discrimination and/or inequalities.

RELATED TREATMENTS(1)				
ACTIVITIES FOR TREATMENT	EXPECTED EFFECT	TIME PLAN FOR COMPLETE	STATUS	COMMENTS
The Project shall: • Use, to the extent possible, sex-disaggregated data in the project and activities' design • Understand impacts on women and girls, as well as the potential of women and girls to contribute to project implementation. • Promote meaningful and equitable participation of women and men. • Not discriminate against women or girls or reinforce gender-based discrimination and/or inequalities. Women organizations are included in the SEP, mentioned above. More information on specific actions for the project to mainstream gender equality in project activities is available in the	• Proper information and involvement of women / women groups in the project implementation • Health effects of microplastics on women is considered in identifying relevant research topics, women role in plastic waste management is recognized and women sufficiently participate in and benefit from the project.	6/30/2028	Not Started	Though it is still unknown how harmful microplastics are to human health, the fact that they are present in the human body and even end up in the placenta and amniotic fluid of pregnant women is cause for concern, according to researchers. Women, still predominantly responsible for household food and goods supply, may therefore be considered as agents for change in

https://undp.lightning.force.com/one/one.app#eyJjb21wb25lbnREZWYiOiJvbmU6YWxvaGFQYVdlliwiYXR0cmliidXRlcyl6eyJhZGRyZXNzIjoiaHR...

2/12

RELATED TREATMENTS(1)				
ACTIVITIES FOR TREATMENT	EXPECTED EFFECT	TIME PLAN FOR COMPLETE	STATUS	COMMENTS
Gender Analysis and Action Plan (GAAP), enclosed to the project document. Project plans to hire an expert on gender mainstreaming in project implementation.				decreasing the use of, especially household, plastics, and its transformation to waste.

Principle & Standard: Accountability

Risk Significance:  Moderate

Triggered Principles: 

Risk Significance:  Moderate

Event:

There is a risk that the Project may involve or lead to exclusion of potentially affected and interested stakeholders, from being informed on and being engaged in relevant project activities and decisions that may affect them? This may result in raising their concerns and grievances.

P4.13 potential exclusion of affected stakeholders

P4.14 risks of grievances from potentially affected stakeholders

Causes:

This risk applies horizontally throughout the project but is mainly related to the Components 2,3, 4, 5, and 6.
The relevant stakeholders are not informed and involved in the project activities.

Impact:

The project might not provide relevant stakeholders with opportunities to express their views on matters that affect them or might not adequately consider them and respond to them. This would violate UNDP commitments in SES part C, paragraph 20.

RELATED TREATMENTS(1)				
ACTIVITIES FOR TREATMENT	EXPECTED EFFECT	TIME PLAN FOR COMPLETE	STATUS	COMMENTS
Project has one component specifically focused on stakeholders' engagement. Component 6 Proactive Communication and Stakeholder Involvement (by UN Environment TC Secretariat) plans to establish a regional network of regional and local stakeholders, and to design and implement communication and awareness raising strategy. This component will be in line with the UNDP SES requirements for stakeholders' It will build on and complete the preliminary Stakeholder analysis and accompanying Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), included in the project document. Preliminary SEP identifies key groups of stakeholders, including climate change, waste management focused NGOs, women organizations, and local, including female entrepreneurs, their role in the project and methods for their involvement in the specific project components that may concern them. Within the actions above, the project shall ensure that consultation processes will:	• Properly designed and implemented SEP result in participative process of project activities' design and implementation. • Relevant stakeholders are properly informed and involved in the project activities	6/30/2028	Ongoing	

RELATED TREATMENTS(1)				
ACTIVITIES FOR TREATMENT	EXPECTED EFFECT	TIME PLAN FOR COMPLETE	STATUS	COMMENTS
• Be initiated early in the relevant project activities' initiation, continued iteratively throughout the project life cycle, and adjusted as risks and impacts arise. • Be based on prior and timely disclosure of accessible, understandable, relevant and adequate information, including draft documents and plans. • Address social and environmental risks and adverse impacts, and the proposed measures and actions to address these. • Be gender and age-inclusive and responsive. • Dully consider the views obtained in proposal design and implementation				

Principle & Standard: Standard 8: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency

Risk Significance:  Moderate

Triggered Principles: 

Risk Significance:  Moderate

Event:

There is a risk that the project activities with currently unknown design parameters may not meet UNDP Social and Environmental Standards - (activities related to Project supported policy, legal and regulatory frameworks)

P3.0 sustainability and resilience
S1.14 transboundary environmental concerns

Causes:

This risk is related to the Component 2, where project will support revision of countries' waste legislation, development and approval of new legislation and the enforcement of the selected existing legislation.
Policy, legal and regulatory frameworks are not designed properly.

Impact:

The project might fail to integrate environmental & social aspects in its support to the countries' plastic waste management policy, reforms, i.e , the supported waste management practices may have negative impact in domestic and transboundary context.

RELATED TREATMENTS(1)				
ACTIVITIES FOR TREATMENT	EXPECTED EFFECT	TIME PLAN FOR COMPLETE	STATUS	COMMENTS
Project already plans to follow the existing best practice in the waste legislation revisions and ensure these are in line with the sustainability and resilience development objectives. Considering the high environmental, climate and social, including health, risks related to the waste management sector, project provided recommendations for improving policy, legal and regulatory framework shall be: • Screened against the UNDP SES principle and standards. • Assessed in terms of their compliance with the relevant national and	• Proposed revisions to national policy and legal frameworks support environmentally and socially sustainable plastic waste management • - Proposed waste management practices do not have negative impacts on environment and public health.	6/30/2028	Not Started	Generation, management, and processing of waste, especially of plastics, is the sector involving considerable risk to the environment, human health, and well-being. Waste management laws, strategies, policies, and regulations set the principles and

RELATED TREATMENTS(1)				
ACTIVITIES FOR TREATMENT	EXPECTED EFFECT	TIME PLAN FOR COMPLETE	STATUS	COMMENTS
international policy and legal framework for environmental and health impact assessment and protection, framework for combating climate change, for environmental justice, occupational health and safety, and other relevant areas. • Consulted with and communicated to affected and interested stakeholders (see the enclosed SEP) Project shall involve relevant technical expertise to support the simplified SESA process mentioned above. Information on involving SE safeguards expert is included in the draft Project Document and its budget.				requirements for the long-term sectoral development and create the framework for waste management actions and interventions.

Risk Significance: ■ Moderate

Event:

There is a risk that the project activities with currently unknown design parameters may not meet UNDP Social and Environmental Standards - project-recommended plastics waste management options, innovations, business models and private sector investments, once implemented, may contribute to climate change, involve impacts on environment, and on local communities' and workers' health and well-being. .

P3.0 sustainability and resilience
P1.5 inequitable or discriminatory impacts on affected populations
P2.9 adverse impacts on gender equality and women and girls' situation
S1.14 transboundary environmental concerns
S2.4 GHG increases
S7.5 discriminatory working conditionsS7.6 occupational health and safety risks
S8.2 waste generation
S8.3 use of hazardous materials

Causes:

The risk is related to the Components 3, 4, 5 .
Component 3 identifying and recommending plastic waste management options, innovations, business models and private sector investments.
Component 4 preliminary identifying investments in waste management through private sector engagement
Component 5 designing and implementing Small Grants Programme (SGP) aiming at improving separate containers collection and waste management at large

Impact:

The project might fail to integrate environmental, climate change and social considerations in recommended plastic waste management solutions and areas for investment.

RELATED TREATMENTS(1)				
ACTIVITIES FOR TREATMENT	EXPECTED EFFECT	TIME PLAN FOR COMPLETE	STATUS	COMMENTS
Proposed solutions and areas for future investment, shall be screened against the UNDP SES principles and standards, and consequently, likely significant environmental and social effects (covering the direct effects and any relevant indirect, secondary, cumulative, and synergistic effects) of	• Solutions recommended by projects support environmentally and socially sustainable plastic waste management . • Project recommended /	6/30/2028	Not Started	Under the component 3 the project will not be involved in the construction or operation of waste handling facilities. It will rather promote the innovative waste

RELATED TREATMENTS(1)				
ACTIVITIES FOR TREATMENT	EXPECTED EFFECT	TIME PLAN FOR COMPLETE	STATUS	COMMENTS
the proposed options shall be identified. Proposed solutions (for future investments) shall: • In case of technologies, apply the criteria for Best Available Technology and Best Environmental Technology. • Apply the Prevention – Reuse – Recycle – Recovery – Disposal hierarchy. • Not significantly contribute to GHGs emissions. • Promote options for waste reuse, recovery, recycling, treatment, and disposal that is safe for the environment and human health and includes the appropriate control of emissions and residues. To ensure the above, each proposed solution shall be subject to targeted SE impact assessment depending on its character (soft measure or technology-based measure) and thematic focus). Recommended solutions with envisaged SE impact shall include suggestions on such impact management. In setting up and applying SGP, the project shall put in place a process to direct grants towards inclusive and clean waste management community projects. To do so, the project shall ensure that: • Each SGP application is screened against UNDP SES screening criteria • Applications with the envisaged SE risks and impacts include measures of impacts' avoidance or minimization and management.	supported action will not have negative impact on environment and local communities.			management solutions by: •needs assessment and preparation of a concept or a project documentation or a feasibility study for a sorting or recycling facility •supporting of the existing facilities (upgrade with new technologies, including training of staff) •site visits for selected experts to such facility in the region •supporting research and education (targeting technical sector of higher education) Project also plans to identify market possibilities for recycled and innovative plastics to be further take up by private sector, and the investment needs . Considering the soft character of the proposed project activities in this component, the project does not envisage the extensive labour work involvement. Some minor labour work may be needed in case the project supports upgrade of existing facilities with the technology upgrade.

Principle & Standard: Human Rights

Risk Significance:  Low

Triggered Principles:

Risk Significance:  Low

Event:

There is a risk related to the infrastructure development linked to the Small Grants Programme - if not designed properly – it may undermine sustainability and resilience of community projects it supports.

P3.0 overall SES risk management
S3.1 infrastructure development risks

Causes:

This risk is related to the Component 5, designing and implementing Small Grants Programme (SGP) aiming at improving separate containers collection and waste management at large (Improper design of the SGP – low sustainability, without assessment of risks and impacts)

Impact:

The project may not prevent, minimize and manage risks from construction and other interventions to communities and workers in accordance with national standards and best practices followed by international organizations in the region.

RELATED TREATMENTS(1)				
ACTIVITIES FOR TREATMENT	EXPECTED EFFECT	TIME PLAN FOR COMPLETE	STATUS	COMMENTS
In setting up and applying SGP, the project shall: • put in place a systematic process to identify, assess, mitigate and manage its potential social and environmental risks and impacts. • consider relevant principles of sustainable finance system and shall put in place a process to direct grants towards inclusive and clean waste management community projects. If applicable, any construction or infrastructure activities supported by the SGP should: • have design-, management- and (where relevant) decommissioning plans that meet applicable country norms/standards and follow international best practices used by international organizations working in the region. These plans shall be prepared by qualified professionals who are certified for such design process and cleared by the competent authorities. • be constructed and operated by the experienced contractor(s) having relevant certifications and permits for the relevant works. • be before the beginning of their actual use/operation approved (and where needed certified) by either competent authorities or independent professionals not involved in their design and construction.	• Construction or infrastructure activity supported by SGP, if any, comply with national standards and best practices followed by international organizations in the region. • SGP/pilot activities completed with sustainable results and without negative impact on environment and local communities.	6/30/2028	Not Started	Project-supported Small Grant Programme will provide financial and technical support to projects aiming at improving separate containers collection and waste management at large. The priorities will be given to community actions, young entrepreneurs, etc..

Questionnaire:

Step 1 - Integrate the SES Programming Principles

Status: Complete

Question 1 - How Does the project Integrate the Programming Principles in Order to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability?

Briefly describe in the space below how the project mainstreams the human rights-based approach (32000 Characters maximum)

All project interventions will follow the UNDP Guidelines on equity, fairness, and equal distribution of benefits among beneficiaries, and will be developed together with various stakeholders to ensure that no rights or laws are infringed by the proposed activities. This project will ensure that the principles of accountability and the rule of law, participation and inclusion, and equality and non-discrimination are

considered by ensuring that there is an effective communication for the various stakeholders to share their insights and suggestions on the project, as well as their complaints if the project is not aligned with human-rights' principles. In case there would an indication of human rights violation within the project activities' implementation, project management team will seek the redress. In case of no satisfactory response, discontinuation of the project shall be considered.

Even though the project aims to support mainly upstream and soft measures, such as review of the countries' legal and policy framework for waste management, and identification of best-practice waste management options, the project aims to ensure the meaningful, effective, and informed participation of stakeholders in the formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the project activities. Project will do so mainly applying its Stakeholders' Engagement Plan (SEP) to be further specified and implemented within the Component 6 specifically designed to support awareness raising and stakeholders' engagement. Stakeholders' engagement will be in line with the UNDP SES requirements as well as with the provisions in the national laws on free access to information.

Focusing on waste management, the project will work both with the national authorities to set up the regulatory framework that ensures the population the right to live in a clean and healthy environment, and with local communities who will be directly engaged in project activities. Activity 5.1 Small Grants Programme is directly targeted at financial and technical support for local communities to implement local waste management solutions beneficial for all. Project will ensure that such support is provided in a transparent and fair manner.

There are no known indigenous peoples and/or ethnic groups and/or internally displaced peoples known to inhabit the specific areas of the interventions. However, prior to undertaking any intervention, additional stakeholder engagement will be conducted to ensure that any ethnic groups and/or internally displaced peoples are fully consulted to ensure the project will not impact on them and/or their cultures/traditions. If any people are found to be located within the area, the project will comply with the respective UNDP Social and Environment Standard.

Briefly describe in the space below how the project is likely to improve gender equality and women's empowerment (32000 Characters maximum)

The waste sector is assumed to be gender neutral, but gender inequalities and norms are embedded in almost every aspect of waste management, leading to a gendered division of labour. Yet, currently, most waste management policies are gender blind. Division of labor in the waste sector based on conventional gender roles and stereotypes. Women are often excluded from higher-income and decision-making positions. When waste management formalizes, women are often marginalized and replaced by men, contrasting their active roles in informal settings. Women are less likely to be business owners or entrepreneurs in the sector. The participation of women in the waste management sector is often seen as 'organic' as it represents an extension of their caregiving role – much like how women are responsible for waste management as a part of their household responsibilities, they are seen to be providing a similar service at a more communal level.

Women are also physiologically more vulnerable to the impacts of exposure to toxic materials. There is a higher likelihood of bioaccumulation of the lipophilic compounds released during burning of plastic. This exposure not only increases the risk for women but also for their future children. Women may be both affected by poor waste management practices and contribute to the problem of plastic, household waste generation. Women, still predominantly responsible for household food and goods supply, may therefore be considered as agents for change in decreasing the use of, especially household, plastics, and its transformation to waste.

In the Caspian countries, women are central to the development of coastal areas and to national economies. They play a key role in food production, in tourism, and perform most of the unpaid care work in coastal areas. Women and girls often face restricted access to productive resources, such as land, agricultural inputs, finance and credit, extension services, and technology. Traditional and cultural norms make it more difficult for women to gain access to public services, markets and institutions, social protection, and decent employment opportunities.

Project will consider all the facts mentioned above in the process of project design and implementation. It will promote and support women's voices, women's leadership, and women's agency in waste management. As the waste sector modernizes and applies new technologies that may require greater education and training, it is essential that women are included in this process. Project will contribute to changing attitudes about gender norms through awareness-raising campaigns, training, and research to collect sex and gender-disaggregated data as crucial to addressing gender inequality in the waste sector. It is also important to bring men and boys, as well as women and girls, into the conversation, as gender is not just about women.

A Gender Analysis and Action Plan (GAAP) will be prepared to inform the set-up of indicators and an Action Plan for gender equality. As such, the Gender Analysis and Action Plan will also stipulate accountability for gender-related outcomes. During project implementation (and as part of the Gender Action Plan), stakeholder consultation will be undertaken to assess project activities in relation to gender, age and other important matters. The GAAP will be modified depending on stakeholder consultation prior to and during the implementation of the project.

Briefly describe in the space below how the project mainstreams sustainability and resilience (32000 Characters maximum)

The project expects to leverage sustainable development economic, social, and environmental benefits. Reducing and better treatment of marine waste litter will have a positive impact on marine and coastal ecosystems. It will reduce negative impact on coastal communities' health and well-being and on their income generation.

Focusing on the upstream activities – waste management legislation and policies review, and on recommending best-practice and environmentally sustainable plastic waste management processes and procedures, the economic, social, and environmental benefits will reach beyond coastal ecosystems and communities. If designed and implemented well, they will have a positive impact on the environment (air, water, and soil quality, GHGs emissions' reduction) and communities on national levels.

All project activities having potentially certain level of social and environmental risks will be assessed and managed following the UNDP SES

requirements and the relevant national legislation and policies. See the Part B for more detailed information on risks and relevant A&M measures.

Briefly describe in the space below how the project strengthens accountability to stakeholders (32000 Characters maximum)

Project will ensure accountability and transparency of proposed technical and financial support. Project has one component specifically focused on stakeholders' engagement. Component 6 Proactive Communication and Stakeholder Involvement (by UN Environment TC Secretariat) plans to establish a regional network of regional and local stakeholders, and to design and implement communication and awareness raising strategy.

Project will provide [potentially affected] stakeholders with opportunities to express their views at all key points in the project decision-making process on matters that affect them & early and effective stakeholder engagement throughout the assessment and management of potential social and environmental risks and impacts. It will engage stakeholders in gender-responsive, culturally sensitive, non-discriminatory, and inclusive manner and shall provide differentiated measures to allow the effective participation of disadvantaged or vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities. Where conditions for inclusive participation are unfavorable, the project shall undertake additional measures to ensure effective stakeholder engagement.

The project will use a transparent, fair, and free-to-access Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). Furthermore, stakeholders will have access to the UNDP Stakeholder Response Mechanism and the Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SECU). Information on how to access these mechanisms will be provided to the stakeholders at the inception meeting and will be available at the project website throughout the project implementation timespan. UNDP's Information Disclosure Policy, which is guided by openness, with the underlying presumption that any information concerning UNDP programmes and operations is available to the public, will apply to the project.

Step 2.1 - SES Risk Screening Checklist (Programming Principles)

Status: Complete

Human Rights

P.1 Have local communities or individuals raised human rights concerns regarding the project (e.g. during the stakeholder engagement process, grievance processes, public statements)? No

P.2 Is there a risk that duty-bearers (e.g. government agencies) do not have the capacity to meet their obligations in the project? Yes

P.3 Is there a risk that rights-holders (e.g. project-affected persons) do not have the capacity to claim their rights? Yes

Would the project potentially involve or lead to:

P.4 Adverse impacts on enjoyment of the human rights (civil, political, economic, social or cultural) of the affected population and particularly of marginalized groups? No

P.5 Inequitable or discriminatory impacts on affected populations, particularly people living in poverty or marginalized or excluded individuals or groups, including persons with disabilities? Yes

P.6 Restrictions in availability, quality of and/or access to resources or basic services, in particular to marginalized individuals or groups, including persons with disabilities? No

P.7 Exacerbation of conflicts among and/or the risk of violence to project-affected communities and individuals? No

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

P.8 Have women's groups/leaders raised gender equality concerns regarding the project, (e.g. during the stakeholder engagement process, grievance processes, public statements)? No

Would the project potentially involve or lead to:

P.9 Adverse impacts on gender equality and/or the situation of women and girls? Yes

P.10 Reproducing discriminations against women based on gender, especially regarding participation in design and implementation or access to opportunities and benefits? Yes

P.11 Limitations on women's ability to use, develop and protect natural resources, taking into account different roles and positions of women and men in accessing environmental goods and services? Yes

P.12 Exacerbation of risks of gender-based violence? No

Sustainability and Resilience: Screening questions regarding risks associated with sustainability and resilience are encompassed by the Standard-specific questions below

Accountability

Would the project potentially involve or lead to:

P.13 Exclusion of any potentially affected stakeholders, in particular marginalized groups and excluded individuals (including persons with disabilities), from fully participating in decisions that may affect them? Yes

P.14 Grievances or objections from potentially affected stakeholders? Yes

P.15 Risks of retaliation or reprisals against stakeholders who express concerns or grievances, or who seek to participate in or to obtain information on the project?

No

Step 2.2 - SES Risk Screening Checklist (Project-Level Standards)

Status: Complete

Standard 1: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management

Would the project potentially involve or lead to:

1.1 Adverse impacts to habitats (e.g. modified, natural, and critical habitats) and/or ecosystems and ecosystem services?	Yes
1.2 Activities within or adjacent to critical habitats and/or environmentally sensitive areas, including (but not limited to) legally protected areas (e.g. nature reserve, national park), areas proposed for protection, or recognized as such by authoritative sources and/or indigenous peoples or local communities?	Yes
1.3 Changes to the use of lands and resources that may have adverse impacts on habitats, ecosystems, and/or livelihoods?	Yes
1.4 Risks to endangered species?	No
1.5 Exacerbation of illegal wildlife trade?	No
1.6 Introduction of invasive alien species?	No
1.7 Adverse impacts on soil?	Yes
1.8 Harvesting of natural forests, plantation development, or reforestation?	No
1.9 Significant agricultural production?	No
1.10 Animal husbandry or harvesting of fish populations or other aquatic species?	No
1.11 Significant extraction, diversion or containment of surface or ground water?	No
1.12 Handling or utilization of genetically modified organisms/living modified organisms?	No
1.13 Utilization of genetic resources?	No
1.14 Adverse transboundary or global environmental concerns?	Yes

Standard 2: Climate Change and Disaster Risks

Would the project potentially involve or lead to:

2.1 Areas subject to hazards such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, severe winds, storm surges, tsunami or volcanic eruptions?	Yes
2.2 Outputs and outcomes sensitive or vulnerable to potential impacts of climate change or disasters	No
2.3 Direct or indirect increases in vulnerability to climate change impacts or disaster risks now or in the future (also known as maladaptive or negative coping practices)?	No
2.4 Increases of greenhouse gas emissions, black carbon emissions or other drivers of climate change?	Yes

Standard 3: Community Health, Safety and Security

Would the project potentially involve or lead to:

3.1 Construction and/or infrastructure development (e.g. roads, buildings, dams)?	Yes
3.2 Air pollution, noise, vibration, traffic, injuries, physical hazards, poor surface water quality due to runoff, erosion, sanitation?	Yes
3.3 Harm or losses due to failure of structural elements of the project (e.g. collapse of buildings or infrastructure)?	No
3.4 Risks of water-borne or other vector-borne diseases (e.g. temporary breeding habitats), communicable and noncommunicable diseases, nutritional disorders, mental health?	Yes
3.5 Transport, storage, and use and/or disposal of hazardous or dangerous materials (e.g. explosives, fuel and other chemicals during construction and operation)?	Yes
3.6 Adverse impacts on ecosystems and ecosystem services relevant to communities' health (e.g. food, surface water purification, natural buffers from flooding)?	Yes
3.7 Influx of project workers to project areas?	Yes
3.8 Engagement of security personnel to protect facilities and property or to support project activities?	No

Standard 4: Cultural Heritage

Would the project potentially involve or lead to:

4.1 Activities adjacent to or within a Cultural Heritage site?	No
4.2 Significant excavations, demolitions, movement of earth, flooding or other environmental changes?	No
4.3 Adverse impacts to sites, structures, or objects with historical, cultural, artistic, traditional or religious values or intangible forms of culture (e.g. knowledge, innovations, practices)? (Note: projects intended to protect and conserve Cultural Heritage may also have inadvertent adverse impacts)	No
4.4 Alterations to landscapes and natural features with cultural significance?	No
4.5 Utilization of tangible and/or intangible forms (e.g. practices, traditional knowledge) of Cultural Heritage for commercial or other purposes?	No
Standard 5: Displacement and Resettlement	
Would the project potentially involve or lead to:	
5.1 Temporary or permanent and full or partial physical displacement (including people without legally recognizable claims to land)?	No
5.2 Economic displacement (e.g. loss of assets or access to resources due to land acquisition or access restrictions - even in the absence of physical relocation)?	No
5.3 Risk of forced evictions?	No
5.4 Impacts on or changes to land tenure arrangements and/or community based property rights/customary rights to land, territories and/or resources?	No
Standard 6: Indigenous Peoples	
Would the project potentially involve or lead to:	
6.1 Areas where indigenous peoples are present (including project area of influence)?	No
6.2 Activities located on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples?	No
6.3 Impacts (positive or negative) to the human rights, lands, natural resources, territories, and traditional livelihoods of indigenous peoples (regardless of whether indigenous peoples possess the legal titles to such areas, whether the project is located within or outside of the lands and territories inhabited by the affected peoples, or whether the indigenous peoples are recognized as indigenous peoples by the country in question)?	No
6.4 The absence of culturally appropriate consultations carried out with the objective of achieving FPIC on matters that may affect the rights and interests, lands, resources, territories and traditional livelihoods of the indigenous peoples concerned?	No
6.5 The utilization and/or commercial development of natural resources on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples?	No
6.6 Forced eviction or the whole or partial physical or economic displacement of indigenous peoples, including through access restrictions to lands, territories, and resources?	No
6.7 Adverse impacts on the development priorities of indigenous peoples as defined by them?	No
6.8 Risks to the physical and cultural survival of indigenous peoples?	No
6.9 Impacts on the Cultural Heritage of indigenous peoples, including through the commercialization or use of their traditional knowledge and practices?	No
Standard 7: Labour and Working Conditions	
Would the project potentially involve or lead to: (note: applies to project and contractor workers)	
7.1 Working conditions that do not meet national labour laws and international commitments?	Yes
7.2 Working conditions that may deny freedom of association and collective bargaining?	No
7.3 Use of child labour?	No
7.4 Use of forced labour?	No
7.5 Discriminatory working conditions and/or lack of equal opportunity?	Yes
7.6 Occupational health and safety risks due to physical, chemical, biological and psychosocial hazards (including violence and harassment) throughout the project life-cycle?	Yes
Standard 8: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency	
Would the project potentially involve or lead to:	
8.1 The release of pollutants to the environment due to routine or non-routine circumstances with the potential for adverse local, regional, and/or transboundary impacts?	Yes
8.2 The generation of waste (both hazardous and non-hazardous)?	Yes

8.3 The manufacture, trade, release, and/or use of hazardous materials and/or chemicals?	Yes
8.4 The use of chemicals or materials subject to international bans or phase-outs?	Yes
8.5 The application of pesticides that may have a negative effect on the environment or human health?	No
8.6 Significant consumption of raw materials, energy, and/or water?	Yes

Approval History

Approval Date: Mon Sep 16 00:00:00 GMT 2024

Confirmed Date:

PAC/Board Date:

Approved By: Abusabeeb Elsadig <abusabeeb.elsadig@undp.org>

Confirmed By:

PAC/Board Meeting minutes uploaded: ☐

STEP NAME	DATE	STATUS	ASSIGNED TO
Cleared for PAC/Board	2024-09-16 05:59:46	Approved	Abusabeeb Elsadig
Confirmed by PAC/Board	2024-09-16 05:59:46	Pending	Steliana NEDERA
Approval Request Submitted	2024-09-12 00:57:54	Started	Marcela Fabianova

Annex 3 UNDP Risklog

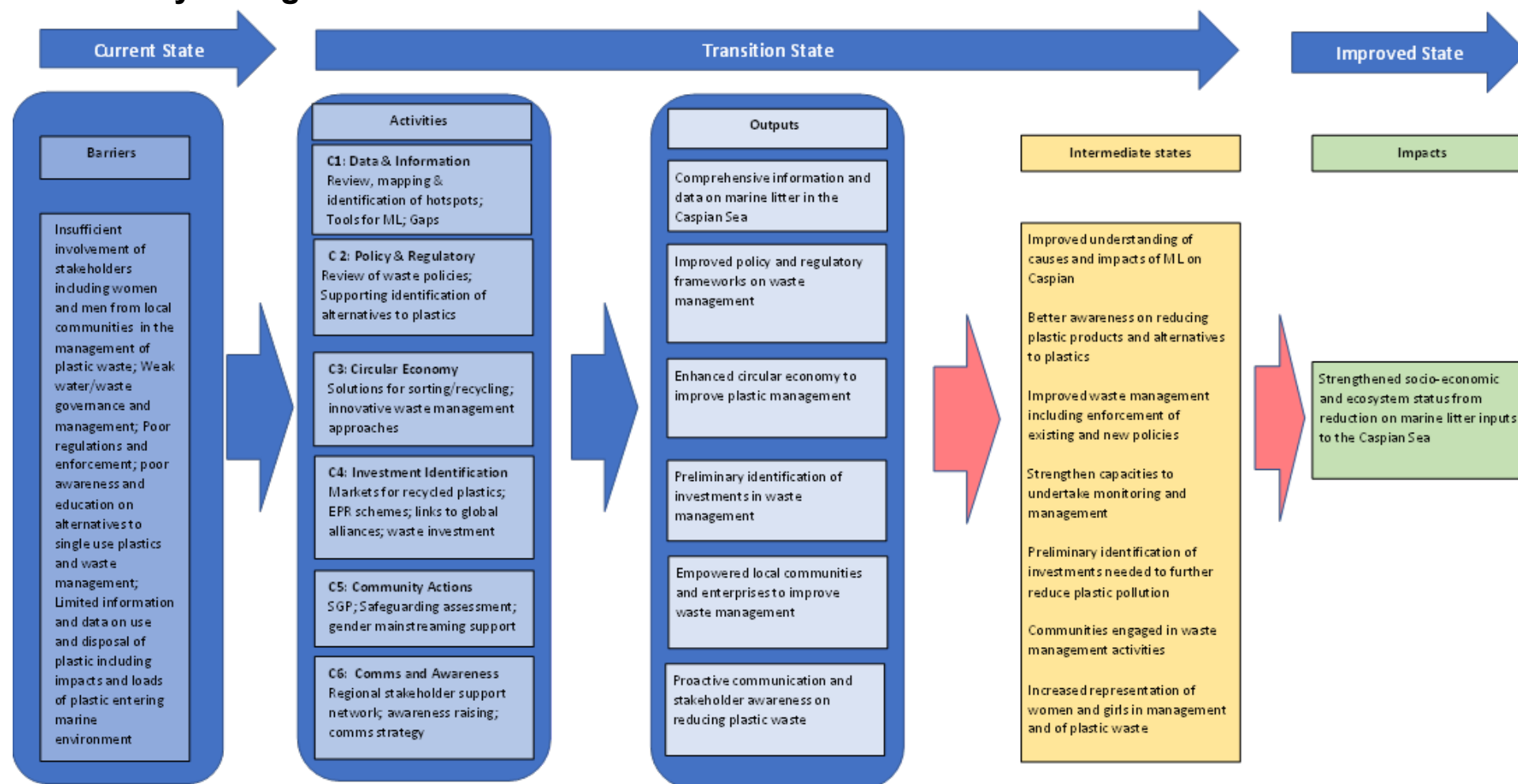
Title of the project: Addressing Marine Litter and Marine Plastics – A Systemic Approach in the Caspian Sea (Caspian Marine Litter project)

Type of risk Category: primary - secondary Impact / likelihood	owner	Date identified /Validity	Event (risk description)	Cause (description)	Impact (description)	Actions treatment (incl. date)	Responsible for actions	Expected results from treatment	comment
Political Government commitment I=1 L=2	UNDP, TCS/UNEP	Jan – Dec 2022	Lack of interest of participating countries to contribute to the preparation and implementation of full size project	In general, the environmental protection may not be priority for the countries	Slow process of the ProDoc development, limited feedback from the key stakeholders	During the project design phase, the TC Secretariat/UNEP will facilitate the consultation process with the relevant national representatives, in cooperation close cooperation with the ProDoc development team and UNDP COs	UNDP, UNEP	The project activities well defined in the ProDoc and pre-discussed with the countries.	2022 risk not critical
Organizational Human Resources I=2 L=3	UNDP, TCS/UNEP	Jan – Dec 2022	Delay of project start-up because critical staff is not in place and/ or lengthy contracting process, incl. negotiations with execution entities	Lengthy contracting process	Slow process in the project implementation as result of delays in the recruitment of the staffing.	During the project design phase Staffing table and recruitment strategy outlined with concrete timelines to avoid delays in commencing the programme.	UNDP, UNEP	The project management well defined in the ProDoc.	2022 risk not critical
Operational Leadership management I=2 L=2	UNDP, TCS/UNEP	Jan – Dec 2022	Capacity constraints of executing entities, local institutions, communities and the private sector may limit the effective implementation of interventions	Capacity constraints	Not effective implementation of interventions	Capacity assessment of executing entities, local institutions, communities and the private sector and programmatic response	UNDP, UNEP	Capacity assessment addresses constraints of executing entities, local institutions, communities and the private sector	2022 risk not critical
Political Political instability I=3 L=1	UNDP, TCS/UNEP	Jan – Dec 2022	Security risks in the Caspian Sea region	Political instability	Delays in the project implementations	Allowing maximum implementation flexibility in case of the occurrence of the risk.		The risk can be minimalised and overcome by maintaining maximum implementation flexibility.	2022 risk not critical

□ Impact: 1-limited / 2-Low / 3-Moderate / 4-High / 5-Extreme

□ Likelihood: 1-Not Likely / 2-Low Likelihood / 3-Moderately Likely / 4-Highly Likely / 5 – expected

Annex 4 Theory of Change



Assumptions: Willingness of counties to work together with TC; National stakeholders welcome this initiative; (See Risks and Assumptions – above)

Drivers: Global concerns on marine litter and plastic pollution; Impacts on environmental status, ecosystem services and human health from plastic pollution and additives in plastics.

Annex 5: Project Steering Committee Terms of Reference and TORs of key management positions.

UNDP Standard Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Project Steering Committee of the Project: Addressing Marine Litter and Marine Plastics -A systemic Approach in the Caspian Sea

I. Background

All UNDP projects must be governed by a multi-stakeholder board or committee established to review performance based on established monitoring and evaluation metrics and high-level implementation issues to ensure quality delivery of results. For the purpose of this ToR and to ensure standardization, henceforth, as regards project documentation, such a body shall only be referred to by one of two names: 'Project Board' or 'Project Steering Committee.'⁶ The [Project Board or Project Steering Committee] is the most senior, dedicated oversight body for a UNDP 'Development Project', which is defined in the PPM as an instrument where UNDP "Delivers outputs where UNDP has accountability for design, oversight and quality assurance of the entire project."

II. Duties and Responsibilities

The two prominent (mandatory) roles of the [Project Board or Project Steering Committee] are as follows:

- 1) **High-level oversight of the project** (as explained in the ["Provide Oversight"](#) section of the PPM). This is the primary function of the Project Steering Committee. The Project Steering Committee reviews evidence of project performance based on monitoring, evaluation and reporting, including progress reports, monitoring missions' reports, evaluations, risk logs, quality assessments, and the combined delivery report. The Project Steering Committee is the main body responsible for taking corrective actions as needed to ensure the project achieves the desired results. And its function includes oversight of annual (and as-needed) assessments of any major risks to the programme or project, and related decisions/agreements on any management actions or remedial measures to address them effectively.

The Project Steering Committee also carries the role of quality assurance of the project taking decisions informed by, among other inputs, the project quality assessment. In this role the Board is supported by the quality assurer, whose function is to assess the quality of the project against the corporate standard criteria. This function is performed by a UNDP programme or monitoring and evaluation officer to maintain independence from the project manager regardless of the project 's implementation modality.

The Project Steering Committee reviews updates to the project risk log.

- 2) **Approval of key project execution decisions** (as explained in the ["Manage Change"](#) section of the PPM). The Project Steering Committee has an equally important, secondary role in approving certain adjustments above provided tolerance levels, including substantive programmatic revisions (major/minor amendments), budget revisions, requests for suspension or extension and other major changes (subject to additional funding partner/donor requirements).

⁶ Please insert the appropriate entity name in the relevant sections in the document. Where this ToR refers to "Board" it is intended to apply to both these entities and should be changed accordingly to match the entity chosen for the specific project

The Project Steering Committee is responsible for making management decisions by consensus when required, including the approval of project plans and revisions, and the project manager's tolerances. The Project Steering Committee approves annual work plans and reviews updates to the project risk log.

Within the overall governance and management arrangements of the project, the role of the Project Steering Committee as regards these two key functions (*'High-level oversight of the project'* and *'Approval of key project execution decisions'*) is distinct from the roles of entities involved in the implementation of the project, namely the implementing partner (IP), responsibilities parties (if applicable), service providers and project staff.

In order to ensure UNDP's ultimate accountability, the Project Steering Committee decisions should be made in accordance with [the Quality Standards for Programming](#) that shall ensure management for development results, best value money, fairness, integrity, transparency and effective national and international competition. An effective Project Steering Committee needs credible data, evidence, quality assurance and reporting to aid decision making (see next section on supporting functions to the Board). The Project Steering Committee also needs to be accountable to protect against conflicts of interest and fraud.

Specific responsibilities of the Project Steering Committee include the following:

- Provide overall guidance and direction to the project, ensuring it remains within any specified constraints, and promote gender equality and social inclusion (LNOB) in the project implementation;
- Review project performance based on monitoring, evaluation and reporting, including standard quality assurance checks, progress reports, risk logs, spot checks/audit reports and the combined delivery report;
- Address any high-level project issues as raised by the project manager and project assurance;
- Provide guidance on emerging and/or pressing project risks and agree on possible mitigation and management actions to address specific risks (including ensuring compliance with UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards, Fraud/corruption, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment);
- Agree or decide on project manager's tolerances as required, within the parameters set by UNDP ([Manage Change](#) in the PPM) and the donor, and provide direction and decisions for exceptional situations when the project manager's tolerances are exceeded;
- Advise on major and minor amendments to the project within the parameters set by UNDP and the donor;
- Agree or decide on a project suspension or cancellation, if required; (note that for GEF and GCF projects it is UNDP that decides to suspend or cancel and project and the Project Steering Committee is informed/consulted only).
- Provide high-level direction and recommendations to the project management unit to ensure that the agreed deliverables are produced satisfactorily according to plans.
- Receive and address project level grievance, including overseeing whatever specific compliance and stakeholder response (or grievance) mechanisms have been put in place so that individuals and communities potentially affected by the project have access to effective mechanisms and procedures for raising concerns about the social and environmental performance of the project⁷.
- Engage in the low value grant selection process where there is no Grant Selection Committee, as guided by the [Low Value Grants – UNDP Operational Guide](#).

⁷ The responsibilities of the board in this regard should follow [UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards](#) (SES) as codified in the PPM. It should be noted that while a project board can play a role in addressing or assisting with the compliance and stakeholder response (or grievance) mechanisms put in place for a given project (as part of their quality assurance and oversight function), this will be in addition to and does not substitute for UNDP's core responsibility to ensure compliance with the SES throughout the project management cycle as part of UNDP's Programming Quality Assurance system.

Additional responsibilities of the Project Steering Committee can include, but are not limited to, the following :

- Ensure coordination between the various donors and government-funded projects and programmes;
- Ensure coordination with multiple government agencies and their participation in project activities;
- Appraise the annual project implementation report, including the quality assessment rating report;
- Act as an informal consultation mechanism for stakeholders;
- Approve the Project Inception Report and evaluation reports and corresponding management responses;
- Review the final project report package during an end-of-project review meeting to discuss lessons learned and opportunities for scaling up;

III. Composition of the Project Steering Committee

The Project Board comprises members with decision-making mandate from the following entities:

- UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub
- Management of participating UNDP Country Offices
- National Representatives of the Tehran Convention parties

The Project Board will contain of the following distinct roles:

- **Project Executive:** UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub, represented by IRH Manager, who chairs the Project Steering Committee.
- **Beneficiary Representatives:** UNDP Resident Representatives (RRs) in Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan (representing the interests of those groups of stakeholders who will ultimately benefit from the project in each of the participating country). The RRs may designate the respective DRRs as their alternates on the PSC. The national stakeholders as the members of the Steering Committee will be the representatives from the countries- Tehran Convention Parties representatives.
- **Development Partners:** comprising of representatives from UNDP BPPS, IRH Environment Team and UNEP
- **Project Assurance** – to supports the Project Board by carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. This role will be held by the IRH Quality Assurance Team.

IV. Standard Project Steering Committee Protocols

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) must meet one time annually at a minimum. It is recommended that the timing of board meetings be agreed upon in advance and corresponds to key project reporting or work planning milestones. The PSC will meet at project start, to guide the inception phase; at least once a year to discuss project progress and substantial project implementation issues; at the end of the project to review conclusions of draft final report. When necessary ad-hoc Committee meetings can be organized. The PSC can take place in person, on-line or via email-exchange.

The PSC meetings are valid if all three key roles (Executive, Supplier, Beneficiary) are represented at the meetings or in the virtual decisions.

Members, who are unable to attend the meeting should notify the Chairperson/s and the Project Manager in writing with contact details of their replacement or delegating their mandate to another Committee member. To facilitate efficient implementation of the project, the decisions of the SC meeting are adopted if at least one representative for each of the three key roles described above was present in the meeting/review. UNDP is responsible for the organization of the Project Board meetings and follow up.

Project Steering Committee members cannot receive remuneration from project funds for their participation in the Board. However, it is allowable for board members to be reimbursed from project funds for certain

reasonable, qualified expenses related to travel or lodging to attend board meetings, as per UNDP rules and procedures.

Unless otherwise specified, Project Steering Committee decisions are made by unanimous consensus. If a consensus cannot be reached within the Board, the final decision shall rest with the UNDP representative on the Project Steering Committee or a UNDP staff member with delegated authority as the programme manager.⁸

It is required that as per internationally recognized professional standards and principles of sound governance, conflicts of interest affecting board members in performing their duties must be formally disclosed if not avoidable. Where a board member has a specific personal conflict of interest with a given matter before the board, he/she must recuse oneself from their participation in a decision. No board member can vote or deliberate on a question in which he/she has a direct personal or pecuniary interest not common to other members of the board.

All board members should be presented with a ToR for the Project Steering Committee, which will include the responsibilities already outlined and indicate agreed board practices and logistics.

V. Standard Outputs of Project Steering Committee Meetings

In its oversight function, the Project Steering Committee will (at a minimum) review and assess the following project-related evidence at each meeting:

- Assessment of project progress to date against project output indicators (as documented in the project document results framework)
- Approval/review of annual work plans
- Assessment of the relevant Monitoring & Evaluation mechanisms, including all evaluations⁹
- Review and assessment of the Project Risk Log (with updating/amendments as needed)
- Assessment of project spending, based on a review of the combined delivery report
- Review of required resources versus available funding (if applicable) and steps taken to reduce funding gap identified at the project design stage

This will be in addition to the review and approval of any required project execution decisions.

The output of every Project Steering Committee should be a written record (minutes) that captures the agenda and issues discussed and the agreed upon action items and decisions (if applicable). Each report should clearly document the members attending the meeting (as well as all participants in the meeting) and the modality used to agree on a certain action or decision (whether formal voting or no-objection or other mechanism). All records of board meetings should be documented and kept by UNDP in their quality assurance function.

VI. Support Functions to the Project Steering Committee

The joint UNDP/UNEP Project Coordination Unit will act as the Secretariat of the Project Steering Committee and is responsible for preparation of all documents for the Committee meetings, timely notification of Committee members and observers about the forthcoming meeting and the project progress (including project reports and work plans), technical and organisational coordination of the meetings and their minutes. The Secretariat drafts the agenda and circulates it to the Committee members for agreement one month before the meeting. The minutes of meeting shall be prepared within two weeks after the meeting takes place and circulated for comments. The SC members shall respond within two weeks after receiving the minutes. If the Project manager receives no comments, tacit agreement is assumed. Final version of minutes shall be circulated within 30 calendar days after the meeting.

⁸ UNDP has this special right since the ultimate legal and fiduciary accountability for a UNDP project, irrespective of modality, rests with UNDP and UNDP must (in line with its obligations to donors and to the Executive Board) be able to ensure that no action is taken by any body in a UNDP project that contravenes UNDP rules and regulations.

⁹ Including audit reports and spot checks.

Indicative tasks of the Project team

Project Manager

The key tasks of the PMA are the following:

- Coordinate the work of Project Coordination Unit and whole team of project experts, coordinate with the Responsible Parties implementing the individual components. Assure timely and quality implementation of all project activities, including quality control of all produced outputs;
- Liaise directly with the UNDP Country Offices, national stakeholders and representatives appointed by the ministries in the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and national focal points;
- Represent the project at various events, facilitate coordination with other relevant projects, initiatives, international institutions and other stakeholder.
- Contribute to the preparation of progress reports, according to the donor requirements, containing technical description of progress, including problem encountered, planned activities, as well as provide inputs for all reports required within UNDP project monitoring scheme.
- Provide substantive inputs into all technical reports to be prepared and carry out various activities arising during the project implementation.
- Plan the activities of the project and monitor progress against the initial quality criteria; review and appraise detailed project plans;
- Mobilize goods and services to initiative activities, including drafting TORs and work specifications;
- Manage the realization of project outputs through activities;
- Address project issues as raised by the Project Board;
- Monitor events as determined in the Monitoring & Communication Plan, and update the plan as required;
- Monitor financial resources and accounting to ensure accuracy and reliability of financial reports;
- Manage and monitor the project risks as initially identified in the Project Brief appraised by the LPAC, submit new risks to the Project Board for consideration and decision on possible actions if required; update the status of these risks by maintaining the Project Risks Log;
- Be responsible for managing issues and requests for change by maintaining an Issues Log.
- Prepare the Project Quarterly Progress Report and the Annual review Report;
- Share relevant information on the project achievement with all interested parties;
- Assure that all project deliverables have been produced satisfactorily;
- Provide direction and guidance to project team/consultants;
- Identify and obtain any support and advice required for the management, planning and control of the project;
- Identify follow-on actions and submit them for consideration to the Project Board.
- Support the preparation of the multi-year work plan and QUANTUM reports covering activity definition, updated risk log and the monitoring schedule plan;
- Support the financial reporting and control mechanisms through Combined Delivery Reports (CDR) which is a mandatory official report reflecting the expenses and funds utilized on a project, and other QUANTUM reporting tools;

Other foreseen positions:

Project assistant

SESP expert (if needed)

Evaluation expert

Annex 6: Stakeholder Engagement Plan

PRELIMINARY STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENT PLAN

1. Introduction

The regional project 'Addressing Marine Litter and Marine Plastics – A Systemic Approach in the Caspian Sea', to be implemented in Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan, aims to improve the management of the land-based sources of pollution that are likely to affect the marine environment of the Caspian Sea. This will be achieved through amending the policy and regulatory frameworks on waste management, comprehensive promotion of a circular economy/life-cycle approach, carrying out investments in waste management as well as strengthening sustainable consumption and production patterns, in particular changing behavioral consumers' change. Marine litter is a transboundary, national, and regional problem that needs to be addressed. Therefore, the project will have both regional and national activities.

Responsible parties and project management unit will make sure that potential, both negative and positive social and environmental risks, related to its implementation, will be addressed. The following potential risks have been identified by the UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP):

Risk 1: Project may involve or leads to exclusion of potentially affected and interested stakeholders, from being informed on and being engaged in relevant project activities and decisions that may affect them? This may result in raising their concerns and grievances.

Risk 2: Project may insufficiently involve women in their design and implementation or may not provide women with sufficient opportunities to utilize the benefits offered through them.

Risk 3: Project supported policy, legal and regulatory frameworks, if not designed properly, may support waste management practices with negative impact on environment and affected communities in both domestic and transboundary context.

Risk 4: Some project-recommended plastics waste management options, innovations, business models and private sector investments, once implemented, may contribute to climate change, involve impacts on environment, and on local communities' and workers' health and well-being.

Risk 5: Small Grants Programme - if not designed properly – may undermine sustainability and resilience of community projects it supports.

This document shall be considered as the preliminary Stakeholders Engagement Plan, since the identification of the exact stakeholders to be involved in each country will happen during the inception phase. Component 6 of the project 'Proactive communication and Stakeholders' Involvement' is specifically focused on establish a regional network of regional and local stakeholders, and on designing and implementing communication and awareness raising strategy.

2. Regulations and Requirements

2.1 Countries' relevant regulation and requirements

Regarding the state policies, it is important to emphasize that the dialogue between the Governments and civil society, and provision of information to public, in the field of environment, is continuously done through set of laws and international agreements: laws on free access to information; access to information and public participation provisions in laws on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA); the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public

Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, and the Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, its public participation provisions.

The dialogue gains additional importance through communication, which is realised through the work of the Aarhus Centres (two at the state and two at the NGO level). The Aarhus Centres act as a bridge between the NGOs, local administration and the private sector and support environmental assessment and participatory decision-making. They also work to facilitate access to information in environmental matters for the public and to raise awareness of environmental and health-related risks.

Table 1: Policy framework for stakeholders' engagement in the project countries

Country	Legal framework	Aarhus centers
Azerbaijan	Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Access to Information (2005); Law on EIA of RAZ (2013); Regulations for Control Over EIA and SEA (2019); Regulations for Application of State and Public Ecological Expertise (2020); Regulations for SEA Application – waiting for adoption??; party to the Aarhus and Espoo conventions	Azerbaijan hosts an Aarhus Centre in the capital city of Baku which focuses primarily on supporting the access to environmental information for the public. The Aarhus Centre operates since 2003.
Iran	Publication and Free Access to Information Act (2009); legal base for EIA and SEA in the National Development Plans; EIA directive (2011);	NA
Kazakhstan	Law of the RK on Access to Information (2015); Environmental Code of the RK – EIA, SEA and transboundary assessments chapters; Interim Instruction on the Procedure of Environmental Impact Assessment of Planned Economic Activity (EIA) in the Republic of Kazakhstan (2017); party to the Aarhus and Espoo conventions	In Kazakhstan, there are fifteen Aarhus Centres across the country. The mission of Zhaiyk Caspian Aarhus Centre is to implement the norms of the Aarhus Convention on the territory of Zhaiyk-Caspian basin.
Turkmenistan	Law of Turkmenistan About information and its protection (2014, amend. In 2021); Law of Turkmenistan About Environmental Assessment (2019 amend.); party to the Aarhus and Espoo conventions	The Aarhus Centre in Ashgabat operates since 2012. The Aarhus Centre focuses on facilitating access to information on environmental issues.

2.2 UNDP principles and requirements

UNDP is committed to meaningful, effective and informed stakeholder engagement in the design and implementation of all UNDP projects. UNDP's commitment to stakeholder engagement arises from internal policies, procedures and strategy documents as well as key international human rights instruments, principles and numerous decisions of international bodies, particularly as they relate to the protection of citizens' rights related to freedom of expression and participation. Key provisions and requirements are formulated in the UNDP's [Social and Environmental Standards \(SES\)](#), the [SES Guidance Note of Stakeholder Engagement](#), and on Gender Equality and Empowerment.

Principle definitions and key concepts of stakeholder engagement

As per the UNDP SES Guidance Note of Stakeholder Engagement, project stakeholders are considered as the following:

Persons, groups, or institutions with an interest in the project or the ability to influence the project outcomes, either positively or negatively. Stakeholders may be directly or indirectly affected by the project. The range of potential stakeholders is diverse and may include target beneficiary groups, locally affected communities or individuals, national and local government authorities, civil society organizations (CSOs) and non- governmental organizations (NGOs) (both domestic and at times international), politicians, religious leaders, the academic community, private sector entities, other special interest groups, UN agencies and donors.

Stakeholder analysis is the process of identifying a project's key stakeholders and assessing their interests in the project and the ways in which these stakeholders may influence the project's outcomes. Stakeholder analysis provides the foundation for planning stakeholder engagement throughout the project cycle.

Stakeholder engagement is an overarching term that encompasses a range of activities and interactions with stakeholders throughout the project cycle. The SES defines stakeholder engagement as an ongoing process that may involve, to varying degrees, the following elements:

- stakeholder analysis and planning
- disclosure and dissemination of information
- consultation and meaningful participation
- dispute resolution and grievance redress
- stakeholder involvement in monitoring and evaluation
- ongoing reporting to affected communities and other stakeholders.

The extent to which the project may impact various stakeholder rights and interests and the power and influence of certain stakeholders will affect needed engagement strategies and approaches. Stakeholder analysis, together with project screening and assessment of social and environmental risks (SESP), assists in developing appropriate engagement strategies for different stakeholder groups, which will then be articulated in the project's stakeholder engagement plan.

3. Summary of any previous stakeholder engagement activities

- *If any stakeholder engagement activities had been undertaken to date, including information disclosure and/or consultation, provide the following details:*
 - o *Type of information disclosed, in what forms and languages (e.g., oral, brochure, reports, posters, radio, etc.), and how it was disseminated*
 - o *Locations and dates of any meetings undertaken to date*
 - o *Individuals, groups, and/or organizations that have been consulted*
 - o *Key issues discussed and key concerns raised*
 - o *Responses to issues raised, including any commitments or follow-up actions*
 - o *Process undertaken for documenting these activities and reporting back to stakeholders*

4. Project Stakeholders

The following stakeholder groups have been preliminary identified, based on the focus and character (preliminary upstream and soft measures) of the project. As mentioned above, more comprehensive stakeholder analysis and engagement plan, including the capacity building measures will be developed during the inception phase, and within the project Component 6 'Proactive communication and Stakeholders' Involvement'.

List of stakeholder groups:

- Policy makers: environment authorities responsible for waste management framework – direct beneficiaries and have a potential to influence project results

- National environmental and health authorities: interested stakeholders, have a potential to influence project results
- (Coastal) municipalities: indirect beneficiaries
- Academia and research institutions – interested stakeholders, beneficiaries
- Supermarkets and other retailers (related to ban on plastic bags) – directly affected
- Public and private entities engaged in waste management and processing – beneficiaries and interested stakeholders
- Business associations - beneficiaries and interested stakeholders
- Environment, climate change, waste management focused NGOs – interested stakeholders
- Women organizations – interested stakeholders
- Local, including female entrepreneurs (tourism providers, fishers, farmers) – beneficiaries (Small Grants Programme); indirectly affected;
- Coastal communities, including women – beneficiaries (Small Grants Programme); directly affected (from longer term perspective)

Names of the specific organizations will be provided during the inception phase.

5. Stakeholder Engagement Program

The goal of this Stakeholder Engagement Plan is to offer a mechanism for all stakeholders of the project to be engaged as early as possible in the implementation process and throughout project duration, and to facilitate a feedback mechanism that ensures that stakeholders' views and concerns inform project adaptive management. Project stakeholders have been preliminary identified firstly, as broadly defined groups possessing convergent sectoral interests, and secondly, as individual entities with specific interests and roles in the project region.

Stakeholder engagement processes should be planned to ensure that all key stakeholders are fully familiar with the project objectives and project activities and that they remain committed to and supportive of the related activities in the project. To secure their participation in related disclosure activities and knowledge dissemination, the relevant stakeholders will be contacted and engaged with using different strategies and methods that best suit their contributions and interests.

As emphasized in the UNDP Guidance Note, methods used may vary according to the target audience and can include the following:

- Interviews with stakeholder representatives and key informants
- Surveys, polls, and questionnaires
- Public meetings, workshops, and/or focus groups with specific groups
- Participatory methods
- Other traditional mechanisms for consultation and decision-making.

Regional network of regional and local stakeholders will be established, and the communication and awareness raising strategy will be developed and implemented within the project component 6 'Proactive communication and Stakeholders' Involvement', to be implemented by UNEP Teheran Convention Secretariat.

Views of women are considered and described in the Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan.

The implementation of the Stakeholders' Engagement Plan is crucial for the success of the project, for the effectiveness and feasibility of proposed legal changes and (plastic) waste management options. It will thereby improve decision-making and performance through improved risk management as it

will secure for the project and communities to identify, prevent, and mitigate environmental and social risks and their impacts that could occur if the project recommended options are not well thought of. The plan will have a direct contribution to improving national policy - obtaining perceptions about a project, which can act as a catalyst for changes and improvements in waste management systems and technological options. On a project level the plan will secure identification, monitoring and reporting on impacts - understanding a project's impact on stakeholders, evaluating and reporting back on mechanisms to address these impacts; and managing stakeholder expectations - consultation with the stakeholders also provides the opportunity for the project to know and manage stakeholder attitudes and expectations.

Stakeholders will continue to be identified on a continuing basis by identifying various stakeholder categories that may be affected by, or be interested in, the Project and specific individuals, groups, and organizations within each of these categories taking into account:

- the expected project area and impact, that is the geographical area over which it may cause impacts (both positive and negative) over its lifetime, and therefore the localities within which people and businesses could be affected;
- The nature of the impacts that could arise and therefore the types of national/local government entities, NGOs, academic and research institutions and other bodies that may have an interest in these issues.

The table below describes the information on why stakeholders are relevant for the project, types of methods that will be used to communicate to each of the stakeholder groups, responsibilities and timeline. It needs to be stressed again, that only types of stakeholders are being identified in the table below and the particular institutions and entities will be listed during the inception phase and continuously, within the Component 6 planning and implementation.

Stakeholders	Why Included (interests)	Relevant Project Outcomes and Outputs	Participation Methods		Timeline
			Method	Responsibility	
Tehran Convention ¹⁰ Secretariat	It will ensure the coordinated regional efforts in addressing marine litter, by all Caspian littoral states. It will have a major role in consultation and coordination with the national beneficiaries.	Component 1, 2, and 6 specifically;	Hosting the project coordination office; member of the project Steering Committee; A Project Management Unit (PMU) will be established by IRH in coordination with the Tehran Convention (TC) Secretariat. Stakeholders' engagement means in in the project component 6: - Establishment of a Regional network of regional and local stakeholders - focused mainly on data collection and platform for engaging in a dialogue and enhanced cooperation with all the project stakeholders' groups - Development and implementation of communication and awareness raising strategy – applying various awareness raising instruments, incl. campaigns, public programmes, and training.	Hosting the project coordination office Project coordination Consultation and coordination with the national beneficiaries. Implementation of the project components 1, 2 and 6 specifically;	Throughout project duration Regular meetings of Project Management Unit (at least once a month); M&E
State agencies / ministries responsible for waste management, and / or for the Caspian environment management or monitoring	The respective agencies / ministries are the central government executive bodies responsible for the development of legislative and strategic framework in the field of waste management and the Caspian environment management. The agencies are responsible	The whole project	<u>Partnerships, meetings, workshops, conferences:</u> Respective state agencies will act as an Implementing Partner for the Project and will be members of Project Steering Committee. They will provide guidance, validate project deliverables, enable and coordinate project activities, assist the project with cross-sectoral communication, provide technical expertise, facilitate access to sites and locations, promote project results, address logistical issues and support overall project management.	As members of the project SC to oversee and provide guidance on implementation.	Throughout project implementation: Regular meetings of Project Steering Committee (at least 2 times a year), M&E

¹⁰ Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea, the Tehran Convention

Stakeholders	Why Included (interests)	Relevant Project Outcomes and Outputs	Participation Methods		Timeline
			Method	Responsibility	
	for the implementation of the Tehran convention. The respective agencies own the data on marine litter and waste in general.		<u>Activity reports, web-based meeting platforms, site visits</u> Respective state agencies will review and validate project reports and products and promote project's progress through media channels (website, social media, etc). Communication will be achieved through regular and ad-hoc Project Steering Committee meetings and other official face-to-face and online meetings as well as through official writing.		
National health and environment authorities responsible for EIA, promotion of circular economy, ministries – EIA departments	Generation, management, and processing of waste, especially of plastics, is the sector involving considerable risk to the environment, human health, and well-being. These authorities shall be consulted to ensure that project activities especially in components 2, 3,4, and 5 shall consider aspects of environmental and health impact, incl. transboundary, assessment and protection, framework for combating climate change, environmental justice,	Component 2	<u>Partnerships, meetings, workshops, focus groups:</u> The respective authorities shall be consulted and engaged, e.g. via working groups, to ensure that project activities especially in components 2, 3,4, and 5 consider aspects of environmental and health impact, incl. transboundary, assessment and protection, framework for combating climate change, environmental justice, occupational health and safety, and other relevant areas. <u>Activity reports, web-based meeting platforms, site visits</u> The respective authorities will review and if needed provide comments to the recommendations for the respective legal reform	Provide technical support and guidance. Support data collection and monitoring (Comp. 1)	Throughout project implementation

Stakeholders	Why Included (interests)	Relevant Project Outcomes and Outputs	Participation Methods		Timeline
			Method	Responsibility	
	occupational health and safety, and other relevant areas. considered in revised legal documents.				
Municipal governments	The project will provide assistance to the Caspian countries to review their waste legislation on both national and local level (Comp 2). In doing so, minimum requirements, based on existing best practice will be used to maximize their effectiveness considering different local contexts. Local governments have an important role in the establishment and implementation of the waste management system. Jurisdiction of local governments regarding waste management is achieved through the work of the various municipal bodies, including environment protection,	The whole project	<i>Engage, Communicate, Inform, Respond</i> <u>Partnerships, meetings, workshops, focus groups:</u> Regular meetings to support implementation of the project. <u>Engage, Communicate, Inform, Respond</u> Municipal governments will play a key role in the project activities dedicated to a) review of marine litter information, b) review of relevant information, c) collaboration with the private sector, and d) community engagement. The project will secure the participation of the Union of Municipalities (UoM). The project will partner with the UoM to secure appropriate information dissemination to all municipalities regarding project implementation and results and ensure community engagement in project activities and endeavors. Special focus will be placed on the cooperation with the coastal municipalities. Municipal governments will be involved also via regional network to be established by the UNEP – Component 6.	To be defined during the inception phase Role related to participation in the to-be established regional network.	Throughout project implementation

Stakeholders	Why Included (interests)	Relevant Project Outcomes and Outputs	Participation Methods		Timeline
			Method	Responsibility	
	development (and in some municipalities, development agencies), secretariats for planning, urbanism and construction, secretariats for public utilities and many other.		<u>Activity reports, web-based meeting platforms, site visits</u> Representatives of municipalities will actively contribute to the review & approval of regular project progress reports. Communication will be achieved through regular and ad-hoc Project Steering Committee meetings and other official face-to-face and online meetings as well as through official writing. <u>Publications, newsletters, news coverages:</u> Representatives of municipalities will also be informed of the project's results through a series of thematic publications, regular project newsletters, and coverage in social media, website, national, regional press and TV.		
Academia and research institutions	Additional research is needed to fill-in the significant gap in knowledge especially with regards to the economic damages associated with the marine litter impacts on the ecosystem, human health, recreational & leisure, agriculture and animal husbandry, fishery industry or navigation. A special focus will be put on the impact of plastic and	Component 1	<u>Partnerships, meetings, workshops, conferences, research collaboration:</u> Initial face to face or virtual meetings with representatives of academia to explain project needs and to ensure proper planning and coordination of project activities, especially of the Component 1. Regular meetings to support implementation of joint works and activities as outlined in the Component 1 in the Project Document.	Data and information provision Beneficiary of the project Component 1	During Component 1 implementation

Stakeholders	Why Included (interests)	Relevant Project Outcomes and Outputs	Participation Methods		Timeline
			Method	Responsibility	
	microplastics. Academia and research institutions will both be involved in specifying those gaps and will be expected to conduct the further research.		<u>Activity reports, web-based meeting platforms, site visits</u> Academia representatives and institutions will provide oral and written inputs to the reports and recommendations for further research, as stated in the Activity 2.1 in the Project Document.		
Environment, climate change, waste management, as well as gender-focused NGOs Project may cooperate with the Coalitions of NGOs if such exist in the countries: ARGO Civil Society Development Association in Azerbaijan Turkmenistan Civic Solidarity Group	Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the respective areas often serve the following functions, relevant for the project: - Promoting good international practice based approach in waste management - Observing compliance of both government and citizens with the waste management requirements and standards - Educate both governments and public on waste management approaches and their	Component 5 and 6; Comp. 3 and 4 where relevant	<u>Partnerships, meetings, workshops, research collaboration:</u> Initial face to face or virtual meetings with representatives of CSOs and NGOs to explain project goals and to ensure proper planning and coordination of project activities. Regular meetings to support implementation of joint works and activities, as outlined mainly in the Component 6. Participation of CSOs and NGOs will ensure adequate representation of public opinion and local stakeholder interests in the project activities and endeavours. Through gender-focused NGOs, gender equality throughout project implementation will be ensured.	Informal partnerships	Throughout the project implementation, to be specified in the Component 6

Stakeholders	Why Included (interests)	Relevant Project Outcomes and Outputs	Participation Methods		Timeline
			Method	Responsibility	
	economic, social and environmental benefits - Promote communication between government and communities, including women (associations)		NGOs and CSOs could also help in promoting project results and help to build upon existing achievements and initiatives already initiated especially on the local level. CSOs and NGOs will be encouraged to take active roles in implementing project activities, ensure synergies with their ongoing initiatives in the field of relevance, and support <u>Activity reports, web-based meeting platforms, site visits</u> Communication will be achieved through meetings and through official writing. <u>Publications, newsletters, news coverages:</u> CSOs and NGOs will also be informed of the project's results through a series of thematic publications, regular project newsletters, and coverage in social media, website, national, regional press and TV. These activities shall be specified in the awareness raising and communication strategy to be developed within the project's Component 6.		
Business associations, enterprises	Business associations and enterprises, mainly those active in waste management, processing, recovery, recycling, and / or disposal, will be a key target group of the project in the activities focused on	Component 4 and 3	<u>Partnerships, meetings, workshops, conferences, research collaboration:</u> Specific, business-oriented meetings will be organized to support implementation of joint works and activities as outlined in the Component 4 and partially in Component 3.	Project beneficiary (Comp. 4)	Mainly during the Component 3 and 4 implementations

Stakeholders	Why Included (interests)	Relevant Project Outcomes and Outputs	Participation Methods		Timeline
			Method	Responsibility	
	identification and support of innovative solutions for advanced sorting, chemical recycling and improved polymer; on identification of sustainable investments in waste management; Identification of markets for recycled and innovative plastics, and on application of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme		Under the Activity 4.3, the project will seek possible <u>partnerships</u> with the global alliance from plastics value chain, including major plastic-producing and plastic-using corporations and processing companies. In doing so the project will encourage and promote <u>membership and participation</u> of the Caspian States and industries in relevant <u>multi regional and global initiatives and alliances</u> for the sustainable management and reduction of waste generation and disposal, including meetings of the Parties of the Tehran Convention and its LBS Protocol. <u>Consultation meetings and training</u> will be organized to support development and application of an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme in the Caspian states.		
Supermarkets and other retailers (related to ban on plastic bags)	Project will promote a ban on sales of plastic bags with recommendations on alternatives (Activity 2.4) In case countries accept and officially introduce such ban (not necessarily during the project implementation) the supermarkets and other retailers will be affected. Therefore, it is important	Activity 2.4	<u>Partnerships, meetings, workshops, conferences, research collaboration:</u> Project will invite retailers and supermarkets' managers to the relevant meetings; Project may conduct interviews and / or surveys with them. <u>Publications, newsletters, news coverages:</u> If applicable, project may partner with supermarkets and retailers on producing and / or disseminating written materials, or online campaigns (radio, TV, social media) among customers, promoting	Affected stakeholders, partners	During Activity 2.4 implementation and beyond

Stakeholders	Why Included (interests)	Relevant Project Outcomes and Outputs	Participation Methods		Timeline
			Method	Responsibility	
	to engage options in early stage of consulting such options.		alternatives to plastic bags, explaining economic and environmental benefits		
Local, incl. female entrepreneurs (tourism providers, fishers, farmers), and coastal communities, including women – beneficiaries	Selected local entrepreneurs and coastal communities will be direct beneficiaries of the project implemented Small Grants Programme (SGP). Coastal communities, incl. local entrepreneurs (tourism providers, fishers, farmers) are good source of information on the amounts and types of marine litter generated and disposed of, on the status of coastal environment related to marine litter and on impact it has on their livelihood. Not necessarily during the project implementation, the coastal communities, incl. local entrepreneurs (tourism providers, fishers,	The whole project	<u>Publications, newsletters, news coverages:</u> Local communities and entrepreneurs will be informed of the project's plans and results through official communication handled by the project team/Implementing Partner and channeled through municipal resources as well as project-based communication means such as regular project newsletters, and coverage in social media, website, national, municipal press and TV. These will be further specified in the Communication and Awareness Raising Strategy to be developed within the Component 6. As part of SES risk mitigation, the project will ensure early disclosure of information and engagement on all activities that may affect local communities. A Grievance Redress Mechanism (see below) will be developed as a mechanism for addressing possible grievances and complaints associated. <u>Partnerships, meetings, workshops, research collaboration:</u> Initial face to face or virtual meetings with representatives of local communities and entrepreneurs to explain project goals and to ensure proper planning and coordination of project activities.	Beneficiaries (SGP) and affected stakeholders	Throughout the whole project; Specifically in Component 5 and 6.

Stakeholders	Why Included (interests)	Relevant Project Outcomes and Outputs	Participation Methods		Timeline
			Method	Responsibility	
	farmers) will be affected by the project activities.		Local community representatives and institutions will be informed and asked for inputs where their livelihoods are concerned, and where they can be a good source of information (e.g. on the amounts and types of marine litter generated and disposed of, on the status of coastal environment related to marine litter and on impact it has on their livelihood Meetings, workshops, and training to raise awareness and build capacity for participating in the SGP scheme.		
Schools and other education institutions	Project will develop and apply cost-effective tools and means to raise awareness with stakeholders, (including waste collectors and local communities), on on negative effects of the inappropriate waste management as well as on simple solutions which could make an immense impact on addressing marine litter especially plastic. Schools and education institutions may play an	Component 3, Activity 3.1 Component 6	<u>Partnerships, meetings, workshops, conferences, research collaboration:</u> <u>Project will invite representatives of schools and other educational institutions to the relevant meetings; Project may conduct interviews and / or surveys with them. Project will find the modality how to involve schools in capacity development and awareness rising activities.</u> <u>Besides being beneficiaries of the project awareness rising and capacity development actions, schools could also help in promoting project results and help to build upon existing achievements and initiatives already initiated especially on the local level.</u>	Informal partnerships	Especially during Component 6, and the Activity 3.1

Stakeholders	Why Included (interests)	Relevant Project Outcomes and Outputs	Participation Methods		Timeline
			Method	Responsibility	
	important role in improving of marine litter literacy. Cooperation with such institutions may increase the sustainability of the project results in terms of promotion and awareness-rising.				
Relevant regional institutions and agencies (e.g. Coordinating Committee on Hydrometeorology and Pollution Monitoring of the Caspian Sea (CASPCOM), UN Environment Programme's Regional Seas Programme)	Cooperation with such institutions will support cost effectiveness and efficiency of project thanks to utilizing their knowledge and experience. This is especially in improving the regulatory framework and in identifying innovative solutions for marine litter waste management	Component 2 and 3	<u>Partnerships, meetings, workshops, research collaboration:</u> Initial face to face or virtual meetings with representatives of regional institutions to explain project goals and agree on the potential cooperation.	Informal partnerships	Throughout the whole project

7. Resources and Responsibilities

Project will design its stakeholder engagement activities within its Component 6: Proactive Communication and Stakeholder Involvement. The UN Environment Tehran Convention (TC) Secretariat is responsible for implementing this component. Following the design, stakeholders' engagement will be carried out throughout the whole project implementation, under the coordination of the UN Environment TC Secretariat and UNDP.

Budget for stakeholders' engagement

- USD 400,000.00 is allocated for the Component 6: Communication and Stakeholder Involvement.
- Budget allocation for the SE activities will be specified during the inception phase, within the planning and implementation of the Component 6, where the concrete stakeholders and means of their involvement are specified.

8. Grievance Mechanism

A Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) is a structured process designed to address and resolve concerns, complaints, or disputes raised by external stakeholders, such as community members, beneficiaries, or partners, in the context of UNDP projects. GRM is required for all projects rated Moderate, Substantial, or High Risk in the SES screening.

The Stakeholder Response Mechanism (SRM) is a backstopping mechanism for addressing project grievances when the UNDP project-level stakeholder engagement processes and GRMs have not successfully resolved issues of concern.

Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SECU) responds to complaints that UNDP may not be meeting its social and environmental commitments. UNDP established the Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SECU) to ensure accountability to individuals and communities. SECU-specific inquiries shall be sent via email to: SECUHOTLINE@UNDP.ORG

UNDP Country Office management normally leads in Stakeholder Response Mechanism at the CO level; the headquarters host the SRM at the corporate level.

UNDP's project-level GRMs are usually based in Implementing Partner (IP) or created for the project. Oversight is being provided by the Project Board (UNDP Quality Assurance) and linked to the SRM. Complainants can choose where to bring the complaint first and can escalate.

Since this project is regional (multi-country) with direct implementation mechanism (DIM), UNDP COs serve the role of Implementation Partners. It is therefore preliminary suggested that project designates the project Steering Committee as the project-GRM. The ToR for such GRM will be developed during the ESMF elaboration, and further consulted and agreed upon during the inception phase, with the government and international partner, in this case UNEP representatives, representatives of potential GRM users, and representatives of any civil society, business, or other groups with a stake in the GRM's design and operation. GRM mechanism will not incur any costs and the same mechanism remains in place for the duration of the project.

It is recommended that the IRH C/Q Assurance Team serves the role of SRM in this project.

GRM entities, roles and responsibilities, as well as contact points will be described in the ESMF and agreed upon during the inception phase.

9. Monitoring and Reporting

Despite that the project has a moderate-risk assessment based on its SES, stakeholders will remain engaged in monitoring during project implementation. This will allow them to continue to assess whether any measures previously instituted continue to be responsive to any or potential conflicts or grievances. If these were to become unresponsive or cease to be functional, stakeholders can immediately inform the process to develop and implement improved measures. Updated and revised measures will be presented at project board meetings and at the broader stakeholder group meetings.

The project implementation will be monitored constantly through regular UNDP project implementation monitoring procedures. These include regular meetings between the project team and UNDP Country Office staff, Project Steering Committee meetings, the annual Project Implementation Report (which includes sections on risk monitoring), and the regular UNDP risk log. This also includes monitoring by the UNDP Country Offices gender specialist and safeguards specialist (if such function exists). In terms of third-party monitoring, the Project Steering Committee will include a wide array of stakeholders who will be regularly informed about the project activities. The project will have a mid-term review and terminal evaluation conducted by external independent evaluation experts.

Annex 7: Gender Analysis and Plan

1. GENDER AND WASTE NEXUS

Physiological aspect

Women are physiologically more vulnerable to the impacts of exposure to toxic materials. There is a higher likelihood of bioaccumulation of the lipophilic compounds released during burning of plastic. This exposure not only increases the risk for women but also for their future children.

Toxins including DDT, BPA and pesticides adhere to microplastic that can be accidentally ingested by small aquatic life. Once ingested, the toxins bio-magnify as they move up the food chain, accumulating in birds, sea life and possibly humans.¹¹ UNEP's 2021 report *From Pollution to Solution* warned that chemicals in microplastics "are associated with serious health impacts, especially in women". These can include changes to human genetics, brain development and respiration rates, among other health issues. Though it is still unknown how harmful microplastics are, the fact that they are present in the human body and even end up in the placenta and amniotic fluid of pregnant women is cause for concern, according to researchers.¹²

Opportunities in labor market and decision-making

The waste sector is assumed to be gender neutral, but gender inequalities and norms are embedded in almost every aspect of waste management, leading to a gendered division of labour. Yet, currently, most waste management policies are gender blind. Division of labor in the waste sector based on conventional gender roles and stereotypes. Women are often excluded from higher-income and decision-making positions. When waste management formalizes, women are often marginalized and replaced by men, contrasting their active roles in informal settings.

Women are less likely to be business owners or entrepreneurs in the sector. The participation of women in the waste management sector is often seen as 'organic' as it represents an extension of their caregiving role – much like how women are responsible for waste management as a part of their household responsibilities, they are seen to be providing a similar service at a more communal level.

There are positive stereotypes in some cases that support women's participation in the sector. Often, they are seen as more trustworthy, faithful, and dependable and they are likely to work for longer. They are also considered more dedicated and have a higher attention to detail and thus preferred for activities such as plastic sorting. However, there is a downside to such stereotypes as women are also seen as lacking in assertiveness and ambition, which might affect the interest that clients show in patronizing women-led plastic collection and recycling businesses. Even in countries with formal systems, such as in Europe, there were some reported incidences of discriminatory hiring due to greater perceived 'suitability' of men to leadership positions.¹³

¹¹

https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/41534/women_plastic_waste.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

¹² <https://www.unep.org/resources/pollution-solution-global-assessment-marine-litter-and-plastic-pollution>

¹³ https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/41534/women_plastic_waste.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

Women as agents for change

Women are vital agents of change in moving towards more efficient, sustainable, and fair waste management. As the primary users of waste management services at the household level and being engaged with various types of work in the waste sector, women have both knowledge and expertise. Mainstreaming gender in the waste sector and strengthening the participation of women in the waste sector can lead to more efficient and effective waste management operations.

One area where women can take an immediate leadership role is in the minimization and separation of household waste, but men also need to become involved and take on a greater—and eventually equal—share of household responsibility for domestic waste management. This strategy can help reduce overall waste through reduction of waste, as well as recycling and composting.

Other areas, where women may play significant role in waste reduction is tourism, both producing and being affected by waste, and agriculture and cultivation, in relation to control of pesticides adhering to microplastic that can be accidentally ingested by small aquatic life. Women are also involved in weekly religious events, which are associated with generation of huge volume of plastic-waste.

It is also essential to promote and support women's voices, women's leadership, and women's agency in waste management. As the waste sector modernizes and applies new technologies that may require greater education and training, it is essential that women are included in this process.

Changing attitudes about gender norms through awareness-raising campaigns, training, and research to collect sex and gender-disaggregated data are crucial to addressing gender inequality in the waste sector.

It is also important to bring men and boys, as well as women and girls, into the conversation, as gender is not just about women.¹⁴

2. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Situation analysis and action plan shall be based on the following, project-related, facts:

- Chemicals in microplastics “are associated with serious health impacts, especially in women”.¹⁵
- Female entrepreneurs may be more affected by marine litter in the coastal areas.
- Women may be both affected by poor waste management practices and contribute to the problem of plastic, especially household waste generation.
- Women, still predominantly responsible for household food and goods supply, may be considered as agents for change in plastic, especially household, waste generation.
- Women are often excluded from higher-income and decision-making positions.

2.1 Socio-economic context

Gender equality in the Caspian countries is guaranteed by the Constitutions, the set of national legislation and by ratified international conventions. However, gender inequality persists, due to the lack of understanding about gender-based discrimination, as well as because of the lack of institutional capacities to implement the legislation. The level of participation of women in political and economic decision-making

¹⁴ [Gender and Waste management | International Environmental Technology Centre \(unep.org\)](#)

¹⁵ UNEP, From Pollution to Solution: A global assessment of marine litter and plastic pollution, 2021, UNEP

both on national and local levels remains low; in a men-dominated society, women have limited access to resources.¹⁶

In the Caspian countries, as in many parts of the world, the disparities in economic opportunities for women and men are rooted in patriarchal norms and traditional gender roles. These deeply ingrained social norms impede the realization of legal provisions on gender equality. Traditional gender roles in the household leave women bearing the burden of unpaid domestic and care work – a fundamental obstacle to their entering and rising in the labour market or setting up their own enterprises. Women also find it harder to come by opportunities for professional development, including skills training and networking, which are key to their economic empowerment and independence. Confidence, capital and connections, easily available to men, elude most women.

In such a context, giving women spaces to meet, network, exchange ideas, forge partnerships, attract capital, gain confidence and grow professionally can have transformative impacts. In rural and remote areas especially, such spaces can be instrumental in helping women to learn more about their rights, discover untapped potential, and overcome obstacles that once seemed insurmountable.

2.1.1 Country-specific information

There is a considerable gap in gender-related data and information in all countries involved in the project. Data gaps are mainly in the following areas: key labor market indicators, such as the gender pay gap, gender and poverty, physical and sexual harassment, women's access to assets (including land), and gender and the environment. These and many other gender-related areas lack comparable methodologies for regular monitoring.¹⁷

Azerbaijan¹⁸

- [Some progress on women's rights has been achieved.](#)
- [Employment rates among women, although relatively high \(67 percent\), are lower than among men \(72 percent\).](#)
- [In general, women find it harder than men to get jobs in well-paid sectors, such as energy or industry. They tend to be employed mainly in underpaid sectors traditionally regarded as feminine, such as education, health care and services.](#)
- [Women and girls aged 15+ spend 25.4% of their time on unpaid care and domestic work, compared to 8.9% spent by men.](#)
- [Only 26 percent of the country's entrepreneurs are women.](#)
- Country's Labour Code currently prohibits women from working in 204 professions.¹⁹
- [As of February 2021, only 18.2% of seats in parliament were held by women.](#)
- Several measures have been taken for the economic empowerment of youth, particularly young women, within the framework of the State Program on the Implementation of the Employment Strategy, such as promoting their employment in the tourism sector, establishing a network of business centres, and providing financial literacy training.

¹⁶ <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/gender-equality-by-country>

¹⁷ <https://data.unwomen.org/countries>

¹⁸ [Country Fact Sheet | UN Women Data Hub](#)

¹⁹ [UN women's rights committee publishes findings on Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Mongolia, Morocco, Namibia, Portugal, Türkiye and United Arab Emirates | OHCHR](#)

Iran²⁰

- 16.7% of women aged 20–24 years old who were married or in a union before age 18. The adolescent birth rate is 31.1 per 1,000 women aged 15–19 as of 2018, down from 33.2 per 1,000 in 2017.
- Iran currently has one of the lowest rates of female labor force participation (around 14% in 2022), ranking Iran 5th lowest in the world.²¹
- Considerably lower number of women have the ICT skills and 56% is the proportion of female individuals who own a mobile telephone, compared to 79.55% of male individuals.
- Women’s unemployment rate is 15.8%, which is double the rate for men (7.7%). Women and girls aged 15+ spend 21% of their time on unpaid care and domestic work, compared to 5.2% spent by men.
- Proportion of women in managerial positions, and proportion of women in senior and middle management positions is 18.9% and 19.8% respectively.
- As of February 2021, only 5.6% of seats in parliament were held by women.

Kazakhstan²²

- Among the countries of Central Asia, Kazakhstan is a leader in progress on gender equality. Kazakhstan improved its overall ranking and jumped 18 positions to 62nd place in the Global Gender Gap Index 2023²³.
- Nevertheless, persistent gender imbalances remain, particularly for wages and access to employment and career opportunities. In 2022, the gender wage gap in 2022 was 21.7 per cent in favor of men.²⁴
- The country has eliminated gender gaps in education levels and shown improvements in economic and political opportunities. While the number of women in government and in parliament continues to grow, progress is still insignificant. As of February 2021, 27.1% of seats in parliament were held by women.
- Women and girls aged 15+ spend 19.9% of their time on unpaid care and domestic work, compared to 5.9% spent by men.

Turkmenistan

- As of February 2021, 25% of seats in parliament were held by women.
- Female unemployment rate is lower than male: 2.3 to 5.3% respectively.
- Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a financial institution or mobile-money-service provider (% of adults aged 15 years and older) is 35.5 for women and 45.7 for men.

²⁰ <https://data.unwomen.org/country/iran-islamic-republic-of>

²¹ UNDP Gender Equality Strategy, 2023 - 2027

²² <https://data.unwomen.org/country/kazakhstan>

²³ A report designed to measure gender equality among 146 countries.

²⁴ <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/where-we-are/kazakhstan>

2.2 National legal and policy frameworks and measures

In Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, and Iran²⁵, gender equality is guaranteed by the country's constitution and legislation. The constitutions prohibit discrimination based on gender, including workplace discrimination.

Azerbaijan

The 21-article Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on State Guarantees of Equal Rights for Women and Men aims to eliminate all forms of gender-based discrimination and ensure gender equality in the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres. Law to prevent domestic violence was adopted in 2010. The Joint Plan of Action on the Prevention of Domestic Violence (2016–2018) was signed by several national ministries, which aims to strengthen inter-institutional cooperation on violence prevention and response. The State Program on the Implementation of the Employment Strategy promoting youth, especially women, employment in the tourism sector, establishing a network of business centers, and providing financial literacy training. Specific budgetary allocations have been made to ensure a steady increase in the gender mainstreaming process and all State programmes and services committed to ensure gender equality at all levels and all spheres. The country promotes girls' careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. It pledges to introduce new legislation to help working women—including flexible working and accessible childcare. Azerbaijan ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1995 and signed its optional protocol in 2000. Several Gender Information Centers operate in the country.²⁶

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan was one of the first Central Asian countries to establish a national entity to promote gender equality - the National Commission on Women, Family and Demographic Policy. Its Gender Equality Strategy for 2006 - 2016 established measures to create and improve legislation in the interests of gender equality. The updated Concept of Family and Gender Policy until 2030 now includes plans to increase to 30 per cent by 2030 the share of women at decision-making levels in executive, representative and judicial authorities, state, quasi-state, and corporate sectors. The same policy sets steps to decrease domestic violence against women, improve the gender wage gap, and increase women's ownership of assets. Kazakhstan has ratified the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1999), the Convention on the Nationality of Married Woman (1999), and eight fundamental Conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.²⁷ In 2021, Kazakhstan joined two Coalitions of Action of the Global Forum "Generation of Equality", committing to combat gender-based violence and ensure economic justice and rights. This led to the abolishment of the list of prohibited professions for women.

Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan's constitution guarantees equal rights to women and men under Article 18 1. However, in practice, women face political and societal discrimination. Women are not allowed to form independent women's organizations, and all such organizations must be registered under the Women's Union of Turkmenistan.²⁸ Turkmenistan's government has recently adopted the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAPGE) for 2021-2025, which identifies national goals, objectives, and priorities to continue advancement in the realization of gender equality in all spheres of people's lives at national and local levels. The seven strategic areas of that plan include further enhancement of the legislation, ensuring gender-responsive healthcare, fostering equal access to education, prevention, and response to gender-based

²⁵ The explicit use of the Persian equivalent of the word 'gender' has been avoided in these documents. They refer to women empowerment.

²⁶ <https://www.unwomen.org/en/get-involved/step-it-up/commitments/azerbaijan>

²⁷ [Kazakhstan | UN Women – Europe and Central Asia](#)

²⁸ <https://humanrightshouse.org/articles/nhc-women-second-class-citizens-in-turkmenistan/>

violence, economic empowerment of women and girls, advancing women's participation on all levels, including the political and social dimensions. Country promotes gender equality also within the framework of the National Action Plan for Human Rights for 2021-2025. Turkmenistan ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1997 and signed its Optional Protocol in 2009.

Iran

The most important policies concerning women are set in the Five-Year Economic, Social and Cultural Development Plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran, also referred to as the National Development Plan (NDP). Almost all previous NDPs have included measures aiming at women's empowerment, such as the improvement of women's participation in policymaking and the activities of the civil society, and creation of gender balance in the labor market to address the increasing number of educated women. However, after the change in presidency administration in 2021, it decided to adjust it based on its new policy priorities. This has meant an increasing emphasis on the goals of Family and Youth Protection Act, which aims at enhancing home-based jobs for women, incentivizing pregnancy of women employees, financial backing for infertility treatment, and supporting marriage among youth. Alongside the NDP, there is an extensive network on laws, policies, regulations, and other legal documents relating to women's status in Iran. Article 20 of the constitution sets men and women as equal before law and gives equal human, political, economic, social, and cultural rights to both genders. Article 21 calls for the government to secure the rights of women in all respect, according to Islamic criteria. Iran is not signatory of other key pillars of the international gender equality space, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which makes the policy framework unbalanced and incomplete in some dimensions.

2.3 UNDP gender mainstreaming framework

Gender mainstreaming is core organization objective of UNDP. The UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025 is aligned with the 2030 Development Agenda and UNDP's Strategic Plan. The strategy recognizes gender equality as a human right as well as instrumental to the achievement of sustainable development. The promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women is central to the mandate of UNDP and intrinsic to its development approach. This effort includes advocating for women's and girls' equal rights, combating discriminatory practices and challenging the roles and stereotypes that affect inequalities and exclusion.

UNDP programmes and projects are informed by gender analysis in their design and implementation. UNDP seeks to identify and integrate the different needs, constraints, contributions and priorities of women, men, girls and boys into its programming.² Both women and men are able to participate meaningfully and equitably, have equal access to programme and project resources, and receive comparable social and economic benefits.

UNDP programmes and projects promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. UNDP strengthens interventions tackling structural changes and remove the institutional, societal, political and legal barriers to accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment and will go beyond counting numbers of beneficiaries by sex. UNDP focuses on empowering and creating agency for women and men and closing gender gaps.

3. PROJECT RESPONSES

In accordance with the above analysis of the most important aspects of gender equality in the Caspian countries, the gender issues which are of the importance of the Project implementation can be summarized as follows:

- Women are physiologically more vulnerable to the impacts of exposure to toxic materials.
- Distribution of resources between women and men is uneven - men own more land, immovable properties, businesses, etc.
- Women are underrepresented among high-level decision-makers in national and local institutions and public enterprises that implement legislation and standards for environmental, including waste management policies. It compromises the possibility to consider the diversity of opinions, ideas and experiences in the decision-making process.
- As the primary users of waste management services at the household level and being engaged with various types of work in the waste sector, women have both knowledge and expertise.
- Women are vital agents of change in moving towards more efficient, sustainable, and fair waste management.

Based on the results, recommendations, and best practices, as well as in accordance with UNDP SES guidance on gender equality, the Project will focus on the following gender equality aspects:

- Collection and generation of gender-disaggregated data, to the extent possible, considering the fact, that there are considerable gender data gaps in the countries', as mentioned in the Situation analysis above.
- Balanced representation and meaningful participation of women and men in key project activities, including those related to capacity building and management planning for waste management, waste management related research and valorization studies, plastic waste threat and risk assessments,
- Engagement and mobilization of individuals, local women groups, women NGOs, etc. to participate in its implementation of the Project and to benefit from capacity development and business opportunities that are created under the relevant Project components.

4. GENDER ACTION PLAN

Activity	Project component/ activity	Gender indicator	Budget
Collect the existing, or generate the gender-disaggregated data and information, to the extent possible	Component 1	Marine litter assessment system and monitoring system contains / does not contain the gender-disaggregated data	10,000 USD
Address the gender – plastic pollution – circular economy nexus in relevant research topics identified by the project; and if feasible, include it as the specific research topic	Component 1	Proportion of recommended research topics that address gender – plastic pollution – circular economy nexus	
Provide mechanisms for enhanced participation of women (associations) in the project-supported policy, legal and regulatory framework review and development	Component 2	Number of women professionals engaged in the project-supported regulatory framework review and development	Covered by the cost of project gender expert
Capacitate the public institutions responsible for project-supported sectoral legislation and policies design and implementation to mainstream gender equality in their work	Component 2	Gender considerations analyzed and gender issues mainstreamed in reviewed and produced laws, policies, strategies and mechanisms for (marine) waste management	10,000 USD

Activity	Project component/ activity	Gender indicator	Budget
Engage women technicians, entrepreneurs, and women business association in identification of the innovative and sustainable waste management technologies and schemes and of the needed waste management investments	Component 3 Component 4	Number of women, women entrepreneurs, and women business associations participating in the respective components' implementation	Covered by the cost of project gender expert
Include criteria to the SGP's awarding scheme for promoting women access to its financial and technical support Programme (SGP)	Component 5	Proportion of women receiving SGP technical and financial support	3,000 USD
Provide mechanisms to engage women (organizations) in the project implementation and to reach out to women (associations) in awareness raising and communication activities	Component 6 The whole project, as applicable	Number of women engaged in project implementation Number of men and women as participants of project awareness raising and communication events and as recipients of awareness raising and communication products	Covered by the cost of project gender expert
Involvement of gender-equality expert (optional; if needed)	For the whole project implementation	Contract between UNDP and gender expert	20,000 USD*

* In case there will be a need for the extra expertise, , this role could also be fulfilled by the social and environmental safeguards expert, in case there is a need for one.

The budget in the table above is indicative. It shall be revised to reflect the results of the inception phase, when it will be clear who in the project will be responsible for gender mainstreaming in the projects, and whether such person will only oversee the mainstreaming process, or he/she will support it substantively.

5. MONITORING

Monitoring against the gender-related indicators shall be conducted as an integral part of the overall project monitoring. Gender-related monitoring shall be done either by the PMU, in case it has the capacity to do so, or by the person with the gender equality specific expertise. Budget needed for such gender expert (if applicable) shall be reflected in the overall project budget.