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United Nations Development Programme

PROJECT DOCUMENT

[Country: Kazakhstan]

Project Title: Project for Enhancing Water Management Capacity for Responding to the Caspian Sea Level Decline

Project Number: Project ID: 01006083/Award # 1549488

Implementing Partner: UNDP

Start Date: June 12, 2026 **End Date: June 12, 2028** **PAC Meeting date: May 25, 2026**

Brief Description

Caspian Sea is one of Eurasia's most critical ecological zones, providing habitat for over 400 of endemic and migratory species, along with ecosystem services that sustain millions of people. It is a hub for economic activity including petroleum and natural gas reserves and transport due to its location at the intersection of Europe and Asia. Despite its growing economic and geopolitical importance, the Caspian ecosystem suffers from water level decline, as the result of a negative basin water budget caused by climate warming (higher evaporation, altered precipitation) combined with reduced river inflow due to hydrological change, reservoir/dam operations and human water use—with natural variability and geophysical effects modulating, but not fully explaining, the observed rapid decline. Coupled with pollution, biodiversity loss and climate-induced degradation, this trend underscores the urgent need for coordinated regional action to safeguard ecosystems, protect communities and build long-term resilience of the economic sectors that depend on them.

To tackle pressing environmental challenges, the project addresses the decline in Caspian Sea water levels by strengthening cooperation among the littoral states to enhance regional water governance. By fostering integrated transboundary data sharing, policy dialogue, and joint action, the project promotes coordinated management of shared water resources across the Caspian basin. Central to this effort is the enhancement of Kazakhstan national monitoring capacities on the most affected northern region and inflows. This project will directly support the coherent implementation of Kazakhstan's policy of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), National Adaptation Plan (NAP), and National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), and contribute to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Contributing Outcome (UNSDCF, CPD, RPD):
(UNSDCF) Outcome 3.1.
(CPD) Output 3.1 - Indicator 3.1.2
Indicative Output(s) with gender marker[1]:
GEN 1

Total resources required:		USD 2,916,094.04
Total resources allocated:		USD 2,916,094.04
	UNDP TRAC:	0
	Donor:	Government of Japan
Unfunded:		N/A

Agreed by (signatures):

UNDP		
Katarzyna Wawiernia, Resident Representative	DocuSigned by: K. Wawiernia 15AE19A41B5A4B3...	28-Jul-2026

[1] The Gender Marker measures how much a project invests in gender equality and women's empowerment. Select one for each output: GEN3 (Gender equality as a principle objective); GEN2 (Gender equality as a significant objective); GEN1 (Limited contribution to gender equality); GEN0 (No contribution to gender quality)

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I. DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE (1/4 PAGE – 2 PAGES RECOMMENDED)

The Caspian Sea, the largest endorheic water body in the world (i.e. without outflow to external water bodies), is surrounded by Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Iran and Azerbaijan, possesses a rich and intricate geological and hydrological history that spans millions of years. Once linked to the global ocean through the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, it became a landlocked basin during the Late Miocene epoch. This isolation fostered a unique evolutionary trajectory, blending continental and marine influences. Its coastline hosts a variety of ecosystems, from cold continental deserts in the north and east to warm highland regions in the south and southwest. The Caspian region's climate is shaped by the convergence of multiple Köppen climatic zones, influenced by Arctic air masses, humid Atlantic winds, dry continental currents from Kazakhstan, and warm flows from the Mediterranean and Iran. This interplay creates pronounced seasonal variability, including harsh winters in the north where ice formation plays an essential ecological role. The sea's long-standing isolation from other water bodies has fostered a unique brackish-water ecosystem, making it one of the planet's most ecologically significant regions. Today, the Caspian supports an exceptional range of habitats, from expansive river deltas and wetlands to dynamic coastal ecosystems. The Caspian Sea receives water from an extensive network of around 130 rivers of varying sizes, delivering an annual inflow of nearly 300 km^3. The Volga River is the dominant contributor, supplying about 80% of this volume, while other significant inputs come from the Ural, Terek, Sulak, Samur, and Kura rivers, along with smaller streams originating in Iran and the Caucasus. The key river affecting the water level of the Caspian Sea that flows through Kazakhstan is the Ural (Zhayyk) River. It is the most significant river in Kazakhstan discharging into the Caspian Sea, contributing approximately 5–10% of the total inflow to the sea in different years, second only to the Volga. These rivers are essential to the Caspian's hydrological system, and the basin's enclosed nature makes its water balance highly sensitive to both climatic variations and human activities.

In addition to its ecological diversity, the Caspian Sea holds vast petroleum and natural gas reserves, making it a hub of economic and geopolitical importance alongside its thriving fisheries. Furthermore, its strategic position at the intersection of Europe and Asia further amplifies its role in international relations. The Caspian Sea is a strategic spot for the China-Europe trade route of the Middle Corridor or the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR). The economic significance of the TITR and was reaffirmed by Japan and Kazakhstan during the Japan-Kazakhstan Summit Meeting (here in after referred as Summit) on 18 December 2025, as highlighted in the Joint Statement. TITR has expanded far faster than anticipated due to unforeseen geopolitical conditions.

Despite its growing geopolitical importance, the Caspian ecosystem suffers from water level decline, pollution, biodiversity loss and climate-induced degradation. The Caspian Sea is undergoing a significant and accelerating decline in water levels driven by a combination of climate-induced hydrological changes and anthropogenic water use. The environmental crisis has been compounded by unforeseen instability in the Red Sea and the continuation of conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which unexpectedly accelerated maritime traffic via TITR. Cargo volumes through Kazakhstan surged from 586,000 tons in 2021 to 3.33 million tons in 2024. This nearly sixfold increase, bringing intensified marine traffic, heightened the risk of oil pollution in environmentally sensitive areas.

In 2024 alone, its mean water level dropped by 12-38 cm compared to 2023, reaching 29.38m near Fort Shevchenko, the lowest in recent decades. This marks the fourth consecutive year of significant decline, primarily due to critically low Volga River runoff (210.5 km^3 in 2024, whereas the norm is 238 km^3). Warmer, drier conditions in late 2024 worsen the situation that has continued in 2025 with further decline in both inflow and water level. During the Summit held in December 2025, the President of Kazakhstan underscored the warning signs of the declining water levels of the Caspian Sea, an issue deserving global attention. Japan

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and Kazakhstan acknowledged the importance of Kazakhstan's initiatives, including efforts to preserve the Caspian Sea's water resources, as declared in the Joint Statement between the two countries.

Regional cooperation has not been fully functional to address the degradation of the Caspian Sea. Despite multiple regional legal instruments and cooperation platforms—such as the Tehran Convention, CASPCOM, and Kazakhstan–Russia river commissions—effective transboundary management of the Caspian Sea and its major inflow rivers remains largely formalistic. In the Ural River basin, cooperation has produced limited coordinated action, weak joint monitoring, and minimal enforcement. The absence of an integrated basin-wide monitoring system linking river hydrology with Caspian Sea level dynamics creates high uncertainty in separating climate and anthropogenic drivers. At the same time, Caspian Sea level decline remains underprioritized in global climate and development agendas, delaying political attention and finance. As a result, transboundary water governance continues to be driven primarily by national interests rather than coordinated ecosystem-based river basin management, underscoring the need to move from dialogue to practical joint monitoring and adaptive management for the Ural–Caspian system.

The Caspian Sea is divided into three nearly equal sections—Northern, Middle, and Southern—each with distinct characteristics in terms of volume, depth, and salinity. The Northern Caspian is the shallowest, averaging about 6 meters in depth and covering roughly 29% of the sea's total area, yet it holds less than 1% of its volume. Salinity in this region varies significantly, from 0.1‰ near river mouths to 10–11‰ as water moves toward the middle basin. In contrast, the Middle and Southern sections are more stable in terms of salinity and hold much more volume (35% and 64% respectively). These salinity variations, combined with seasonal and long-term fluctuations in water levels, have major consequences for biodiversity, especially in the extensive shallow zones that provide vital habitats for numerous endemic species and play an essential role to maintain the water level.

Kazakhstan is the most vulnerable among the five Caspian littoral states, with over 70% of at-risk coastline located in its territory. The northeastern Caspian Sea part in Kazakhstan and the Ural River delta is undergoing desiccation due to rapidly falling sea level, with 30cm annual decline since 2020. The Ural River is critically important for maintaining the sea level, supporting the northern Caspian ecosystem, and sustaining spawning grounds. Observed climate change in Kazakhstan is further exacerbating riparian degradation: air temperatures during the growing season in forested zones have increased by 0.3–2.3 °C over the past century, heat waves have intensified, and seasonal precipitation patterns have become more irregular, with declining summer–autumn rainfall in western regions (Kazhydromet, 2023). While hydrothermal conditions have generally remained stable or improved in many forest zones, they have deteriorated specifically in floodplain willow–sedge forests along the Ural River (−14.7%), indicating increasing moisture stress and reduced natural capacity of riparian ecosystems to regulate runoff and sustain baseflow (Chernetsky, 2025). Afforestation in the riparian zones of the Ural River remains systematically underfinanced and technically neglected due to high implementation costs, difficult access conditions, and strong seasonal constraints related to flooding, soil instability, and short planting windows. As a result, most tree-planting efforts in Kazakhstan continue to concentrate in steppe areas, where costs and logistics are lower, despite the substantially higher hydrological and climate adaptation value of riparian forests.

Without urgent action through improved water governance and coordination, nature-based solutions, and ecosystem restoration, these trends are likely to intensify, threatening biodiversity, fisheries, and local livelihoods. Addressing the root cause of the Caspian Sea water level decline plays a critical role for the TITR, which connects the global economy.

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II. STRATEGY (1/2 PAGE - 3 PAGES RECOMMENDED)

A) Project Objective and Rationale

The proposed project aims to enhance the quality of economic growth by harmonizing the economy, society and environment and by strengthening resilience to climate-induced challenges. The objective of this project is to address the root cause of the ongoing decline in Caspian Sea water levels by fostering regional cooperation among the littoral states. To foster integrated transboundary coordination, the project will enhance monitoring capacities through equipping systems and capacity building. The Project will also take sustainable and scalable approach by ecological and climate resilience through piloting of nature based solutions. These interventions will address longstanding ecosystem degradation with practical measures aligned with Kazakhstan's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), National Adaptation Plan (NAP), and National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), the new Water Code.

Advanced monitoring will aim to establish in partnership with the Digital Government Support Center, Caspian Research Institute of Kazakhstan and others a comprehensive, real-time monitoring system for the Caspian Sea that employs advanced sensor technologies and integrated data platforms to accurately measure water level fluctuations, salinity, temperature, and related hydrological parameters with elements of marine landscape planning. The system will ensure continuous and reliable data collection to support informed decision-making and effective management of environmental and infrastructural challenges associated with sea level decline. Current monitoring approaches are fragmented, rely on periodic manual measurements, and lack the capacity to provide timely and accurate data for operational planning. An advanced and adequate monitoring system is essential to:

- Capture real-time, high-resolution data on water levels and associated parameters to understand short-term fluctuations and long-term trends.
- Provide reliable information for environmental management and infrastructure planning, reducing economic losses and safeguarding ecosystems.
- Facilitate regional cooperation through standardized data-sharing protocols and interoperable platforms.

By leveraging modern sensor technologies, IoT connectivity, and robust data systems, this initiative will transform monitoring from sporadic and reactive to continuous and systematic, ensuring resilience and sustainability in the Caspian region.

This project will directly support the coherent implementation of Kazakhstan's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), National Adaptation Plan (NAP), and National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), which are currently being updated in parallel. The forthcoming NAP (expected end-2025) prioritizes forestry, water resources, agriculture, and disaster risk reduction, while the updated NBSAP reinforces these priorities and identifies the Ural River basin as a national adaptation and biodiversity conservation priority. The chart below shows the linkage:

NDC sector and target	NAP sector and target	NBSAP sector and target	Proposed project Output

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Strengthening water security and efficient resource use	Adaptation priority area – Water Resource Management	Establishment of the Zhayik Ormany State Nature Reserve in West Kazakhstan Oblast and afforestation on catchment areas in the floodplains of major rivers such as the Irtysh, Ural, Syr Darya, and Ili—highlighting the strategic importance of the Ural River basin for biodiversity conservation.	Output 2: Enhance systematic monitoring capacity of the Northern Caspian Sea.

The project will also contribute to the UNDP's flagship initiative "***Climate Promise Pledge to Impact***" project, especially its *Output 1.5: Implementation of NDC measures is advanced in key sectors and cross-cutting thematic areas*. The expected contributions of this project to the Climate Promise global results are indicated in the Result Framework provided in Section V. below.

B) Project Outputs and Activities

The Project intends to implement its intervention through the following activities under three outputs.

Output 1: Enhance Regional Coordination on Caspian Sea Water Level Decline

- Activity 1.1: Functional regional coordination and scientific platform facilitated to support evidence-based science–policy dialogue on Caspian Sea water level decline. At least two a technical and policy dialogues conducted in partnership with the Kazakh Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and other interested partners to initiate bilateral ecological flow strategy discussions, identification of the factors contributing to sea level decrease and defining steps to reverse or offset these factors, including monitoring mechanisms.

Despite multiple regional agreements, transboundary management of the Caspian Sea and its inflow rivers remain largely formal and weakly implemented, with the Ural River basin characterized by limited joint action, fragmented monitoring, and minimal enforcement. Within this context, Activity 1.1 aims to create a technically grounded entry point for strengthening transboundary dialogue on the Ural River.

- Activity 1.2: Joint scientific research on root causes of Caspian Sea decline with participation of experts from at least two littoral states conducted.

This activity will support coordinated research involving scientists from a minimum of two Caspian littoral countries that are the members of the Teheran Convention to analyze the primary hydrological and anthropogenic drivers of reduced river inflows and associated Caspian Sea level dynamics, drawing on national datasets, expert inputs. The research will deliver a shared situational analysis that identifies priority knowledge gaps, monitoring inconsistencies, and institutional bottlenecks hindering effective transboundary river basin management. Results will be presented during regional dialogues to facilitate early alignment on ecological flow concepts, harmonized monitoring parameters, and feasible options to strengthen data exchange and technical cooperation. The outputs will form a practical technical and policy foundation for progressively enhancing transboundary coordination and joint action among Caspian Sea states.

The technical and policy roundtable is expected to result in a shared situational analysis of the main hydrological and anthropogenic factors influencing Ural River inflows and associated Caspian Sea level

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dynamics, based on available national data and expert input. A key short-term result will be the identification of priority knowledge gaps, monitoring inconsistencies, and institutional bottlenecks that currently limit effective joint river basin management. The roundtable will also facilitate preliminary alignment on ecological flow concepts and monitoring parameters, and define feasible options for improving data exchange and technical cooperation at the working level. Collectively, these results will provide a practical technical foundation for incremental strengthening of transboundary cooperation. Kazakhstan has prepared a draft new five-year programme for the conservation and restoration of the Ural River basin, and this Project will serve as a practical technical and policy platform to advance its discussion, coordination, and alignment in a transboundary context.

Output 2: Enhance systematic monitoring capacity of Northen Caspian Sea.

- Activity 2.1: Identification of the most suitable locations for automizing the data collection for the Northern Caspian Sea and inflows.
- Activity 2.2: Operationalization and use of monitoring equipment.

Recent study indicated that high resolution measurements and high spatial coverage with monitoring stations as one of the key limitations in water resources research advancement. Output 2 will strengthen systematic monitoring capacity for the Northern Caspian Sea by identifying priority locations for automated hydrometeorological observation, and operationalizing high-quality monitoring systems across both the sea and key inflow rivers. The final selection of locations will be determined during project implementation based on detailed assessments and stakeholder consultations. Through targeted upgrades—including potentially modernization of the Peshnoy marine hydropost, installation of automatic stations at flood-prone river posts, and deployment of high-resolution sensors and ADCPs—the project will address current gaps in spatial coverage and data quality. The enhanced network will generate continuous, high-accuracy datasets on sea level, hydrodynamics, salinity, evaporation, and river discharge, creating a robust scientific basis for water balance analysis, ecosystem management, and regional data sharing across the Caspian basin.

Above are the conclusions from the preliminary discussions with Kazhydromet. Necessary equipment will be re-examined during the implementation of the project. In addition, the exact location of laboratory and monitoring stations will need to be determined during implementation depending on the currently available infrastructure and facilities. Whether other additional sensors are required will be detailed after consultations with other stakeholders in the region. The monitoring system development experience will be shared with the region to strengthen regional coordination.

Caspian Research Institute of Kazakhstan, established by the Government in 2024, addresses environmental challenges affecting the Caspian Sea with its focus includes studying the decline in water levels, investigating the causes of large-scale seal and fish die-offs, and ensuring the conservation of Caspian seals, marine ecosystems and coastal zones. However, monitoring equipment remain insufficient. Therefore, the project will support the Caspian Research Institute in enhancing its capacity through improved equipment and targeted capacity-building initiatives.

The Theory of Change of the project is formulated as follows:

IF coastal states engage in policy dialogue and joint actions; **THEN** the management of shared water resources across the Caspian basin will become better coordinated.

IF robust hardware is equipped at most suitable locations, training on the usage is conducted and trusted data is coupled with forecasts, thresholds, and alerts; **THEN** operators and agencies will take timely, evidence-based actions to address water level decline.

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III. RESULTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Expected Results

This project aims to enhance resilience of the Caspian Sea through piloting nature-based solutions and advanced monitoring and research capacity of the Northern Caspian Sea, supporting water priority sectors outlined in Kazakhstan's updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). The updated NDC includes a dedicated chapter on climate change adaptation, emphasizing the importance of water resources management as national adaptation priorities. Additionally, it complements the UNDP's ongoing initiative to integrate national adaptation plans into regional development strategies, ensuring a unified and comprehensive approach to climate resilience and sustainable development throughout Kazakhstan.

- The Project will enhance Caspian Sea's resilience by organizing dialogue and enhancing water monitoring capacity.
- Improved environmental flow management will strengthen the ecological integrity and resilience of the Ural River Delta and the northern Caspian coast (Ramsar site, 111,500 ha), safeguarding critical habitats for threatened species and Caspian sturgeon spawning grounds.
- The potential beneficiaries are:
    - 270,000 from the improved water monitoring system.
    - more than 700,000 people potentially, including 382,000 women. (Around 734,000 citizens residing in 9 administrative districts of 2 regions adjacent to the Ural River), if the investment materialized.
    - more than 15 million indirect project beneficiaries, living in coastal areas of the five countries bordering the Caspian Sea: Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Turkmenistan.
    - environmental benefits include improved conservation status of 400 species.

Resources Required to Achieve the Expected Results

To deliver the planned outputs and realize the anticipated results, the project will mobilize a combination of human, financial, technical, and institutional resources. The project will be managed by the UNDP Project Manager located in the UNDP Office in Astana, Kazakhstan. Project implementation will be a dedicated UNDP team, led by a Project Manager and supported by a Project Assistant. International specialists will be engaged to provide strategic assistance for stakeholder engagement. International and national experts in water and biodiversity will be involved to ensure high-quality delivery. Oversight, operational assurance, and strategic guidance will be provided by UNDP Kazakhstan's Programme and Operations teams.

Partnerships

The Project is rooted in UNDP's long-standing collaboration with the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and builds on a proven record of coordinated action with national and local institutions. These partnerships are essential to ensure strategic alignment, effective targeting, and long-term sustainability of results. UNDP will work in close coordination with the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which will play a central role throughout the project lifecycle.

Regarding the water monitoring, other key partners include the Republican State Enterprise of "Kazhydromet", which conducts systematic monitoring of seawater and bottom sediment quality in the Kazakh sector of the Caspian Sea, and "Kazakh Research Institute of the Caspian Sea", whose focus includes the study of the decline in water levels. In terms of afforestation, the project partner includes the Akzhayik Nature Reserve and local administrations.

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The Project builds on the foundation of on-going Japan-funded UNDP initiatives of 'Enhancing Urban Resilience to Disaster Risk and Climate Change in Central Asia' and 'The Project for the Flood Control Using Integrated Dam Management System', where the UNDP Kazakhstan and the Japanese Embassy of Kazakhstan have been engaging actively. The Embassy will remain actively engaged throughout implementation and will be a key partner in visibility events including project launch and site visits.

To further strengthen this strategic partnership, UNDP will explore cooperation with Japanese institutions, including private sector actors. These collaborations will focus on Caspian Sea monitoring and digital innovation. The Project plans to leverage advanced technologies and solutions for water level, quality or biota monitoring systems, and any other relevant products from leading companies like Shimadzu Corporation, Takuwa Corporation, Yokogawa Electric Corporation, OPTEX Co., Ltd., Nippon Koei Co., Ltd. etc. These companies are recognized for their extensive experience and high-quality products in areas such as real-time water level monitoring, analytical instruments for water quality and water management. While these potential partners have been identified based on initial research, the final decision regarding the partnership establishment, procurement of equipment and products will be made in accordance with UNDP's rules and regulations.

Additionally, an international knowledge management professional will be engaged to support communications, strengthen knowledge management, and contribute to building new institutional linkages with Japanese stakeholders. All partnership activities will be implemented in line with UNDP's operational, financial, and procurement guidelines to ensure accountability, transparency, and high impact.

Stakeholder Engagement

The Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation and Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources are the key stakeholders and at the same time the main beneficiary of the Project. UNDP has been closely coordinating with the Ministries to provide efficient and focused support by identifying their needs and incorporating them into the Project.

Other relevant Ministries, such as the Ministry of Emergency Situations which manages Bautino port that is a strategically vital port for offshore oil and gas operations in Kazakhstan's sector of the Caspian Sea, and local authorities are also important stakeholders of the Project. In implementing the Project, actively engaging with the local authorities of the pilot project is essential for the smooth and efficient execution of the project.

The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources is a core institutional stakeholder, represented in this Project through its Forestry and Wildlife Committee, which is responsible for forest management, the administration of protected areas including the Akzhayik State Nature Reserve, and oversight of ecological restoration works within the territory of the Reserve. The West Kazakhstan regional authority (Akimat) will also be a key stakeholder, responsible for the allocation, formalization, and tenure arrangements of land plots for riparian afforestation and for ensuring coordination with local land users and municipalities.

Gender

The greater impact of water resource-related issues on women and girls is revealed through various studies and reports, however, women and girls are under-represented in the water resources management sector to adequately address the existing gender gap. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the gender gap in the water resources management sector and put efforts to enhance the representation and involvement of women. In this regard, the Project aims to approach activities with a gendered lens where possible, such as considering the number or ratio of women in organizations when promoting participation of women in policy and technical dialogues.

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South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSC/TrC)

Other littoral states of the Caspian Sea also face degradation challenges due to climate change and human activity. The successful implementation of the Project could pave the way for future regional cooperation in knowledge exchange and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned.

Digital Solutions

The main component of the Project is equipping the Caspian Sea water monitoring system. The Project acknowledges the importance of data collection in order to build the system for evidence-based decision making and actions to address environmental challenges. Procured equipment will automatically record data and the collected data will be sent to the centralized monitoring system, which will ensure sustainable continuation of the system beyond the Project duration.

Digital solutions are utilized in monitoring and operation and constitute the main components of the Project. This is a prerequisite to increase efficiency of operation and enhance monitoring capability.

Knowledge and Communication

The Project will produce several knowledge products that can be utilized beyond the lifespan of the Project and replicated in other regions all across the country and possibly in the Central Asian region.

UNDP will ensure that the generosity of the Government of Japan is fully and visibly acknowledged throughout the implementation of the project. A comprehensive visibility and communications plan will be developed in line with the respective corporate guidelines to ensure that the partnership's impact is effectively communicated to all relevant stakeholders, beneficiaries and the public.

Key visibility actions will include a dedicated press release at the Project's launch, produced in coordination with the Embassy of Japan and disseminated through national and international media. Japan's logo will be clearly displayed on all project supplies, equipment, and visibility materials, including banners, training toolkits where relevant, ensuring high visibility in all target locations.

Project progress and impact will be consistently promoted through UNDP Kazakhstan's social media platforms (Facebook, X, Instagram, LinkedIn), the official UNDP Kazakhstan website, and—whenever relevant—through UNDP's global Climate Promise communication platforms and the channels of implementing partners. Close engagement with the Embassy of Japan will be maintained throughout the project cycle, including regular communication updates, provision of visual and narrative materials, and the organization of joint field visits to project sites, providing direct visibility into the results of Japan's contribution.

Sustainability and Scaling Up

Throughout the Project, beneficiaries, including the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, and other relevant stakeholders, will be actively involved to ensure national ownership. Additionally, capacity-building initiatives will be embedded in various activities, enhancing the skills and knowledge of local authorities, engineers, and other key stakeholders to ensure the sustainability of impacts and activities.

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IV. PROJECT MANAGEMENT (1/2 PAGES - 2 PAGES RECOMMENDED)

Cost Efficiency and Effectiveness

The cost-effectiveness and expected results of this Project are based on best practices and lessons learned from previous UNDP projects. The Project will be economically viable by adhering to standard UNDP rules and procedures. Project management will include structured and consistent planning of project activities, as well as financial planning. During the implementation, new methods, mechanisms, and financial instruments will be widely used to ensure economic efficiency and effectiveness.

Project Management

The project will be implemented through a direct implementation modality (DIM), fully managed by UNDP Kazakhstan. The Resident Representative will exercise overall supervision of implementation, lead coordination, and consultations with key national partners, UNCT and other stakeholders. In accordance with corporate regulations UNDP will be responsible for: (i) identification and/or recruitment of project personnel; (ii) procurement of goods and services; and (iii) financial services, for which the project will incur Direct Project Costs as per UNDP 2023 Universal Price List (UPL). UNDP will ensure that the approved resources are used in line with the agreement with the donor, as well as in accordance with UNDP financial rules and regulations.

Financial oversight, including approval of expenditures and independent audits, monitoring and mid-term and final evaluation of progress and results will be also ensured by the Country Office. The costs directly attributable to activities that support programme quality, coherence and relate to development results as well as the policy advisory services provided by the UNDP staff related to activities of technical and implementation nature that are essential to deliver development results will be directly charged to the project budget.

The project will be implemented under the overall management of Energy and Environment (EE) Unit. UNDP Head of EE Unit will provide general project implementation and quality assurance, including other programme support as necessary.

UNDP will establish a project team, which will ensure that the envisaged activities are carried out and the outputs are reached. The project team will be managed by the Project Manager (PM), who will coordinate project activities and serve as the financial authorizing officer. The PM will report to the Head of EE Unit and will be responsible for all project operations. The incumbent will ensure the proper use of funds and that project activities are implemented in accordance with the agreed project document and project work plans. Management of project funds including budget revisions, disbursements, record keeping, accounting, reporting, and auditing will follow UNDP rules and procedures. The PM will be responsible for the project daily planning, implementation quality, reporting, timeliness, and effectiveness of the activities carried out.

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V. RESULTS FRAMEWORK[2]

Intended Outcome as stated in the UNSDCF/Country Programme Results and Resource Framework: UNSDCF Outcome 3/ CPD 2026-2030 Outcome 3: By 2030, all people in Kazakhstan, especially the most vulnerable, benefit from enhanced age and gender sensitive environmental resilience, as well as inclusive, rights-based climate, nature and pollution action and sustainable management of natural resources.
Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets: **Indicator 3.1.2**: Number of digital tools for climate and natural resource governance, monitoring, evidence-based decision-making and reporting Baseline (2024): 0 Target (2030): 3 Data source, frequency: relevant institutions, ministries; annually
Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: Output 4.1
Climate Promise result: **Pillar 2: Accelerating adaptation in vulnerable and fragile countries and communities, for increased resilience to climate risks and impacts** **2.0** Number of direct beneficiaries with increased resilience to climate change (i.e., more resilient physical and natural assets, diversified and strengthened livelihoods and sources of income, new/improved climate information systems) **4.0** Number of people trained/educated/informed through technical transfers, dialogues, workshops, campaigns, and other efforts (disaggregated by: male, female, youth (15-24) and indigenous people)
Project title and Quantum Project Number: Project for Enhancing Water Management Capacity for Responding to the Caspian Sea Level Decline

[2] UNDP publishes its project information (indicators, baselines, targets and results) to meet the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standards. Make sure that indicators are S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound), provide accurate baselines and targets underpinned by reliable evidence and data, and avoid acronyms so that external audience clearly understand the results of the project.

* Social Snapshot and Poverty in Armenia,2024 ARMSTAT

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EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)				DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS
			Value	Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	FINAL	
Output 1: Enhance Regional Coordination on Caspian Sea Water Level Decline.	a) Number of technical summary documents produced b) Number of institutions participating	*Reports*	*0*	*2025*		*a) At least 1* *b) 5*		*a) At least 1* *b) 5*	
Output 2: Enhance systematic monitoring capacity of the Northern Caspian Sea.	2.1: Number of monitoring equipment procured	*Reports*	*0*	*2025*	*0*	*4*	*0*	*4*	*Reports on physical verification of monitoring stations installed, stakeholder confirmation letter.*
	2.2: Number of staff trained to use new monitoring equipment	*Reports*	*0*	*2025*	*0*	*At least 50*	*0*	*At least 50*	

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VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In accordance with UNDP's programming policies and procedures, the project will be monitored through the following monitoring and evaluation plans: *[Note: monitoring and evaluation plans should be adapted to project context, as needed]*

Monitoring Activity	Purpose	Frequency	Expected Action	Partners (if joint)	Cost (if any)
Track results progress	Progress data against the results indicators in the RRF will be collected and analyzed to assess the progress of the project in achieving the agreed outputs.	Annually	Slower than expected progress will be addressed by project management.	N/A	N/A
Monitor and Manage Risk	Identify specific risks that may threaten achievement of intended results. Identify and monitor risk management actions using a risk log. This includes monitoring measures and plans that may have been required as per UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards. Audits will be conducted in accordance with UNDP's audit policy to manage financial risk.	Annually	Risks are identified by project management and actions are taken to manage risk. The risk log is actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken.	N/A	N/A
Learn	Knowledge, good practices and lessons will be captured regularly, as well as actively sourced from other projects and partners and integrated back into the project.	At least annually	Relevant lessons are captured by the project team and used to inform management decisions.	N/A	N/A
Annual Project Quality Assurance	The quality of the project will be assessed against UNDP's quality standards to identify project strengths and weaknesses and to inform management decision making to improve the project.	Annually	Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by project management and used to inform decisions to improve project performance.	N/A	N/A
Review and Make Course Corrections	Internal review of data and evidence from all monitoring actions to inform decision making.	At least annually	Performance data, risks, lessons, and quality will be discussed by the project board and used to make course corrections.	N/A	N/A
Project Report	A progress report will be presented to the Project Board and key stakeholders, consisting of progress data showing the results achieved against pre-defined annual targets at the output level, the annual project quality rating summary, an updated risk long with mitigation measures, and any evaluation or review reports prepared over the period.	Annually, and at the end of the project (final report)		N/A	N/A
Project Review (Project Board)	The project's governance mechanism (i.e., project board) will hold regular project reviews to assess the performance of the project and review the Multi-Year Work Plan to ensure realistic budgeting over the life of the project. In the project's final year, the Project Board shall hold an end-of project review to capture lessons learned and discuss opportunities for scaling up and to socialize project results and lessons learned with relevant audiences.	Annually	Any quality concerns or slower than expected progress should be discussed by the project board and management actions agreed to address the issues identified.	N/A	N/A

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VII. MULTI-YEAR WORK PLAN [34]

All anticipated programmatic and operational costs to support the project, including development effectiveness and implementation support arrangements, need to be identified, estimated and fully costed in the project budget under the relevant output(s). This includes activities that directly support the project, such as communication, human resources, procurement, finance, audit, policy advisory, quality assurance, reporting, management, etc. All services which are directly related to the project need to be disclosed transparently in the project document.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	Planned Budget by Year			RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
		Y1	Y2	Y3		Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount
Output 1: Enhance Regional Coordination on Caspian Sea Water Level Decline *Gender marker: GEN1*	1.1 Functional regional coordination and scientific platform facilitated to support evidence-based science–policy dialogue on Caspian Sea water level decline. At least two technical and policy dialogues conducted in partnership with the Kazakh Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and other interested partners to initiate bilateral ecological flow strategy discussions, identification of the factors contributing to sea level decrease and defining steps to reverse or offset these factors, including monitoring mechanisms.	-	65,000	65,000	UNDP	Government of Japan	72100-Contractual Services - Companies	130,000
		-	10,000	10,000	UNDP	Government of Japan	71200-International Consultants	20,000
		-	8,000	8,000	UNDP	Government of Japan	71600-Travel	16,000
	GMS 8% (General management support)	-	6,640	6,640	UNDP	Government of Japan	75100-Facilities and Administration	13,280
	Subtotal for Activity 1.1	**-**	**89,640**	**89,640**	**UNDP**	**Government of Japan**		**179,280**

[3] Cost definitions and classifications for programme and development effectiveness costs to be charged to the project are defined in the Executive Board decision DP/2010/32.

[4] Changes to a project budget affecting the scope (outputs), completion date, or total estimated project costs require a formal budget revision that must be signed by the project board. In other cases, the UNDP programme manager alone may sign the revision provided the other signatories have no objection. This procedure may be applied for example when the purpose of the revision is only to re-phase activities among years.

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EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	Planned Budget by Year			RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
		Y1	Y2	Y3		Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount
	1.2 Joint scientific research on root causes of Caspian Sea decline with participation of experts from at least two littoral states conducted.	50,000	100,000	-	UNDP	Government of Japan	72100-Contractual Services-Companies	150,000
		30,000	60,000	-	UNDP	Government of Japan	71200-International Consultants	90,000
		3,000	7,000	-	UNDP	Government of Japan	71600-Travel	10,000
	GMS 8% (General management support)	6,640	13,360	-	UNDP	Government of Japan	75100-Facilities and Administration	20,000
	Sub-Total for Activity 1.2	89,640	180,360	-	UNDP	Government of Japan		270,000
	Sub-Total for Output 1	**89640**	**270,000**	**89,640**				**449,280**
Output 2: Enhance systematic monitoring and research capacity of the Northern Caspian Sea. *Gender marker: GEN0*	2.1 Identification of the most suitable locations for automizing the data collection for Northern part of Caspian Sea and inflows.	110,000	-	-	UNDP	Government of Japan	71200-International Consultants	110,000
		10,000	-	-	UNDP	Government of Japan	71600-Travel	10,000
		35,000	-	-	UNDP	Government of Japan	72100-Contractual Services-Companies	35,000
	GMS 8% (General management support)	12,400	-	-	UNDP	Government of Japan	75100-Facilities and Administration	12,400

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EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	Planned Budget by Year			RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
		Y1	Y2	Y3		Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount
	Sub- Total for Activity 2.1	**167,400**	**-**	**-**	**UNDP**	**Government of Japan**		**167,400**
	2.2 Operationalization and use of monitoring equipment.	-	10,000	6,000	UNDP	Government of Japan	71200-International Consultants	16,000
		-	50,000	20,000	UNDP	Government of Japan	72100-Contractual Services-Companies	70,000
		-	1,000,000	500,000	UNDP	Government of Japan	72200-Equipment & Furniture	1,500,000
		30,210	35,370	-	UNDP	Government of Japan	71500-UNV	65,580
		6,000	3,790	-	UNDP	Government of Japan	71350-Intern	9,790
		2,950	-	-	UNDP	Government of Japan	72400-Translation costs	2,950

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EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	Planned Budget by Year			RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
		Y1	Y2	Y3		Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount
		10,000	20,000	12,190.83	UNDP	UNDP	71600-Travel	42,190.83
	GMS 8% (General management support)	3,932.8	89,532.8	43,055.2	UNDP	Government of Japan	75100-Facilities and Administration	136,520.8
	Sub-Total for Activity 2.2	**53,092.8**	**1,208,692.8**	**581,246.03**	**UNDP**	**Government of Japan**		**1,843,031.63**
	Total for Output 2	**220,492.8**	**1,208,692.8**	**581,246.03**				**2,010,431.63**
Project Management Costs	National Contractual Services Individuals (Project Manager (NPSA9 70%), Project Expert(NPSA8 50%)Project Assistant (NPSA6 30%))	29,449	58,897	29,449	UNDP	Government of Japan	71400-National Contractual Services-Individual	117,795
	International Contractual Services Individuals 50% (IPSA9 50%)	21,795	43,592	21,795	UNDP	Government of Japan	71400-International Contractual Services-Individual	87,182
	Labor cost (Programme Specialist 14%,Programme Analyst 13%)	24,446	48,891	24,446	UNDP	Government of Japan	67205 - Labour cost - NO Staff;	97,783
	Labor cost (Programme Associate 12%)	4,426	8,851	4,426	UNDP	Government of Japan	67305 - Labour cost - GS Staff	17,703

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EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	Planned Budget by Year			RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
		Y1	Y2	Y3		Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount
	Office rent	4,800	9,600	4,800	UNDP	Government of Japan	73100-Rental & Maintenance-Premises	19,200
	Office equipment	1,500	3,000	1,500	UNDP	Government of Japan	72800-Information Technology Equipment	6,000
	Miscellaneous (Bank commission, etc.)	200	400	100	UNDP	Government of Japan	74500-BBank commission	700
	Local security contribution	300	300	300	UNDP	Government of Japan	74300	900
	Mailing services	100	200	100	UNDP	Government of Japan	72400	400
	UNDP cost recovery DPC (Delivery Enabling Services)	3,225	6,450	3,225	UNDP	Government of Japan	74596-GOE DPC 30%	12,900
		8,365	15,890	7,525	UNDP	Government of Japan	64397- Staff Costs (DPC) 70%	31,780
	Procurement of printing, interpretation and audiovisual services	1,000	1,500	1,000	UNDP	Government of Japan	74200 Audio Visual&Print Prod Costs	3,500
	GMS 8% (General management support)	7,968.5	15,805.7	7,893	UNDP	Government of Japan	75100-Facilities and Administration	31,667.20

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EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	Planned Budget by Year			RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
		Y1	Y2	Y3		Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount
	Sub-Total for PMC	**107,574.5**	**213,376.7**	**106,559**		**Government of Japan**		**427,510.20**
Sub-Total for Outputs		**417,707.3**	**1,692,069.5**	**777,445.03**				**2,887,221.83**
Coordination levy (1%)		**4,177.07**	**16,920.69**	**7,774.45**				**28,872.21**
TOTAL		**421,884.37**	**1,708,990.19**	**785,219.48**				**2,916,094.04**

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VIII. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Project will be managed and implemented by UNDP Kazakhstan within the UNDP Direct Implementation Modality (DIM). The Energy and Environment Unit will provide oversight, quality assurance, technical guidance, and project management services as well as ensure communication with the donor. The Management and Programme Support (MPSU) and Operations Units will provide administrative and financial support to the project implementation.

Project management will be carried out by UNDP Country Office (CO) staff. A National Expert will be hired to provide technical guidance and implementation support. A Project Assistant from the MPSU will be assigned to provide adminfinance support services to the project implementation. The Project will be implemented in line with UNDP project management policies and UNDP financial rules and regulations. All materials and publications produced under the Project will fully adhere to the Communication and Visibility Strategy of UNDP and the donor. A Project Board will be established to provide guidance, supervision, and oversight for the project implementation and to ensure adequate engagement with the donor.

The Project Board will be the main governing mechanism led by UNDP CO. The Project Board meetings will hold annual meetings to discuss the progress, review and approve annual work plans, and review the risks that arise during the project implementation. To relieve administrative burdens and mitigate risks, UNDP CO will consider the engagement of a partner in the role of the responsible party to provide goods and/or services to the Project, carry out project activities and/or produce outputs. This modality will also allow UNDP CO to take advantage of a responsible party's specialized skills in the subject field. The engagement will be made in line with UNDP rules and regulations. All relevant assessments and checks will be completed in line with the legal status of the partner.

Any organization that is legally constituted and duly registered may become a responsible party for a UNDP project. This includes government agencies, intergovernmental organizations, private firms, other UN agencies, or civil society organizations, including non-governmental organizations, advocacy groups, state-owned enterprises, and academia. Spot check and audit: UNDP reserves the right to conduct a spot-check of the responsible party. According to UNDP rules, responsible parties are subject to a spot check. In addition, UNDP will carry out several mandatory procedures for assessing the capacity of a responsible party, including an independent micro-assessment aimed at determining the capacity of the financial management system in terms of accounting, procurement, reporting, and internal control so as to establish a Cash Transfer Modality to the responsible party, as well as identifying and determining the risk rating for proper implementation of the donor funds. UNDP shall solicit an independent, certified audit company to conduct the micro-assessment.

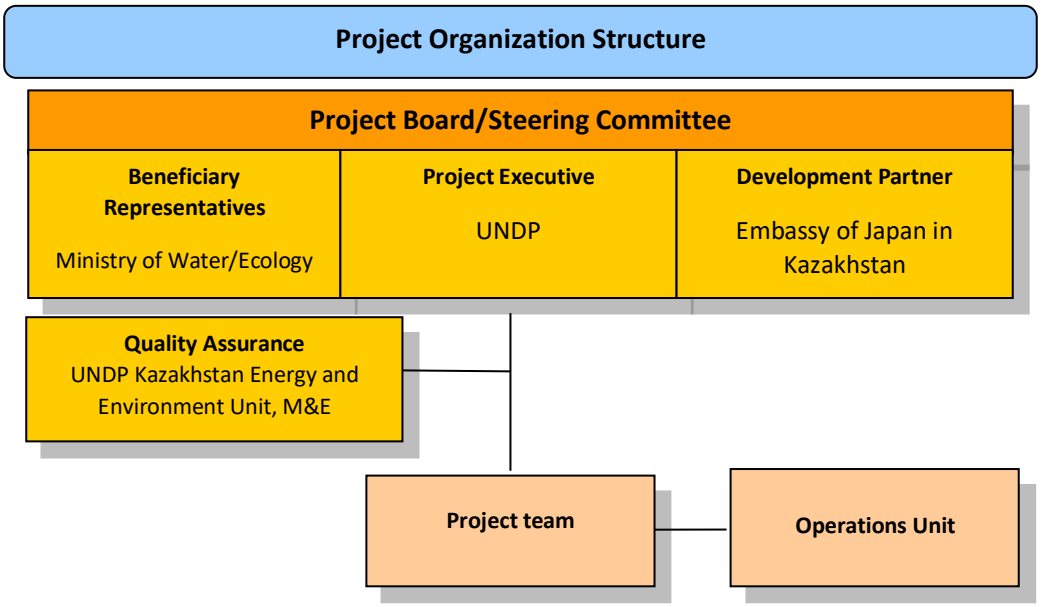
In accordance with UNDP policies and procedures, the responsible party shall be responsible for the project implementation. National regulations, rules, and procedures shall apply to the project implementation to the extent that they do not contradict the UNDP financial regulations and rules. The responsible party shall be responsible for achieving the goals and key outputs and ensuring that key partners and beneficiaries are engaged in its implementation, contribute to the implementation of the necessary political reforms at the national and regional levels, and ensure synergy between the project implementation and relevant public policy measures, as well as sustainability and continuity of the project outcomes.

As an implementing partner, UNDP will be responsible to:
· Develop, and appraise a detailed Annual Work Plan, risk log, and the monitoring, gender mainstreaming and communication plans;
· Responsible for delivering donor's project cycle management services comprising project approval and startup, project supervision and oversight, and project completion and evaluation;
· Ensure that the donor's resources are being used for the purpose intended.

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· Address project issues as raised by the responsible party;
· Provide guidance and agree on possible countermeasures/management actions to address specific risks;
· Review and approve final project report, make recommendations for follow-on actions;
· Provide ad-hoc direction and advice for exception situations;
· Assure that all Project deliverables have been produced satisfactorily;
· Review and approve the Final Project Report and Exit Strategy, including lessons learned.

The Project organization structure is as follows:



IX. LEGAL CONTEXT

This project document shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and UNDP, signed on 4 October 1994. All references in the SBAA to "Executing Agency" shall be deemed to refer to "Implementing Partner." This project will be implemented by UNDP ("Implementing Partner") in accordance with its financial regulations, rules, practices and procedures only to the extent that they do not contravene the principles of the Financial Regulations and Rules of UNDP. Where the financial governance of an Implementing Partner does not provide the required guidance to ensure best value for money, fairness, integrity, transparency, and effective international competition, the financial governance of UNDP shall apply.

X. RISK MANAGEMENT

1. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will comply with the policies, procedures and practices of the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS.)

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2. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that none of the [project funds][5] [UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document][6] are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism , that the recipients of any amounts provided by UNDP hereunder do not appear on the United Nations Security Council Consolidated Sanctions List, and that no UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document are used for money laundering activities. The United Nations Security Council Consolidated Sanctions List can be accessed via https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/un-sc-consolidated-list. This provision must be included in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into under this Project Document.

3. Social and environmental sustainability will be enhanced through application of the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (http://www.undp.org/ses) and related Accountability Mechanism (http://www.undp.org/secu-srm).

4. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will: (a) conduct project and programme-related activities in a manner consistent with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards, (b) implement any management or mitigation plan prepared for the project or programme to comply with such standards, and (c) engage in a constructive and timely manner to address any concerns and complaints raised through the Accountability Mechanism. UNDP will seek to ensure that communities and other project stakeholders are informed of and have access to the Accountability Mechanism.

5. In the implementation of the activities under this Project Document, UNDP as the Implementing Partner will handle any sexual exploitation and abuse ("SEA") and sexual harassment ("SH") allegations in accordance with its regulations, rules, policies and procedures.

6. All signatories to the Project Document shall cooperate in good faith with any exercise to evaluate any programme or project-related commitments or compliance with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards. This includes providing access to project sites, relevant personnel, information, and documentation.

7. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will ensure that the following obligations are binding on each responsible party, subcontractor, and sub-recipient:

a. Consistent with the Article III of the SBAA *[or the Supplemental Provisions to the Project Document]*, the responsibility for the safety and security of each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient and its personnel and property, and of UNDP's property in such responsible party's, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's custody, rests with such responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient. To this end, each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient shall:

i. put in place an appropriate security plan and maintain the security plan, taking into account the security situation in the country where the project is being carried;

ii. assume all risks and liabilities related to such responsible party's, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's security, and the full implementation of the security plan.

b. UNDP reserves the right to verify whether such a plan is in place, and to suggest modifications to the plan when necessary. Failure to maintain and implement an appropriate security plan as required hereunder shall be deemed a breach of the responsible party's, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's obligations under this Project Document.

c. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient (each a "sub-party" and together "sub-parties") acknowledges and agrees that UNDP will not tolerate sexual harassment and sexual

[5] To be used where UNDP is the Implementing Partner

[6] To be used where the UN, a UN fund/programme or a specialized agency is the Implementing Partner

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exploitation and abuse of anyone by the sub-parties, and other entities involved in Project implementation, either as contractors or subcontractors and their personnel, and any individuals performing services for them under the Project Document.

(a) In the implementation of the activities under this Project Document, each sub-party shall comply with the standards of conduct set forth in the Secretary General's Bulletin ST/SGB/2003/13 of 9 October 2003, concerning "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse" ("SEA").

(b) Moreover, and without limitation to the application of other regulations, rules, policies and procedures bearing upon the performance of the activities under this Project Document, in the implementation of activities, each sub-party, shall not engage in any form of sexual harassment ("SH"). SH is defined as any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offense or humiliation, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. SH may occur in the workplace or in connection with work. While typically involving a pattern of conduct, SH may take the form of a single incident. In assessing the reasonableness of expectations or perceptions, the perspective of the person who is the target of the conduct shall be considered.

d. In the performance of the activities under this Project Document, each sub-party shall (with respect to its own activities), and shall require from its sub-parties (with respect to their activities) that they, have minimum standards and procedures in place, or a plan to develop and/or improve such standards and procedures in order to be able to take effective preventive and investigative action. These should include: policies on sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse; policies on whistleblowing/protection against retaliation; and complaints, disciplinary and investigative mechanisms. In line with this, sub-parties will and will require that their respective sub-parties will take all appropriate measures to:

(i) Prevent its employees, agents or any other persons engaged to perform any services under this Project Document, from engaging in SH or SEA;

(ii) Offer employees and associated personnel training on prevention and response to SH and SEA, where sub-parties have not put in place its own training regarding the prevention of SH and SEA, sub-parties may use the training material available at UNDP;

(iii) Report and monitor allegations of SH and SEA of which any of the sub-parties have been informed or have otherwise become aware, and status thereof;

(iv) Refer victims/survivors of SH and SEA to safe and confidential victim assistance; and

(v) Promptly and confidentially record and investigate any allegations credible enough to warrant an investigation of SH or SEA. Each sub-party shall advise UNDP of any such allegations received and investigations being conducted by itself or any of its sub-parties with respect to their activities under the Project Document, and shall keep UNDP informed during the investigation by it or any of such sub-parties, to the extent that such notification (i) does not jeopardize the conduct of the investigation, including but not limited to the safety or security of persons, and/or (ii) is not in contravention of any laws applicable to it. Following the investigation, the relevant sub-party shall advise UNDP of any actions taken by it or any of the other entities further to the investigation.

e. Each sub-party shall establish that it has complied with the foregoing, to the satisfaction of UNDP, when requested by UNDP or any party acting on its behalf to provide such confirmation. Failure of the relevant sub-party to comply of the foregoing, as determined by UNDP, shall be considered grounds for suspension or termination of the Project.

f. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will ensure that any project activities undertaken by them will be implemented in a manner consistent with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards and shall ensure that any incidents or issues of non-compliance shall be reported to UNDP in accordance with UNDP Social and Environmental Standards.

g. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will take appropriate steps to prevent misuse of funds, fraud, corruption or other financial irregularities, by its officials, consultants, subcontractors and sub-recipients in implementing the project or programme or using

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the UNDP funds. It will ensure that its financial management, anti-corruption, anti-fraud and anti money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism policies are in place and enforced for all funding received from or through UNDP.

h. The requirements of the following documents, then in force at the time of signature of the Project Document, apply to each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient: (a) UNDP Policy on Fraud and other Corrupt Practices (b) UNDP Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Policy; and (c) UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations Investigation Guidelines. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient agrees to the requirements of the above documents, which are an integral part of this Project Document and are available online at www.undp.org.

i. In the event that an investigation is required, UNDP will conduct investigations relating to any aspect of UNDP programmes and projects. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will provide its full cooperation, including making available personnel, relevant documentation, and granting access to its (and its consultants', subcontractors' and sub-recipients') premises, for such purposes at reasonable times and on reasonable conditions as may be required for the purpose of an investigation. Should there be a limitation in meeting this obligation, UNDP shall consult with it to find a solution.

j. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will promptly inform UNDP as the Implementing Partner in case of any incidence of inappropriate use of funds, or credible allegation of fraud, corruption other financial irregularities with due confidentiality.

Where it becomes aware that a UNDP project or activity, in whole or in part, is the focus of investigation for alleged fraud/corruption, each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will inform the UNDP Resident Representative/Head of Office, who will promptly inform UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI). It will provide regular updates to the head of UNDP in the country and OAI of the status of, and actions relating to, such investigation.

k. UNDP will be entitled to a refund from the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient of any funds provided that have been used inappropriately, including through fraud corruption, other financial irregularities or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Project Document. Such amount may be deducted by UNDP from any payment due to the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient under this or any other agreement. Recovery of such amount by UNDP shall not diminish or curtail any responsible party's, subcontractor's or sub-recipient's obligations under this Project Document.

Where such funds have not been refunded to UNDP, the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient agrees that donors to UNDP (including the Government) whose funding is the source, in whole or in part, of the funds for the activities under this Project Document, may seek recourse to such responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient for the recovery of any funds determined by UNDP to have been used inappropriately, including through fraud, corruption or other financial irregularities, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Project Document.

Note: The term "Project Document" as used in this clause shall be deemed to include any relevant subsidiary agreement further to the Project Document, including those with responsible parties, subcontractors and sub-recipients.

l. Each contract issued by the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient in connection with this Project Document shall include a provision representing that no fees, gratuities, rebates, gifts, commissions or other payments, other than those shown in the proposal, have been given, received, or promised in connection with the selection process or in contract execution, and that the recipient of funds from it shall cooperate with any and all investigations and post-payment audits.

m. Should UNDP refer to the relevant national authorities for appropriate legal action any alleged wrongdoing relating to the project or programme, the Government will ensure that the

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relevant national authorities shall actively investigate the same and take appropriate legal action against all individuals found to have participated in the wrongdoing, recover and return any recovered funds to UNDP.

n. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient shall ensure that all of its obligations set forth under this section entitled "Risk Management" are passed on to its subcontractors and sub-recipients and that all the clauses under this section entitled "Risk Management Standard Clauses" are adequately reflected, *mutatis mutandis*, in all its sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into further to this Project Document.

Special Clauses. In case of government cost-sharing through the project, the following clauses should be included:

1. The schedule of payments and UNDP bank account details.

2. The value of the payment, if made in a currency other than United States dollars, shall be determined by applying the United Nations operational rate of exchange in effect on the date of payment. Should there be a change in the United Nations operational rate of exchange prior to the full utilization by the UNDP of the payment, the value of the balance of funds still held at that time will be adjusted accordingly. If, in such a case, a loss in the value of the balance of funds is recorded, UNDP shall inform the Government with a view to determining whether any further financing could be provided by the Government. Should such further financing not be available, the assistance to be provided to the project may be reduced, suspended or terminated by UNDP.

3. The above schedule of payments takes into account the requirement that the payments shall be made in advance of the implementation of planned activities. It may be amended to be consistent with the progress of project delivery.

4. UNDP shall receive and administer the payment in accordance with the regulations, rules and directives of UNDP.

5. All financial accounts and statements shall be expressed in United States dollars.

6. If unforeseen increases in expenditures or commitments are expected or realized (whether owing to inflationary factors, fluctuation in exchange rates or unforeseen contingencies), UNDP shall submit to the government on a timely basis a supplementary estimate showing the further financing that will be necessary. The Government shall use its best endeavors to obtain the additional funds required.

7. If the payments referred above are not received in accordance with the payment schedule, or if the additional financing required in accordance with paragraph 6 above is not forthcoming from the Government or other sources, the assistance to be provided to the project under this Agreement may be reduced, suspended or terminated by UNDP.

8. Any interest income attributable to the contribution shall be credited to UNDP Account and shall be utilized in accordance with established UNDP procedures.

In accordance with the decisions and directives of UNDP's Executive Board:

The contribution shall be charged:

(a) 8% cost recovery for the provision of general management support (GMS) by UNDP headquarters and country offices

(b) Direct cost for implementation support services (ISS) provided by UNDP and/or an executing entity/implementing partner.

9. Ownership of equipment, supplies and other properties financed from the contribution shall vest in UNDP. Matters relating to the transfer of ownership by UNDP shall be determined in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures of UNDP.

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10. The contribution shall be subject exclusively to the internal and external auditing procedures provided for in the financial regulations, rules and directives of UNDP."

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XI. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Project QA Assessment: Design and Appraisal

Project QA Assessment: Design and Appraisal				
Overall Project				
Exemplary (5) ¥¥¥¥¥	**Highly Satisfactory (4)** ¥¥¥¥¡	**Satisfactory (3)** ¥¥¥¡¡	**Needs Improvement (2)** ¥¥¡¡¡	**Inadequate (1)** ¥¡¡¡¡
At least four criteria are rated Exemplary, and all criteria are rated High or Exemplary.	**All criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher, and at least four criteria are rated High or Exemplary.**	**At least six criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher, and only one may be rated Needs Improvement. The Principled criterion must be rated Satisfactory or above.**	**At least three criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher, and only four criteria may be rated Needs Improvement.**	**One or more criteria are rated Inadequate, or five or more criteria are rated Needs Improvement.**
DECISION				
• **APPROVE – the project is of sufficient quality to be approved in its current form. Any management actions must be addressed in a timely manner.** • **APPROVE WITH QUALIFICATIONS – the project has issues that must be addressed before the project document can be approved. Any management actions must be addressed in a timely manner.** • **DISAPPROVE – the project has significant issues that should prevent the project from being approved as drafted.**				
RATING CRITERIA **For all questions, select the option that best reflects the project**				
Strategic				
1. Does the project specify how it will contribute to higher level change through linkage to the programme's Theory of Change?		**3**	**2**	**1**

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<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Project QA Assessment: Design and Appraisal</th></tr>
<tr><td>

- **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 lightbulb for these cases.

</td><td colspan="2">Evidence

Pls refer to the "Strategy" section of the ProDoc.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">

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[7] and adapts at least one Signature Solution[8]. 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[4]. 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.**

</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">1</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Evidence

The project aligns with Strategic Plan 4.2, with indicators included in the project RRF. Pls refer to "Results Framework" of the Prodoc.</td></tr>
</table>

[7] The three development settings in UNDP's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan are: a) Eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions; b) Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development; and c) Build resilience to shocks and crises

[8] The six Signature Solutions of UNDP's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan are: a) Keeping people out of poverty; b) Strengthen effective, inclusive and accountable governance; c) Enhance national prevention and recovery capacities for resilient societies; d) Promote nature based solutions for a sustainable planet; e) Close the energy gap; and f) Strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

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<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Project QA Assessment: Design and Appraisal</th></tr>
<tr><td>Also select this option if none of the relevant SP indicators are included in the RRF.</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>3. Is the project linked to the programme outputs? (i.e., UNDAF Results Group Workplan/CPD, RPD or Strategic Plan IRRF for global projects/strategic interventions not part of a programme)</td><td>Yes</td><td>No</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Relevant</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">4. Does the project target groups left furthest behind?
• 3: The target groups are clearly specified, prioritising discriminated and marginalized groups left furthest behind, identified through a rigorous process based on evidence.
• 2: The target groups are clearly specified, prioritizing groups left furthest behind.
• 1: The target groups are not clearly specified.
*Note: Management Action must be taken for a score of 1.
Projects that build institutional capacity should still identify targeted groups to justify support</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">1</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Evidence
Water level decline is affecting the Northan part of the Caspian Sea the most due to its shallowness. This project focuses on this area, which contributes to support communities rely on water resources there.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">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: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">1</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Evidence
The project builds upon the longstanding successful partnership between the Government of Japan and Kazakhstan. Furthermore, the project reflects lessons learned particularly from the relevant framework of the Teheran Convention, with an emphasis on fostering collaboration among littoral states.</td></tr>
</table>

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Project QA Assessment: Design and Appraisal		
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: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1**	**3**	**2**
	1	
	Evidence **UNDP works closely with the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation of Kazakhstan and the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan to implement this project.** **Furthermore, UNDP has been closely with the Research Institute of Caspian Research Institute of Kazakhstan since its establishment by the Government in 2024.**	
Principled		
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**	**3**	**2**
	1	
	Evidence **UNDP as the implementing partner will comply with the policies, procedures and practices of the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS). All signatories to the Project**	

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Project QA Assessment: Design and Appraisal		
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: Management action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1**	**Document shall cooperate in good faith with any exercise to evaluate any programme or project-related commitments or compliance with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards.**	
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.**	**3**	**2** **1** **Evidence** **The Project aims to approach activities with a gender lens where possible, such as ensuring 30% women participation into trainings.**

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<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Project QA Assessment: Design and Appraisal</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">9. Did the project support the resilience and sustainability of societies and/or ecosystems?

• <u>3:</u> 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).

• <u>2:</u> 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)

• <u>1:</u> Sustainability and resilience dimensions and impacts were not adequately considered.

*Note: Management action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">1</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Evidence

This Project supports NDC sector and target of ‘Strengthening water security and efficient resource use’ and NAP sector and target of ‘Adaptation priority area – Water Resource Management’, shown in section 2 of ProDoc.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">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 reports, coordination of events, trainings, workshops, meetings, conferences and/or communication materials and information dissemination. [if yes, upload the completed checklist. If SESP is not required, provide the reason for the exemption in the evidence section.]</td><td>Yes</td><td>No</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Social and environmental risks have been considered.</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">Management & Monitoring</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">11. Does the project have a strong results framework?</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">1</td></tr>
</table>

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<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Project QA Assessment: Design and Appraisal</th></tr>
<tr><td>

- **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: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1**

</td><td colspan="2">Evidence

Pls refer to RRF of the ProDoc.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">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**

</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">1</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Evidence

Pls refer to section 8 of the Prodoc, and the board TOR.</td></tr>
</table>

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<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Project QA Assessment: Design and Appraisal</th></tr>
<tr><td>responsibilities of the project board, project director/manager and quality assurance roles. (all must be true)

• <u>1:</u> 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: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">13. Have the project risks been identified with clear plans stated to manage and mitigate each risk?

• <u>3:</u> Project risks related to the achievement of results are fully described in the project risk log, 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. Clear and complete plan in place to manage and mitigate each risk, reflected in project budgeting and monitoring plans. (both must be true)

• <u>2:</u> Project risks related to the achievement of results are identified in the initial project risk log based on a minimum level of analysis and consultation, with mitigation measures identified for each risk.

• <u>1:</u> Some risks may be identified in the initial project risk log, 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 and/or no initial risk log is included with the project document.

*Note: Management Action must be taken for a score of 1</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">1</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Evidence

SESP approved, risk register prepared. Pls refer to Annex 2&3.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Efficient</td></tr>
</table>

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<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Project QA Assessment: Design and Appraisal</th></tr>
<tr><td>14. Have specific measures for ensuring cost-efficient use of resources been explicitly mentioned as part of the project design? This can include, for example: i) using the theory of change analysis to explore different options of achieving the maximum results with the resources available; ii) using a portfolio management approach to improve cost effectiveness through synergies with other interventions; iii) through joint operations (e.g., monitoring or procurement) with other partners; iv) sharing resources or coordinating delivery with other projects, v) using innovative approaches and technologies to reduce the cost of service delivery or other types of interventions.

(Note: Evidence of at least one measure must be provided to answer yes for this question)</td><td>Yes (3)

The cost effectiveness and expected results of this Project are based on best practices and lessons learned from previous UNDP projects. The Project will be economically viable by adhering to standard UNDP rules and procedures.</td><td>No (1)</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">15. Is the budget justified and supported with valid estimates?

• <u>3:</u> 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.

• <u>2:</u> 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.

• <u>1:</u> The project’s budget is not specified at the activity level, and/or may not be captured in a multi-year budget.</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">1</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Evidence

The multi-year workplan clearly outlines the budget lines, activities as well as the funding source.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">16. Is the Country Office/Regional Hub/Global Project fully recovering the costs involved with project implementation?</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">1</td></tr>
</table>

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Project QA Assessment: Design and Appraisal		
• **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: Management Action must be given for a score of 1. The budget must be revised to fully reflect the costs of implementation before the project commences.**	**Evidence** **Pls refer to Annex 5, project budget details.**	
Effective		
17. Have targeted groups been engaged in the design of the project? • **3: Credible evidence that all targeted groups, prioritising discriminated 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.**	**3**	**2**
	1	
	Evidence **The Research Institute of Caspian Research Institute of Kazakhstan operating Caspian Sea coast was engaged in the design of the project.**	

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<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Project QA Assessment: Design and Appraisal</th></tr>
<tr><td>• <u>1:</u> No evidence of engagement with targeted groups during project design.</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">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?</td><td>Yes
(3)
The project developed M&E plan which captures monitoring, progress review, lessons learned and quality assurance tasks, amongst others.</td><td>No
(1)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">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.
*Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of “no”</td><td>Yes
(3)</td><td>No
(1)
Indicative output with gender is GEN1.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Evidence</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">Sustainability & National Ownership</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">20. Have national/regional/global partners led, or proactively engaged in, the design of the project?
• <u>3:</u> National partners (or regional/global partners for regional and global projects) have full ownership of the project and led the process of the development of the project jointly with UNDP.
• <u>2:</u> The project has been developed by UNDP in close consultation with national/regional/global partners.
• <u>1:</u> The project has been developed by UNDP with limited or no engagement with national partners.</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">1</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Evidence
Project was developed in consultation with the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation of Kazakhstan, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan and the Research Institute of Caspian Research Institute of Kazakhstan.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">21. Are key institutions and systems identified, and is there a strategy for strengthening specific/ comprehensive capacities based on capacity assessments conducted?</td><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">1</td></tr>
</table>

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Project QA Assessment: Design and Appraisal		
• **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.**	**Evidence** **Capacity building initiatives are embedded in various activities, enhancing the skills and knowledge of local authorities, engineers, and other key stakeholders to ensure sustainability of impacts.**	
22. 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 (3)** **The project will make use of national systems as relevant.**	**No (1)**
23. 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 (3)** **The proposed project is expected to strengthen monitoring capacity of the Kazakhstan side of the Caspian Sea though engagement with the governmental bodies and the research institute.**	**No (1)**

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ANNEX 2. UNDP Offline SESP Tool (September 2025)

Project Information

Information	
Title	**Project for Enhancing Water Management Capacity for Responding to the Caspian Sea Level Decline**
Number	**01006083**
Location	**Kazakhstan**
Project stage	**Concept/Design/Implementation**
Date	**20 May 2026**

Social and environmental risk identification and management

	2: Specific S&E risks caused by these outputs/ activities (Risk Events) (see Checklist)	3: Comments *(optional: provide contextual information on risks and their potential impacts as needed)*	4: Risk Significance (L/M/S/H)	5: Assessments or management measures to address these risks during design and implementation of the relevant outputs or activities (Treatment Measures)
OUTPUT 1: Enhance Regional Coordination on Caspian Sea Water Level Decline				
Activity 1.1: Functional regional coordination and scientific platform facilitated to support evidence-based science–policy dialogue on Caspian Sea water level decline. At least two a technical and policy dialogues conducted in partnership with the	**No risks triggered.**			

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Kazakh Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and other interested partners to initiate bilateral ecological flow strategy discussions, identification of the factors contributing to sea level decrease and defining steps to reverse or offset these factors, including monitoring mechanisms.				
Activity 1.2: Joint scientific research on root causes of Caspian Sea decline with participation of experts from at least two littoral states conducted.	**No risks triggered.**			
OUTPUT 2: Enhance systematic monitoring capacity of Northen Caspian Sea.				
Activity 2.1: Identification of the most suitable locations for automizing the data collection for the Northern Caspian Sea and inflows.	**No risks triggered.**			
Activity 2.2: Operationalization and use of monitoring equipment.	**No risks triggered.**			

Social and Environmental Risk Rating of the Project

6: Overall Social and Environmental risk categorization (based on highest Risk Significance level from above)

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S&E Risk rating	Check if applicable	Comments
Low Risk	**x**	
Moderate Risk	☐	
Substantial Risk	☐	
High Risk	☐	

Social and Environmental Risk Management Instruments

7: Assessment or management measures required to address the identified S&E risks and impacts (applies only for complex Moderate, Substantial and High-Risk projects)		
Further assessment or management measures	**Check if applicable**	**Comments: indicate scope of measures (e.g. outputs/activities to be addressed) as well as timing (e.g. completed, planned, prior to initiation of certain activities)**
ESMF (Environmental and Social Management Framework)	☐	
Targeted assessment(s)	☐	
ESIA (Environmental and Social Impact Assessment)	☐	
SESA (Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment)	☐	
ESMP (Environmental and Social Management Plan)	☐	
Targeted management plans	☐	
Other instruments (please specify)	☐	

Additional Measures to Integrate the Programming Principles to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability

8: Measures to further mainstream the UNDP Programing Principles into the project

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Mainstreaming the human rights-based approach
In consideration of a human-rights based approach, the Project considers the following principles: • **Accountability and the rule of law: In implementing the Project, all standard UNDP policies on monitoring, evaluation, audits, and transparency will be followed for its accountability.** • **Inclusiveness: The Project will engage multiple and diverse stakeholders at a national and regional level to ensure inclusiveness.** • **Equality and non-discrimination: The Project will design and implement the project activities without discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, gender, age, language, disability, sexual orientation, religion, political or other opinion, national or social or geographical origin, property, birth, or other.**
Improving gender equality and women's empowerment
The Project will fully comply with UNDP's gender mainstreaming requirements. The greater impact of water resource-related issues on women and girls is revealed through various studies and reports, however, women and girls are under-represented in the water resources management sector to adequately address the existing gender gap. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the gender gap in the water resources management sector and put efforts to enhance the representation and involvement of women. In this regard, the Project aims to approach activities with a gendered lens where possible, such as considering the number or ratio of women in organizations when piloting blue bonds and promoting participation of women in policy and technical dialogues.
Mainstreaming sustainability and resilience
Throughout the Project, beneficiaries, including the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, the Caspian Research Institute of Kazakhstan will be actively involved to ensure national ownership. Additionally, capacity-building initiatives will be embedded in various activities, enhancing the skills and knowledge of local authorities, engineers, and other key stakeholders to ensure the sustainability of impacts and activities.
Strengthening accountability to stakeholders
The project strengthens accountability to stakeholders through several ways.The project strengthens accountability to stakeholders by fostering inclusive participation, enhancing transparency, and building institutional capacity. It ensures active engagement of key stakeholders—including government bodies, monitoring officers, researchers and local communities—through coordinated platforms that enable regular dialogue, feedback, and collaborative decision-making. Transparent monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are integral to the project, enabling progress tracking and clear reporting of outcomes to all involved parties. The project also invests in capacity building, equipping stakeholders with the knowledge and tools to uphold safety and environmental standards, thereby reinforcing responsible governance. Additionally, a formal grievance redress mechanism is established to allow stakeholders to raise concerns and ensure these are addressed transparently and fairly, further reinforcing accountability throughout the project's implementation.

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Annex I: SESP Social and Environmental Risk Screening Checklist

Checklist Potential Social and Environmental Risks		
INSTRUCTIONS: The risk screening checklist will assist in completing the Offline SES Preparation Tool and the Online SESP. Answers to the checklist questions help to identify potential risks related to programming activities. Identified risks require further review in the screening process. The "Risk Events" column presents relevant risks in summarized form. Refer to the SES toolkit, including Guidance Notes for various SES Standards, for further guidance on addressing screening questions.		
Overarching Principle: Leave No One Behind **Human Rights**	**Risk Events and Codes**	**Y/N**
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)?	**Risk of human rights violations (P1.1)**	**N**
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?	**Risk associated with the limited capacities of duty bearers to meet human rights obligations (P1.2)**	**N**
P.3 Is there a risk that rights-holders (e.g. persons affected by programming activities) do not have the capacity to claim their rights?	**Risk associated with the limited capacities of rights-holders to claim their rights (P1.3)**	**N**
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?	**Risk of adverse impacts on civil, political, economic, social, or cultural rights (P1.4)**	**N**
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? ***Note: Prohibited grounds of discrimination include race, ethnicity, sex, age, language, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, political or other opinion, national or social or geographical origin, property, birth or other status including as an indigenous person or as a member of a minority. References to "women and men" or similar is understood to include women and men, boys and girls, and other groups***	**Risk of inequitable or discriminatory impacts on affected populations (P1.5)**	**N**

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discriminated against based on their gender identities, such as transgender and transsexual people.		
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?	**Risk of restricting access to resources or basic services (P1.6)**	**N**
P.7 exacerbation of conflicts among and/or the risk of violence to affected communities and individuals?	**Risk of exacerbating conflicts (P1.7)**	**N**
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)?	**Gender equality concerns raised by women's groups/leaders (P2.8)**	**N**
Would the project potentially involve or lead to:		
P.9 adverse impacts on gender equality and/or the situation of women and girls?	**Risk of adverse impacts on gender equality (P2.9)**	**N**
P.10 reproducing discriminations against women based on gender, especially regarding participation in design and implementation or access to opportunities and benefits?	**Risk of discrimination against women (P2.10)**	**N**
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?** ***For example, activities that could lead to natural resources degradation or depletion in communities who depend on these resources for their livelihoods and well being***	**Risk of limiting women's access to natural resources (P2.11)**	**N**
P.12 exacerbation of risks of gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse of women and children? ***For example, through the influx of workers to a community, changes in community and household power dynamics, increased exposure to unsafe public places and/or transport, cash-for-work programs, etc.***	**Risk of gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse (P2.12)**	**N**
Accountability		
Would the project potentially involve or lead to:		
P.13 exclusion of any potentially affected stakeholders, in particular marginalized groups and excluded	**Risks of potential exclusion of**	**N**

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individuals (including persons with disabilities), from fully participating in decisions that may affect them?	**affected stakeholders (P3.13)**	
P.14 grievances or objections from potentially affected stakeholders?	**Risks of stakeholder grievances (P3.14)**	**N**
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/portfolio?	**Risks of retaliation or reprisals against stakeholders (P3.15)**	**N**
Sustainability and Resilience (Note: Screening questions regarding risks associated with sustainability and resilience are generally encompassed by the Standard-specific questions below. Where there is a high degree of uncertainty regarding potential risks of programming activities, the following question may assist with further risk identification)		
P.16 Does the project include activities with unknown design parameters for which potential SES risks cannot yet be determined and will require further activity-level screening and potential assessment for risks associated with sustainability and resilience?	**Generic sustainability and resilience risks associated with activities with unknown design parameters (P4.16)**	**N**
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? ***For example, through habitat loss, conversion or degradation, fragmentation, hydrological changes***	**Risks to habitats and/or ecosystems and their services (S1.1)**	**N**
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?	**Risks to critical habitats (S1.2)**	**N**
1.3 changes to the use of lands and resources that may have adverse impacts on habitats, ecosystems, and/or livelihoods? (Note: if restrictions and/or limitations of access to lands would apply, refer to Standard 5)	**Biodiversity risks associated with land-use/ecosystem changes (S1.3)**	**N**
1.4 risks to endangered species (e.g. reduction, encroachment on habitat)?	**Risks to endangered species (S1.4)**	**N**

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1.5 exacerbation of illegal wildlife trade?	**Illegal wildlife trade risks (S1.5)**	**N**
1.6 introduction of invasive alien species?	**Risks of introducing or spreading invasive alien species (S1.6.)**	**N**
1.7 adverse impacts on soils?	**Risks of soil degradation (S1.7)**	**N**
1.8 harvesting of natural forests, plantation development, or reforestation?	**Forestry/plantation-related risks to biodiversity (S1.8)**	**N**
1.9 significant agricultural production?	**Agriculture-related risks to biodiversity (S1.9)**	**N**
1.10 animal husbandry or harvesting of fish populations or other aquatic species?	**Animal husbandry or fish harvesting risks to biodiversity (S1.10)**	**N**
1.11 significant extraction, diversion or containment of surface or ground water? ***For example, construction of dams, reservoirs, river basin developments, groundwater extraction***	**Surface or ground water use risks (S1.11)**	**N**
1.12 handling or utilization of genetically modified organisms/living modified organisms? ***Note: See the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.***	**Risks of release/spread of genetically modified organisms (S1.12)**	**N**
1.13 utilization of genetic resources? (e.g. collection and/or harvesting, commercial development)? ***Note: See the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Nagoya Protocol on access and benefit sharing from use of genetic resources***	**Genetic resources benefit sharing risks (S1.13)**	**N**
1.14 adverse transboundary or global environmental concerns?	**Transboundary environmental risks (S1.14)**	**N**
Standard 2: Climate Change and Disaster Risks		
Would the project/portfolio MYWP potentially involve or lead to:		
2.1 areas subject to hazards such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, severe winds, storm surges, tsunami or volcanic eruptions?	**Hazard/disaster-related risks (S2.1)**	**N**

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2.2 outputs and outcomes sensitive or vulnerable to potential impacts of climate change or disasters? ***For example, through increased precipitation, drought, temperature, salinity, extreme events, earthquakes***	**Risks due to sensitivity to climate change or disasters (S2.2)**	**N**
2.3 increases in vulnerability to climate change impacts or disaster risks now or in the future (also known as maladaptive or negative coping practices)? ***For example, changes to land use planning may encourage further development of floodplains, potentially*** ***increasing the population's vulnerability to climate change, specifically flooding***	**Maladaptation risks (S2.3)**	**N**
2.4 increases of greenhouse gas emissions, black carbon emissions or other drivers of climate change?	**Risks of increased GHG emissions (S2.4)**	**N**
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)? (Note: the GEF does not finance programming activities that would involve the construction or rehabilitation of large or complex dams)	**Construction-related risks (S3.1)**	**N**
3.2 air pollution, noise, vibration, traffic, injuries, physical hazards, poor surface water quality due to runoff, erosion, sanitation?	**Emissions, noise, traffic, hazards and effluent risks (S3.2)**	**N**
3.3 harm or losses due to failure of structural elements of the programming activities (e.g. collapse of buildings or infrastructure)?	**Safety risks due to failure of project structural elements (S3.3)**	**N**
3.4 risks of water-borne or other vector-borne diseases (e.g. temporary breeding habitats), communicable and noncommunicable diseases, nutritional disorders, mental health?	**Risks of water/vector-borne diseases (S3.4)**	**N**
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)?	**Risks associated with hazardous or dangerous materials (S3.5)**	**N**
3.6 adverse impacts on ecosystems and ecosystem services relevant to communities' health (e.g. food, water purification, natural buffers, nutrient cycling, spiritual values, etc.)?	**Health risks due to impacts on ecosystems/ecosystem services (S3.6)**	**N**

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3.7 influx of project workers to targeted areas?	**Risks associated with influx of project workers (S3.7)**	**N**
3.8 engagement of security personnel to protect facilities and property or to support project activities?	**Risks associated with engagement of security or enforcement personnel (S3.8)**	**N**
Standard 4: Cultural Heritage		
Would the project potentially involve or lead to:		
4.1 activities adjacent to or within a Cultural Heritage site?	**Risks to cultural heritage sites (S4.1)**	**N**
4.2 significant excavations, demolitions, movement of earth, flooding or other environmental changes?	**Risks of unknown archaeological heritage damage (S4.2.)**	**N**
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: portfolio MYWPs/projects intended to protect and conserve Cultural Heritage may also have inadvertent adverse impacts)	**Risks to tangible and intangible forms of cultural heritage (S4.3)**	**N**
4.4 alterations to landscapes and natural features with cultural significance?	**Risks to landscapes with cultural significance (S4.4)**	**N**
4.5 utilization of tangible and/or intangible forms (e.g. practices, traditional knowledge) of Cultural Heritage for commercial or other purposes?	**Risks of inappropriate utilization of intangible and tangible cultural heritage (S4.5)**	**N**
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)?	**Physical displacement risks (S5.1)**	**N**
5.2 S5.2 Economic displacement riskseconomic displacement (e.g. loss of assets or access to resources due to land acquisition or access restrictions – even in the absence of physical relocation)?	**Economic displacement risks (S5.2)**	**N**

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5.3 risk of forced evictions? ***Forced eviction is defined here as the permanent or temporary removal against their will of individuals, families or communities from the homes and/or land which they occupy, without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection. Forced evictions constitute gross violations of a range of internationally recognized human rights.***	**Risk of forced evictions (S5.3)**	**N**
5.4 impacts on or changes to land tenure arrangements and/or community-based property rights/customary rights to land, territories and/or resources?	**Risks of impacts on community-based rights to land, territories or resources (S5.4)**	**N**
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)?	**Risks associated with activities taking place where indigenous peoples are present (S6.1)**	**N**
6.2 activities located on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples?	**Risks associated with activities taking place on lands, territories claimed by indigenous peoples (S6.2)**	**N**
6.3 impacts (positive or negative) to the human rights, lands, territories, natural resources and traditional livelihoods of indigenous peoples (regardless of whether indigenous peoples possess the legal titles to such areas, whether the programming activities are 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)? ***If the answer to screening question 6.3 is "yes", then Standard 6 requirements apply, and the potential significance of risks related to impacts on indigenous peoples must be Moderate or above.***	**Risks to rights, lands, territories natural resources and traditional livelihoods of indigenous peoples (S6.3)**	**N**
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?	**Risk that activities will take place without meaningful, effective informed participation of indigenous peoples (S6.4)**	**N**

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6.5 the utilization and/or commercial development of natural resources on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples?	**Risk of utilizing/developing indigenous peoples resources without agreement and/or agreed benefit sharing (S.6.5)**	**N**
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? ***Consider, and where appropriate ensure, consistency with the answers under Standard 5 above***	**Risk of forced eviction or physical/economic displacement of indigenous peoples (S6.6)**	**N**
6.7 adverse impacts on the development priorities of indigenous peoples as defined by them?	**Impacts on development priorities of indigenous peoples (S6.7)**	**N**
6.8 risks to the physical and cultural survival of indigenous peoples?	**Risks to physical and cultural survival of indigenous peoples (S6.8)**	**N**
6.9 impacts on the Cultural Heritage of indigenous peoples, including through the commercialization or use of their traditional knowledge and practices? ***Consider, and where appropriate ensure, consistency with the answers under Standard 4 above.***	**Risks of impacts on cultural heritage of indigenous peoples (S6.9)**	**N**
Standard 7: Labour and Working Conditions		
Would the project potentially involve or lead to: (note: applies to portfolio MYWP, project and contractor workers)		
7.1 working conditions that do not meet national labour laws and international commitments?	**Risks of substandard labour & working conditions (S7.1)**	**N**
7.2 working conditions that may deny freedom of association and collective bargaining?	**Risks to freedom of workers association and collective bargaining (S7.2)**	**N**
7.3 use of child labour?	**Child labour risks (S7.3)**	**N**
7.4 use of forced labour?	**Forced labour risks (incl. in supply chains) (S7.4)**	**N**

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7.5 discriminatory working conditions and/or lack of equal opportunity?	**Risks of discriminatory working conditions (S7.5)**	**N**
7.6 occupational health and safety risks due to physical, chemical, biological and psychosocial hazards (including violence and harassment) throughout the project life-cycle?	**Occupational health and safety risks (S7.6)**	**N**
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?	**Risks of pollutants release (S8.1)**	**N**
8.2 the generation of waste (both hazardous and non-hazardous)?	**Risks of inadequate waste management (S8.2)**	**N**
8.3 the manufacture, trade, release, and/or use of hazardous materials and/or chemicals?	**Risks associated with handling of hazardous materials (S8.3)**	**N**
8.4 the use of chemicals or materials subject to international bans or phase-outs? ***For example, DDT, PCBs and other chemicals listed in international conventions such as the Montreal Protocol, Minamata Convention, Basel Convention, Rotterdam Convention, Stockholm Convention***	**Risks associated with materials subject to international bans or phase-outs (S8.4)**	**N**
8.5 the application of pesticides that may have a negative effect on the environment or human health	**Risks associated with the use of agrochemicals (S8.5)**	**N**
8.6 significant consumption of raw materials, energy, and/or water?	**Risks associated with consumption of raw materials, energy, and water (S8.6)**	**N**

Annex II. Organizing the Social and Environmental Risk Data for the Online SESP

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UNDP SES Principles & Standards	S&E Risk Events (from # 2)	Causes (outputs/activities from # 1)	Impacts (summarize potential impacts of risks, see #3 Comments for contextual information)	Risk Signifi-cance (Impact/ Likelihood)	Treatment Measures (summary informed by # 5)
Human Rights Principle	Risks associated with the limited capacities of right holders (i.e. those who could be adversely impacted by disasters) for accessing DRR information that is produced in solely digital formats (P1.3)	Output 1/Activity 1.2 Develop SOPs and guidelines for transboundary disaster response.	Limited capacity to access (i.e., digital-only) DRR information can leave vulnerable right-holders uninformed and at risk during disasters.	I: 2 L: 2	SOPs should require (or at least strongly encourage) the local authorities that will be receiving eventual DRR alerts to further disseminate them to all relevant population groups, including those who may not have access to digital media, through locally appropriate means.
Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment Principle	None triggered.			I: L:	
Accountability Principle	None triggered.			I: L:	
Sustainability and Resilience Principle	None triggered.			I: L:	

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1. Biodiversity Cons. & Sust. Nat. Resource Mgmt.	**None triggered.**			**I:** **L:**	
2. Climate Change and Disaster Risks	**None triggered.**			**I:** **L:**	
3. Community Health, Safety and Security	**None triggered.**			**I:** **L:**	
4. Cultural Heritage	**None triggered.**			**I:** **L:**	
5. Displacement and Resettlement	**None triggered.**			**I:** **L:**	
6. Indigenous Peoples	**None triggered.**			**I:** **L:**	
7. Labour and Working Conditions	**None triggered.**			**I:** **L:**	
8. Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency	**None triggered.**			**I:** **L:**	

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ANNEX 3: OFFLINE PROJECT RISK REGISTER

Project Title: Project for Enhancing Water Management Capacity for Responding to the Caspian Sea Level Decline	**Project Number:** 01006083	**Date: 24 June 2026**

#	Event	Cause	Impact(s)	Risk Category and Sub-category *(including Risk Appetite)*	Impact, Likelihood & Risk Level *(see Annex 3 Risk Matrix)*	Risk Valid From/To	Risk Owner *(~~individual~~ team accountable for managing the risk)*	Risk Treatment and Treatment Owner
1	There is a risk that the Ministry/Government may not approve developed documents/systems	As a result of changes in priority or any other political/organizational reasons	Which will impact in reaching the targets of Outputs according to the results framework and work plan	**7. STRATEGIC (7.5. Government commitment) - UNDP Risk Appetite: OPEN TO SEEKING**	Likelihood: **2 - Low likelihood** Impact: **3 - Intermediate** Risk level: **MODERATE (equates to a risk appetite of EXPLORATORY)**	From: 24-Jun-26 To: 12-Jun-28	Project Team	Risk Treatment 1.1: Closely coordinate with MWRI, MENR and other stakeholders in the government to ensure their needs and priorities are well reflected in the development of documents/systems. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Team
2	There is a risk that activities based on	As a result of incomplete data or	Which will impact in the	**3. OPERATIONAL (3.8. Capacities of**	Likelihood:	From: 24-Jun-26	Project Team	Risk Treatment 2.1: Conduct research on

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	existing data may be delayed	lack of adequate data available.	implementation of activities.	**the partners) - UNDP Risk Appetite: EXPLORATORY TO OPEN**	**2 - Low likelihood** Impact: **3 - Intermediate** Risk level: **MODERATE (equates to a risk appetite of**	To: 12-Jun-28		available resource when designing the details of activities Risk Treatment Owner: Project Team
3	There is a risk that activities involving the hiring of contractors or companies may be delayed	As a result of the lack of a pool of adequate contractors or companies	Which will impact in reaching the delivery of the Project according to the work plan	**4. ORGANIZATIONAL (4.9. Procurement) - UNDP Risk Appetite: EXPLORATORY TO OPEN**	Likelihood: **3 - Moderately likely** Impact: **3 - Intermediate** Risk level: **MODERATE (equates to a risk appetite of EXPLORATORY)**	From: 24-Jun-26 To: 12-Jun-28	Project Team	Risk Treatment 3.1: Preparation for seeking contractors/companies should be done in advance. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Team
4	There is a risk that Iran's participation into regional activities may be interrupted or cancelled	As a result of war circumstances in Iran	Which will impact on the quality of implementation of the Project.	**3. OPERATIONAL (3.5. Partners' engagement) - UNDP Risk Appetite:**	Likelihood: **4 - Highly likely** Impact: **4 - Extensive**	From: 24-Jun-26 To: 12-Jun-28	Project Team	Risk Treatment 4.1: Engage primarily with non-political institutions and maintain a scientific and technical level of engagement to

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				EXPLORATORY TO OPEN	Risk level: **HIGH (equates to a risk appetite of CAUTIOUS)**			minimize political and operational risks.The Project team will also closely coordinate with national and local authorities to ensure the safety and adequate scheduling of activities. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Team

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Annex 4. ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Activities	2026							2027												2028				
	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Output 1 Enhance Regional Coordination on Caspian Sea Water Level																								
Activity 1.1 Functional regional coordination and scientific platform facilitated to support evidence-based science–policy dialogue on Caspian Sea water level decline. At least two technical and policy dialogues conducted in partnership with the Kazakh Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and other interested partners to initiate bilateral ecological flow strategy discussions, identification of the factors contributing to sea level decrease and defining steps to reverse or offset these factors, including monitoring mechanisms.																								
Technical and policy dialogue										x												x		
Activity 1.2 Joint scientific research on root causes of Caspian Sea decline with participation of experts from at least two littoral states conducted.																								
ToR development for research			x	x																				
Conducting research						x	x	x	x	x	x	x												
Output 2 Enhance systematic monitoring and research capacity of the Northern Caspian Sea.																								

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Activity 2.1 Identification of the most suitable locations for automizing the data collection for Northern part of Caspian Sea and inflows.																									
Meeting with Kazhydromet on details of equipments and potential locations		x	x	x	x	x																			
potential locations			x	x	x	x																			
Meeting with Atyrau region akimat on details of equipments and potential locations			x	x	x	x																			
Site visits						x																			
Development of the list of equipments and selected locations						x																			
Activity 2.2 Operationalization and use of monitoring equipment.																									
ToR development for monitoring system								x	x																
Procurement of monitoring system									x	x	x	x	x												
Installation and transfer of equipment														x	x	x	x	x	x						
Site visits																			x						

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ANNEX 5. PROJECT BOARD

UNDP Standard Terms of Reference (ToR) for the

Project Board of Project for Enhancing Water Management Capacity for Responding to the Caspian Sea Level Decline (ID:01006083)

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.'[9] The Project Board 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 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 Board. The Project Board 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 Board 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 Board 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 Board 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 Board 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).

[9] 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

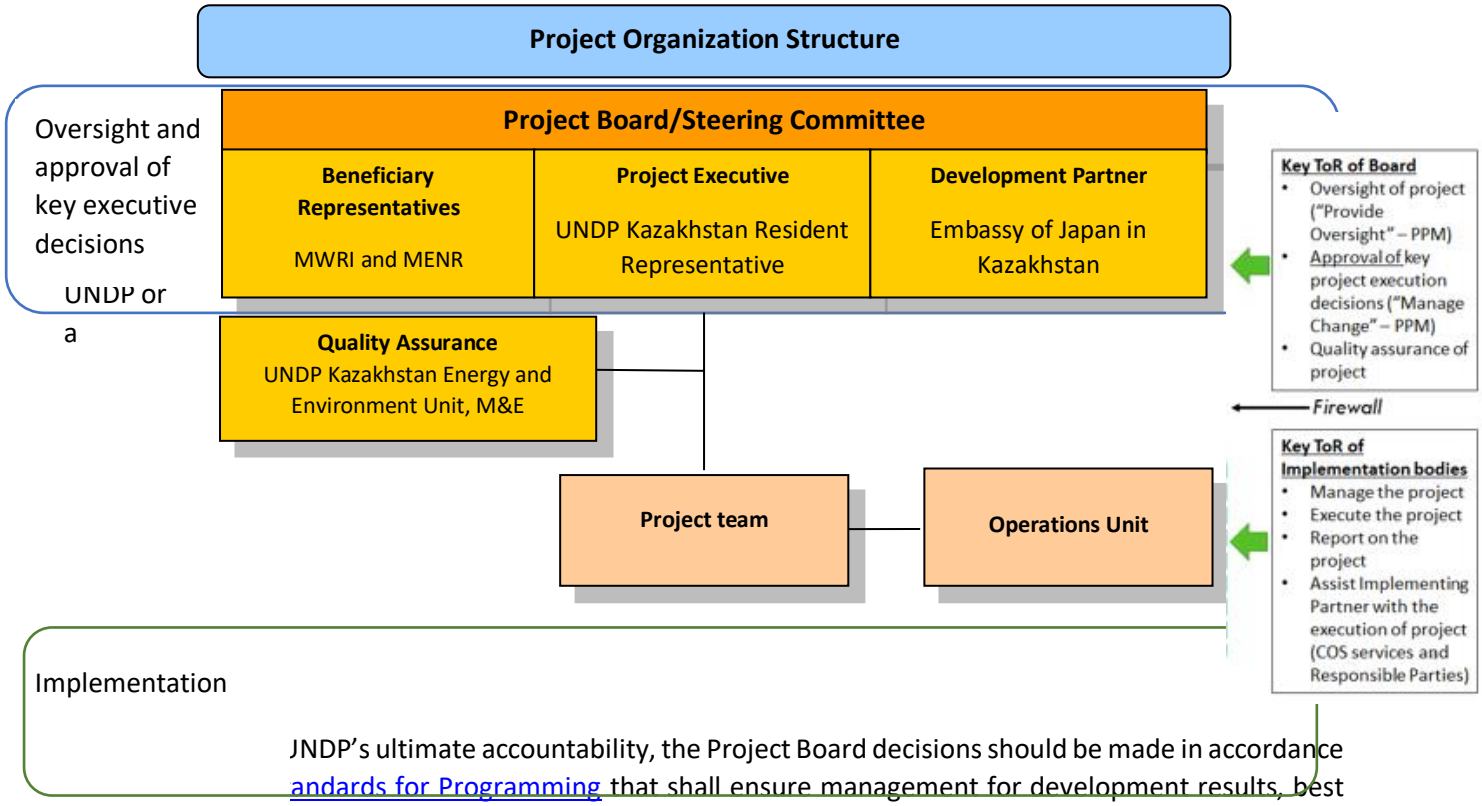
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The Project Board is responsible for making management decisions by consensus when required, including the approval of project plans and revisions, and the project manager's tolerances. The Project Board approves annual work plans and reviews updates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

Within the overall governance and management arrangements of the project, the role of the Project Board 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.

The diagram below outlines the main entities involved (and their respective responsibilities) in the 'oversight/approval of key execution decisions' layer and the 'implementation' layer of the project structure.

Diagram 1 – Standard Figure of Project Organization Structure vis-à-vis oversight & approval and implementation roles



JNDP's ultimate accountability, the Project Board decisions should be made in accordance andards for Programming that shall ensure management for development results, best ıess, integrity, transparency and effective national and international competition. An effective Project Board needs credible data, evidence, quality assurance and reporting to aid decision making (see next section on supporting functions to the Board). The Project Board also needs to be accountable to protect against conflicts of interest and fraud.

Specific responsibilities of the Project Board 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;

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- 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 Board 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 project[10].
- 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.

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

- Ensure coordination between the various donors and government-funded projects and programmes;
- Report to relevant inter-ministerial bodies or higher-level oversight bodies;
- Ensure coordination with multiple government agencies and their participation in project activities;
- Track and monitor co-financing for this project;
- Appraise the annual project implementation report, including the quality assessment rating report;
- Ensure commitment of human resources to support project implementation, arbitrating any issues within the project;
- Act as an informal consultation mechanism for stakeholders;

[10] 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 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.

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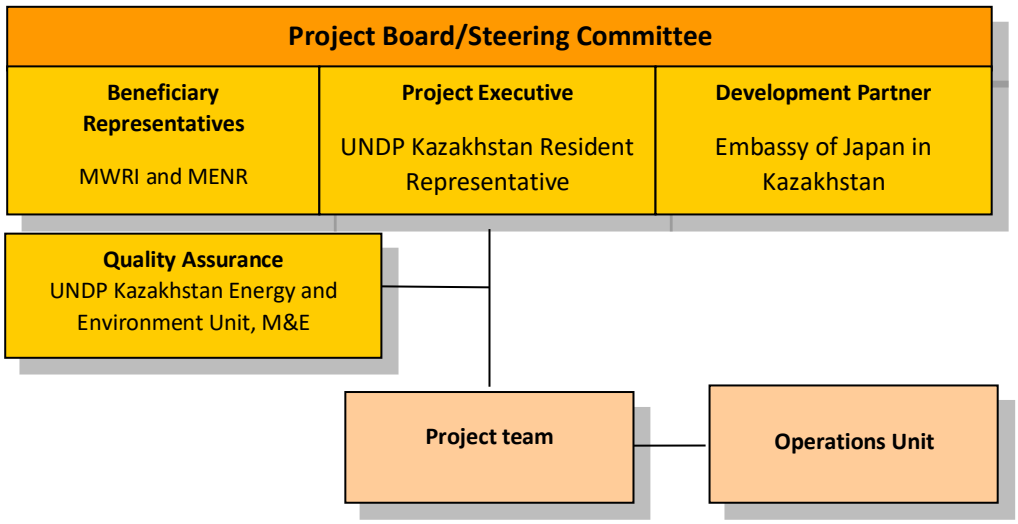
- Approve the Project Inception Report, Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation reports and corresponding management responses;
- Review the final project report package during an end-of-project review meeting to discuss lessons learned and opportunities for scaling up;
- Providing guidance or reporting protocols to technical committees or sub-bodies reporting to the Board (if applicable);

III. Composition of the Project Board

Consequently, the governance of the Project will be ensured through the Project Board, which will comprise representatives of:

- UNDP Kazakhstan Country Office.
- Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MWRI) and Ministry of Ecology and Naturaly Reources of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MENR).
- Embassy of Japan in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Diagram 2 – Standard Figure for a Project Organization Structure



The three categories of Project Board members are the following:

1) **Project Director/Executive(s):** This is an individual(s) who represents ownership of the project and chairs (or co-chairs) the Project Board. The executive usually is the most senior national counterpart for nationally implemented projects (typically from the same entity as the Implementing Partner), and it must be UNDP for projects that are direct implementation (DIM). In exceptional cases, two individuals from different entities can co-share this role and/or co-chair the Project Board. If the project executive co-chairs the Project Board with a representative of another category, it typically does so with a development partner representative. The Project Executive is: *UNDP Kazakhstan Country Office.*

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2) **Beneficiary Representative(s):** This is an individual(s) representing the interests of those groups of stakeholders who will ultimately benefit from the project. Their primary function within the Board is to ensure the realization of project results from the perspective of project beneficiaries. Often representatives from civil society, industry associations, community groups or other government entities benefiting from the project can fulfil this role. If the project has a specific geographic focus, often representatives from the government entities in the targeted area/region will play this role. There can be multiple beneficiary representatives in a Project Board. The Beneficiary Representatives are: Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Ministry of Ecology and Naturaly Reources of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MENR).

3) **Development Partner(s):** Individuals representing the interests of the parties concerned that provide funding, strategic guidance and/or technical expertise to the project [11]. There can be multiple development partners representatives in a Project Board. The Development Partner(s) representative(s) is: Embassy of Japan in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

A **UNDP representative must always be represented in the Project Board** in either the project executive or development partner role.

Where applicable, representatives from responsible parties to the project cannot sit on the Project Board as a formal voting member; they can (if requested) attend board meetings as observers. Since the chief responsibility of the Board is to provide high-level oversight of project implementation, to avoid any conflicts of interest, it is not appropriate for representatives of third party entities engaged by the project to provide services – whether responsible parties or contractors/service providers – to concurrently sit on the Board. Representatives of responsible parties can attend board meetings (as observers) but can have no official role in board decision-making. The same principle applies to the project manager who in attending and presenting at board meetings, does so in a non-voting capacity.

In cases where the inputs and guidance of responsible parties or other entities formally engaged in providing goods or services to the project are needed by the Board on a recurring basis, it is recommended to establish appropriate advisory or technical committees or working groups composed of those entities that can formally report to the Board, while ensuring the impartiality and integrity of board decisions happening independent of those bodies (see Section V of the ToR).

Standard Project Board Protocols

The Project Board 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. This Project Board will meet 2 times annually according to this provisional schedule (insert scheduled meeting times if known).

Project Board 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,

[11] With the exception of responsible parties or any firms/entities engaged by the project to provide technical expertise with project funds

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qualified expeses related to travel or lodging to attend board meetings. Such protocols are outlined in this ToR and the benefits are applicable to all eligible board members.

All Project Boards must have rules for quorum and documentation/minuting of board decisions. All board decisions and minutes should be kept by the project management unit and UNDP. Guidelines on decisions taken in between board meetings or virtually should be clearly elaborated in the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Project Board.

Unless otherwise specified, Project Board 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 Board or a UNDP staff member with delegated authority as the programme manager.[12]

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 Board, which will include the responsibilities already outlined and indicate agreed board practices and logistics.

IV. Standard Outputs of Project Board Meetings

In its oversight function, the Project Board 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 evaluations[13]
- 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 applicabel) 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 Board 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

[12] 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.

[13] Including audit reports and spot checks.

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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 (see next section).

V. Support Functions to the Project Board

There are two main entities/functions outside the Project Board structure whose role is to report to the Project Board and support board members in effectively fulfilling their roles: project assurance and project management.

Project Assurance: Project assurance is the responsibility of each Project Board member; however, UNDP has a distinct assurance role for all UNDP projects in carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. UNDP performs quality assurance and supports the Project Board (and Project Management Unit) by carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions, including applying UNDP's social and environmental management system to ensure the SES are applied through the project cycle. The Project Board cannot delegate any of its quality assurance responsibilities to the project manager. Project assurance is totally independent of project execution.

A designated representative of UNDP playing the project assurance role is expected to attend all Project Board meetings and support board processes as a non-voting representative. It should be noted that while in certain cases UNDP's project assurance role across the project may encompass activities happening at several levels (e.g. global, regional), at least one UNDP representative playing that function must, as part of their duties, specifically attend board meetings and provide board members with the required documentation required to perform their duties.

The UNDP representative playing the main project assurance function is: CO Monitoring & Evaluation Officer

Project Support, this function is often covered by the Project Management Unit: The Project Manager (PM) (also called project coordinator) is the senior most representative of the Project Management Unit (PMU) and is responsible for the overall management of the project on behalf of the Implementing Partner, including the mobilization of all project inputs, supervision over project staff, responsible parties, consultants and sub-contractors. The project manager typically presents key deliverables and documents to the Board for review and approval, including progress reports, annual work plans, adjustments to tolerance levels and risk logs.

A designated representative of the PMU is expected to attend all board meetings and present the required progress reports and other documentation needed to support board processes as a non-voting representative.

Annex A – Acknowledgement of this ToR by each designated official Project Board member

Note: The form/evidence for this acknowledgement must be included as an annex or codified in other ways (e.g. note to file or minutes of a board meeting)

The formal acknowledgement of the ToR by board members can be done via various procedures, including the following options:

1) Having copies of the ToR be signed by each appointed board member at the Appraise and Approve stage (LPAC) and then having all signed copies attached as an annex to the Project Document

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2) Having the final ToR be signed by each appointed board member at the first project board meeting after Project Document signing with the approvals recorded in the minutes of the meeting

In both cases, the signature or acknowledgement should include the name, title and category of board representation for the person signing