



UNDP-GEF Midterm Review Terms of Reference

BASIC CONTRACT INFORMATION

Location: SWAZILAND
Application Deadline: 02 March 2018
Category: Environment
Type of Contract: Consultancy
Assignment Type: Local Consultant
Languages Required: English and Siswati
Starting Date: (09 March 2018)
Duration of Initial Contract: 30 Working days
Expected Duration of Assignment: 3 months

BACKGROUND

A. Project Title: Strengthening the National Protected Areas Systems of Swaziland (SNPAS) Project.

B. Project Description

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of the full -sized project titled Strengthening the National Protected Areas System of Swaziland (SNPAS) PIMS 4932 implemented through The Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC) a parastatal organization in close collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs which is to be undertaken in 2018. The project started in 2015 and is in its third year of implementation. In line with the UNDP-GEF Guidance on MTRs, this MTR process was initiated before the submission of the second Project Implementation Report (PIR). This ToR sets out the expectations for this MTR. The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects (see Annex).

The Project design:

Swaziland's formal Protected Areas (PAs) cover approximately 4% of the country's total land area, and are relatively rich in biodiversity with their share of endemism as represented in various ecosystems. Furthermore, the country has set targets for the conservation of its ecosystems and species in line with the National Development Strategy (Vision 2022) and other international targets such as the Aichi Targets under the auspices of the Convention on Biological Diversity. While some of the critical ecosystems and species are found in existing PAs, some are found in areas where there is prone to unsustainable utilization and overexploitation of resources, thereby threatening livelihoods and impeding sustainable development.

The Strengthening National Protected Areas Systems (SNPAS) in Swaziland is a six years (2014-2020) Project funded by GEF aims at developing, expanding and effectively managing the capacities of Swaziland's PAs network in order to adequately protect the biodiversity. This will be undertaken through the "landscapes" approach towards sustainable development and will involve integrated land and natural resource management that transforms the current PA patchwork into network and enhance vulnerable communities' livelihoods, in particular those adjacent to the PAs.

The Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC) a parastatal organisation is the implementing agency in close collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental affairs.

The SNPAS Project has been organized around three components: (i) knowledge-based platform operationalised at the national, regional and community levels to address current and emerging threats to PAs and biodiversity conservation; (ii) Expansion of PA network, and (iii) strengthening PA functioning through improved conservation management and operational support for existing and new PAs, including both formal and informal. PAs will be established and managed in critical biodiversity areas as clusters, integrating different sites that are managed by the Government of Swaziland (GoS), the private sector and local communities and enable a matrix of complementary land-use activities across board.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

C. Scope of Work and Key Tasks

The MTR team will consist of two independent consultants that will conduct the MTR - one team leader (with experience and exposure to projects and evaluations in other regions globally) and one local team expert with experience in Swaziland.

The MTR team will first conduct a document review of project documents (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, Project Document, ESSP, Project Inception Report, PIRs, Finalized GEF focal area Tracking Tools, Project Appraisal Committee meeting minutes, Financial and Administration guidelines used by Project Team, project operational guidelines, manuals and systems, etc.) provided by the Project Team and Commissioning Unit. Then they will participate in a MTR inception workshop to clarify their understanding of the objectives and methods of the MTR, producing the MTR inception report thereafter. The MTR mission will then consist of interviews and site visits to selected areas in the Project areas including Mkhaya Cluster, Lubombo Cluster, Malolotja cluster and Ngwempisi Cluster.

The MTR team will assess the following four categories of project progress and produce a draft and final MTR report. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* (http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/mid-term/Guidance_Midterm%20Review%20_EN_2014.pdf) for requirements on ratings. No overall rating is required.

1. Project Strategy

Project Design:

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.
- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results.
- Review how the project addresses country priorities
- Review decision-making processes

Results Framework/Logframe:

- Undertake a critical analysis of the project’s logframe indicators and targets, assess how “SMART” the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary.
- Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women’s empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.

2. Progress Towards Results

- Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets; populate the Progress Towards Results Matrix, as described in the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*; colour code progress in a “traffic light system” based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for the project objective and each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as “not on target to be achieved” (red).
- Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review.
- Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective.
- By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.

3. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Using the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*; assess the following categories of project progress:

- Management Arrangements
- Work Planning
- Finance and co-finance
- Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Reporting
- Communications

4. Sustainability

Assess overall risks to sustainability factors of the project in terms of the following four categories:

- Financial risks to sustainability
- Socio-economic risks to sustainability
- Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability
- Environmental risks to sustainability

The MTR consultant/team will include a section in the MTR report setting out the MTR’s evidence-based **conclusions**, in light of the findings.

Additionally, the MTR consultant/team is expected to make **recommendations** to the Project Team. Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. A recommendation table should be put in the report's executive summary. The MTR consultant/team should make no more than 15 recommendations total.

D. Expected Outputs and Deliverables

The MTR consultant/team shall prepare and submit:

- MTR Inception Report: MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of the Midterm Review no later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission. To be sent to the Commissioning Unit and project management. Approximate due date: (26 March 2018)
- Presentation: Initial Findings presented to project management and the Commissioning Unit at the end of the MTR mission. Approximate due date: (30 April 2018)
- Draft Final Report: Full report with annexes within 3 weeks of the MTR mission. Approximate due date: (18 May 2018).
- Final Report*: Revised report with annexed audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report. To be sent to the Commissioning Unit within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft. Approximate due date: 25 May 2018)

*The final MTR report must be in English. If applicable, the Commissioning Unit may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into a language more widely shared by national stakeholders.

E. Institutional Arrangement

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's MTR is the UNDP Swaziland Country Office (CO) with the support of the SNPAS PMU. The CO will contract the team of two (2) consultants, one international and one national. The lead will be the International consultant and the Local counterpart will make inputs to the deliverables as guided by the International Consultant.

The Commissioning Unit will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the MTR team. The Project Team/PMU will be responsible for liaising with the MTR team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits/Travel arrangement.

F. Duration of the Work

The total duration of the MTR will be approximately (*30 of days*) over a period of (*12 weeks*) starting (*09 March 2018*), and shall not exceed five months from when the consultant(s) are hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

- (*02 March 2018*): Application closes
- (*06 March 2018*): Selection of MTR Team
- (*09 March 2018*): Prep the MTR Team (handover of project documents)
- *04 days*: Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report
- *26 March 2018* : Finalization and Validation of MTR Inception Report- latest start of MTR mission
- *09 -27 April 2018*: MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits
- (*30 April 2018*): Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of MTR mission
- *10 days*: Preparing draft report

- *5 days*: Incorporating audit trail on draft report/Finalization of MTR report (note: accommodate time delay in dates for circulation and review of the draft report)
- *(25 May 2018)*: Preparation & Issue of Management Response
- *(31 May 2018)*: Expected date of full MTR completion

The date start of contract is (09 March 2017).

G. Duty Station

The Consultants Duty Station shall be the SNTC/ SNPAS offices at Lobamba for the contract duration. Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR. Additionally, the MTR team is expected to conduct field missions to project sites covering the Malolotja Cluster, Lubombo Cluster, Ngwempisi Cluster and Mkhaya Cluster.

Travel:

- No international travel is required for the local consultant during the MTR mission;

REQUIRED SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

H. Qualifications of the Successful Applicants

The selection of consultants will be aimed at maximizing the overall “team” qualities in the following areas:

- Specialist technical knowledge in the field of biodiversity conservation and ecosystems Management in particular protected area system strengthening in relation to 2030 agenda. (10%)
- Recent experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies (15%);
- Experience applying SMART indicators, targets and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios (10%);
- Experience working with the GEF or GEF-evaluations (15%);
- Experience working in the SADC region and working experience in Swaziland is desirable (5%);
- Work experience for at least 10 years in fields related to Environment, Biodiversity, Ecosystems or related fields (15%),
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and Biodiversity; experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis (10%);
- Excellent communication skills (5%);
- Demonstrable analytical skills (5%);
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset;
- A Master’s degree in Sustainable development, Environmental Science, Natural Resources Management or other closely related field (10%).

Consultant Independence:

The consultants cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project’s related activities.

APPLICATION PROCESS

I. Scope of Price Proposal and Schedule of Payments

Financial Proposal:

- Financial proposals must be “all inclusive” and expressed in a lump-sum for the total duration of the contract. The term “all inclusive” implies all cost (professional fees, travel costs, living allowances etc.);
- The lump sum is fixed regardless of changes in the cost components.

Schedule of Payments:

10% of payment upon approval of the MTR Inception Report

30% upon submission of the draft MTR Report

60% upon finalization of the MTR Report

Or, as otherwise agreed between the Commissioning Unit and the MTR team.

J. Recommended Presentation of Offer

- a) **Personal CV**, indicating all past experience from similar projects, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the Candidate and at least three (3) professional references;
- b) **Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)
- c) **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price, supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template provided. If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP. See Letter of Confirmation of Interest template for financial proposal template.

Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

K. Criteria for Selection of the Best Offer

The award of the contract will be made to the Individual Consultant who has obtained the highest Combined Score and has accepted UNDP’s General Terms and Conditions. Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. The offers will be evaluated using the “Combined Scoring method” where:

- a) The educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted a max. of 70%;
- b) The price proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring.

L. Annexes to the MTR ToR

Include *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* and other existing literature or documents that will help candidates gain a better understanding of the project situation and the work required.

Possible annexes include: (reference ToR Annexes in Annex 3 of *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*)

- List of documents to be reviewed by the MTR Team
- Guidelines on Contents for the Midterm Review Report

- UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Midterm Review Consultants
- MTR Required Ratings Table and Ratings Scales
- MTR Report Clearance Form
- Sample MTR Evaluative Matrix
- Progress Towards Results Matrix and MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Tables (in Word)

ToR ANNEX B: Guidelines on Contents for the Midterm Review Report¹

- i. Basic Report Information (*for opening page or title page*)
 - Title of UNDP supported GEF financed project
 - UNDP PIMS# and GEF project ID#
 - MTR time frame and date of MTR report
 - Region and countries included in the project
 - GEF Operational Focal Area/Strategic Program
 - Executing Agency/Implementing Partner and other project partners
 - MTR team members
 - Acknowledgements
- ii. Table of Contents
- iii. Acronyms and Abbreviations
1. Executive Summary (*3-5 pages*)
 - Project Information Table
 - Project Description (brief)
 - Project Progress Summary (between 200-500 words)
 - MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table
 - Concise summary of conclusions
 - Recommendation Summary Table
2. Introduction (*2-3 pages*)
 - Purpose of the MTR and objectives
 - Scope & Methodology: principles of design and execution of the MTR, MTR approach and data collection methods, limitations to the MTR
 - Structure of the MTR report
3. Project Description and Background Context (*3-5 pages*)
 - Development context: environmental, socio-economic, institutional, and policy factors relevant to the project objective and scope
 - Problems that the project sought to address: threats and barriers targeted
 - Project Description and Strategy: objective, outcomes and expected results, description of field sites (if any)
 - Project Implementation Arrangements: short description of the Project Board, key implementing partner arrangements, etc.
 - Project timing and milestones
 - Main stakeholders: summary list
4. Findings (*12-14 pages*)
 - 4.1 Project Strategy
 - Project Design
 - Results Framework/Logframe
 - 4.2 Progress Towards Results
 - Progress towards outcomes analysis

¹ The Report length should not exceed **40** pages in total (not including annexes).

- Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective
- 4.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management
- Management Arrangements
 - Work planning
 - Finance and co-finance
 - Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems
 - Stakeholder engagement
 - Reporting
 - Communications
- 4.4 Sustainability
- Financial risks to sustainability
 - Socio-economic to sustainability
 - Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability
 - Environmental risks to sustainability
5. Conclusions and Recommendations (4-6 pages)
- 5.1 Conclusions
- Comprehensive and balanced statements (that are evidence-based and connected to the MTR's findings) which highlight the strengths, weaknesses and results of the project
- 5.2 Recommendations
- Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project
 - Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project
 - Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives
6. Annexes
- MTR ToR (excluding ToR annexes)
 - MTR evaluative matrix (evaluation criteria with key questions, indicators, sources of data, and methodology)
 - Example Questionnaire or Interview Guide used for data collection
 - Ratings Scales
 - MTR mission itinerary
 - List of persons interviewed
 - List of documents reviewed
 - Co-financing table (if not previously included in the body of the report)
 - Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form
 - Signed MTR final report clearance form
 - *Annexed in a separate file:* Audit trail from received comments on draft MTR report
 - *Annexed in a separate file:* Relevant midterm tracking tools (*METT, FSC, Capacity scorecard, etc.*)

ToR ANNEX C: Midterm Review Evaluative Matrix Template

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Project Strategy: To what extent is the project strategy relevant to country priorities, country ownership, and the best route towards expected results?			
(include evaluative question(s))	(i.e. relationships established, level of coherence between project design and implementation approach, specific activities conducted, quality of risk mitigation strategies, etc.)	(i.e. project documents, national policies or strategies, websites, project staff, project partners, data collected throughout the MTR mission, etc.)	(i.e. document analysis, data analysis, interviews with project staff, interviews with stakeholders, etc.)

Progress Towards Results: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved thus far?			
Project Implementation and Adaptive Management: Has the project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively, and been able to adapt to any changing conditions thus far? To what extent are project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting, and project communications supporting the project's implementation?			
Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?			

Evaluators/Consultants:

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

MTR Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of Consultant: _____

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): _____

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

Signed at _____ (*Place*) on _____ (*Date*)

Signature: _____

² www.undp.org/uneqcodeofconduct

ToR ANNEX E: MTR Ratings

Ratings for Progress Towards Results: (one rating for each outcome and for the objective)		
6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve or exceed all its end-of-project targets, without major shortcomings. The progress towards the objective/outcome can be presented as “good practice”.
5	Satisfactory (S)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, with only minor shortcomings.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets but with significant shortcomings.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve its end-of-project targets with major shortcomings.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	The objective/outcome is expected not to achieve most of its end-of-project targets.
1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective/outcome has failed to achieve its midterm targets, and is not expected to achieve any of its end-of-project targets.

Ratings for Project Implementation & Adaptive Management: (one overall rating)		
6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. The project can be presented as “good practice”.
5	Satisfactory (S)	Implementation of most of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only few that are subject to remedial action.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Implementation of some of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, with some components requiring remedial action.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Implementation of some of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive, with most components requiring remedial action.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	Implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.
1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.

Ratings for Sustainability: (one overall rating)		
4	Likely (L)	Negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes on track to be achieved by the project’s closure and expected to continue into the foreseeable future
3	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on outcomes at the Midterm Review
2	Moderately Unlikely (MU)	Significant risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on
1	Unlikely (U)	Severe risks that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained

ToR ANNEX F: MTR Report Clearance Form

(to be completed by the Commissioning Unit and UNDP-GEF RTA and included in the final document)

Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:

Commissioning Unit

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ToR ANNEX G: Audit Trail Template

Note: The following is a template for the MTR Team to show how the received comments on the draft MTR report have (or have not) been incorporated into the final MTR report. This audit trail should be included as an annex in the final MTR report.

To the comments received on (*date*) from the Midterm Review of (*project name*) (UNDP Project ID-*PIMS #*)

The following comments were provided in track changes to the draft Midterm Review report; they are referenced by institution (“Author” column) and track change comment number (“#” column):

Author	#	Para No./ comment location	Comment/Feedback on the draft MTR report	MTR team response and actions taken