



ADVANCING IWRM ACROSS THE KURA RIVER BASIN

MID-TERM REVIEW REPORT

by

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

APR/PIR	Annual Project Review/Project Implementation Report
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
EUWI	EU Water Initiative
ESI	Environmental Status Indicator
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IRH	Istanbul Regional Hub, UNDP
IWRM	Integrated Water Resource Management
IW:LEARN	International Waters Learning, Exchange and Resource Network
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NEA	National Environment Agency (Georgia)
PAP	Pollution Abatement Plans
PI	Process Indicator
PIF	Project Inception Form
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RBMO	River Basin Management Organizations
SAP	Strategic Action Program
SEIS	Shared Environmental Information System
SRI	Stress Reduction Indicator
TDA	Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The consultant would like to acknowledge the cooperation, help and advice provided by the project implementation teams and other people connected with the Kura II project in Azerbaijan and Georgia. Particularly he would like to thank them heartfully for the provision of assistance in terms of the project-related documentation, logistical support for the evaluation mission, as well as candid answers to the questions and discussion points raised during the interviews that contributed to successful completion of the Mid-Term Review.

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Executive Summary

Project Information Table

Project Title	Kura II: Advancing IWRM across the Kura river basin through implementation of the transboundary agreed actions and national plans		
UNDP Project ID (PIMS #):	5325	PIF Approval Date:	4 September 2014
GEF Project ID (PMIS #):	6962	CEO Endorsement Date:	17 June 2016
Country(ies):	Azerbaijan, Georgia	ProDoc Signature Date:	
Region:	CEE	Date project manager hired:	1 November 2016
Focal Area:	International Waters	Inception Workshop date:	6-7 April 2017
GEF Focal Area Strategic Objective:	GEF-6 Objective 2	Midterm Review Date:	June – August 2019
Trust Fund:	GEF TF	Planned closing date:	30/06/2020
Executing Agency/ Implementing Partner	UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub		
Other execution partners:			
Project Financing	<i>at CEO endorsement (US\$)</i>	<i>at Midterm Review (US\$)¹</i>	
[1] GEF financing:	5,329,452	2,265,455.17	
[2] UNDP contribution:	3,261,670	3,261,670.00	
[3] Government:	1,540,000	-	
[4] Other partners:	190,080,000	133,210,000	
[5] Total co-financing [2 + 3 + 4]:	194,881,670	136,471,670	
PROJECT TOTAL COSTS [1 + 5]	200,211,122	138,737,125	

Project Description

This report presents the findings of the Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNDP/GEF project ” Kura II: Advancing IWRM across the Kura river basin through implementation of the transboundary agreed actions and national plans” also known as the Kura II Project.

The Kura II Project is a continuation of the cooperation between the governments of Azerbaijan and Georgia in water resources management of the Kura River with the support of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The Kura II Project addresses the priority needs for implementation of the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) that had been endorsed by the two governments under the previous phase Kura I.

The project is composed of five interlinked components as follows:

Component 1 was designed to enhance the framework for the implementation of IWRM, by supporting the harmonization of legal, institutional and regulatory protocols within and between countries for more effective governance of the shared river system and its water resources for strengthened water/food/energy/environmental security in line with pending bilateral agreement under negotiation on Cooperation in the Field of Protection and Sustainable Use of the Water Resources of the Kura River Basin.

¹ Information from the government and other partners not provided

Component 2 aims at strengthening the capacity of the institutions responsible for implementing IWRM in the sub-basins, the countries, and at the transboundary level across sectors. This will support the long-term implementation of the bilateral agreement and seek to support harmonization in approaches across sectors and between countries for more effective sustainable development and improved water/food/energy/environmental security.

Component 3 showcases demonstrations through small scale projects to reduce stressors on water, with the intention to upscale these and attract investments in larger-scale solutions to address the challenges of ecosystem degradation for transboundary benefits.

Component 4 is based on activities to empower stakeholder to play an active and innovative role in IWRM implementation from a wide range of perspectives. By building awareness of the challenges, and turning to stakeholders for possible solutions, ownership of these solutions will be enhanced, and the potential for low cost initiatives leading to sustainable results increased.

Component 5 has the aim to strengthen monitoring, data assessment and analysis systems in support of improved decision making, and increased exchange of comparable information and analyses between sectors and countries for improved and harmonized water resources management. This will increase applied water/food/energy/ecosystem security and climate change adaptation including conjunctive uses by increasing the empirical understanding of necessary decisions to be made to realize the shared benefits of cross sectoral coordination.

Project Progress Summary

Overall, the Kura II Project has built on the solid foundations laid by the predecessor Kura I Project and has been instrumental in advancing cooperation and collaboration between the two countries in the field of water resources management in the Kura river basin. The two countries currently exchange data on water levels and flows at key points along the river. Through harmonization of IWRM governance protocols and monitoring procedures, they enhance compatibility and comparability of the monitoring data for the shared water quality indicators and through communication of findings and sharing of results enhance transparency of the data collection and build mutual trust in the monitoring results. All these create grounds necessary for improved transboundary water management in the Kura river basin.

On the governance level, the project has provided a guidance for long-term monitoring according to the EU WFD river ecological status criteria and developed an alternative and simplified methodology for hydrological monitoring in the river basin. It also provided recommendations for use of results of the ecological monitoring in environmental flow calculations, including combination of newly collected information with previously accumulated biomonitoring data. Furthermore, the project set the stage for flood risk mapping and development of instruments and mechanisms for reduction of the risks of losses due to floods and for water flow allocation and regulation between sectors.

The project has initiated discussions on shared water quality indicators and water quantity management, developed a structure of a Water Council and presented it to the focal point ministries in both countries. The structure will enable the water management institutions to

continue information sharing and cooperation after the finalization of the project. In a semi-formal manner. Although the national and regional harmonization of the integrated water resources management is on track, realization of plans for institutionalization of intersectoral coordination between two countries have not yet started due to unsure levels of political will in both countries.

In the field of the capacity building of water professionals, the project has substantially progressed with assistance to the countries to meet the standards required by the EU WFD. Following the capacity building plan developed by the project, remarkable numbers of beneficiaries and stakeholders have participated in trainings organized in a modular format to address the needs of different groups of water resource professionals from the two countries and bring them to the same level of understanding of issues, key concepts and the fundamental terminology in hydrological modelling, river basin ecology, water resources economics, laboratory quality management, water-energy-food nexus and gender mainstreaming in IWRM. All trainings have been recorded with the aim to develop online training materials in national languages.

The project has duly executed its firm commitment to education of a wide range of stakeholders, stretching from state and private sectors to community actors and aims at integrating best practices in stakeholder engagement in water management with on-the-ground realities in the Kura river basin. Based on a dedicated Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, the project combines theoretical insights in transboundary river basin management with practical cases and empirical knowledge of the specific conditions in the Kura basin.

Through the educational toolkit Kura Box, the project has reached out to the population at large as ultimate beneficiaries of this intervention. It also fostered engagement and empowerment of academic stakeholders across the Kura river basin by bringing them together, building their capacities in water management and facilitating sustainable information exchange. More recently, the project has started engagement with hotels as one of the main water-consuming industries in the region. Good cooperation has been established with the Georgia Tourism Awards and the Azerbaijan Hotels Association.

The specific component with pilot demonstration projects augments the technical and capacity building activities with an important additional dimension. In implementation of this component, the project team faced a variety of challenges that resulted in substantial delays in relation to the original implementation plan, including complicated procurement procedures, changes and restructuring of the key participating ministries, and unresolved issues of land ownership. Although it is likely that the demonstration pilots will be operational by the original project completion date, suboptimal amount of information will be collected on experience from the operation that are necessary to produce recommendations for scaling up and replication of the pilots.

The established managerial arrangements and frequency of the project governance body's meetings are adequate for the size and level of complexity of the project and has been functioning well since the inception phase of the Project. The establishment and frequency of meetings of the various advisory and working groups show strong commitment and ownership of the project by the key stakeholders in the two countries.

The current financial controls for the project are sufficient and the project finances have been managed well. As of 30 June 2019, the total disbursement of the GEF funds amounted to US\$ 2,265,455.17 that gives the rate of implementation 42.51%. The remaining balance of US\$ 3,063,996.83 represents a substantial budget available for the remaining implementation period of the project. The financial data clearly highlight the need to significantly increase the rate of implementation during the final period of the project. However, the co-financing information from the parallel projects and from the national governments has been somewhat difficult to obtain and the absence of the periodic co-financing data collection requires immediate attention of the PCU.

Internal communication within the project implementing team has been commendable as the Project Manager has maintained regular and effective communication channels and has demonstrated strong leadership towards key personnel from the PCU. However, the situation is different with respect to external communication and reporting. A more targeted external communication would be desirable to ensure that the key stakeholders receive regular overview as well as specific information about the project's activities and ensure thus that the project achieves its full potential for producing impacts at national as well as regional level.

The main issue for sustainability of the project is whether the two countries sign the bilateral agreement and establish the Joint Commission for the Kura River basin by the end of the project. The evaluator has no doubt that a majority of planned results will be achieved by the project closure. However, whether the outcomes and outputs will carry on after the project closure is fundamentally tied to the fate of the draft bilateral agreement that has been negotiated by the two countries.

The table below shows summary of MTR ratings and achievement.

Measure	MTR Rating²	Achievement Description³
Progress	Project Objective Rating: N.A.	Indicators for project objective not defined in the project results framework

MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary

² MTR rating scores are explained in Annex 6

³ Details on the achievement are given in the respective sections Progress towards results, Project implementation and Adaptive management and Sustainability

Towards Results	Outcome 1 Rating: 6 (HS)	The work on harmonization protocols on environmental flow, water flow management as well as on pollution abatement and intersectoral water policy coordination in progress and on track to achieve end-of-project targets by the original closing date of the project
	Outcome 2 Rating: 6 (HS)	The work on capacity building of IWRM professionals and national institutions to implement river basin management plans, enforcement of regulations and information and data management in progress and expected to achieve the end-of-project targets by the planned closing date of the project
	Outcome 3 Rating: 4 (MS)	The work on demonstration of technologies for water conservation in urban and agricultural settings, on pre-feasibility of pollution abatement plans and on selected river restoration project in progress and expected to be completed by the end of the planned closing date of the project. However, two of the three sub-components delayed and will not achieve the end-of-project targets in terms of data collection on operation and lessons learned for upscaling by the end of the planned closing date of the project
	Outcome 4 Rating: 6 (HS)	The work on targeted education and involvement of a range of stakeholders from academia, civic society and private sector in progress and on track to achieve the end-of-project targets by the original closing date of the project
	Outcome 5 Rating: 6 (HS)	The work on assessment of groundwater and surface water assessment, on economic/social benefits of water use, on staged river ecological assessment and on data and information exchange in progress and on track to achieve the end-of-project targets by the original closing date of the project
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	Rating: 5 (S)	Management arrangements, project formulation and implementation and stakeholder involvement rated Highly Satisfactory (HS), finance/co-finance, monitoring and evaluation as well as work planning are rated Satisfactory (S), and reporting and communication is rated Moderately Satisfactory (MS)
Sustainability	Rating. 4 (L) /3(ML)	Sustainability of the project deeply tied with the ability of the participating countries to sign the bilateral agreement and establish the Joint Commission for the Kura river basin

Conclusions

Conclusion 1: Due to the nature and complexity of procurement of construction works and maintenance services for the constructed wetlands under Output 3.3 the completion of the output could drag out towards the end of the project implementation period.

***Recommendation 1:** The project team in cooperation with the Procurement Unit in UNDP IRH should accelerate implementation of procurement of the works and services for Output 3.3 and closely monitor the performance of the local contractors in Azerbaijan and Georgia to ensure all deliverables under this output are realized by the end of the 1st quarter 2020.*

Conclusion 2: Due to the delays in operationalization of the demo pilots, it will not be possible to collect more than 9 months of data for these demonstrations within the current timeline of the project. This means that not enough information will be collected on experience from the operation of the demonstration pilots for formulation of recommendations for scaling up and replication.

***Recommendation 2:** UNDP IRH on behalf of the Governments of Azerbaijan and Georgia should submit to the GEF Secretariat a request for a non-cost extension of the project by 6 months until February 2021 to ensure sufficient time for the collection of data and experience from the demonstration pilots. Based on the project funds disbursement to date, it is reasonable to assume that there will be sufficient financial resources to continue the project until the extended completion date.*

Conclusion 3: Absence of the signed bilateral agreement and the Joint Commission for the Kura river basin at the project closure would place at risk the countries' commitments for transboundary cooperation expressed in the SAP that had been developed and signed under the Kura I phase. It is desirable to consider alternative solutions for continued regional cooperation.

***Recommendation 3:** The project team in cooperation with the focal point ministries in Azerbaijan and Georgia should elaborate an exit strategy to be pursued in case the two countries fail to institutionalize the cooperation at the regional level by the end of the current project. The strategy should be presented to the final meeting of the Project Steering Committee and should consider short-term options such as operationalization of temporary regional structures and longer-term options such as preparation of another project under GEF-7 or GEF-8 funding cycles.*

Conclusion 4: It is allowed that mid-term evaluations propose changes to the logical framework and reformulation of indicators and their target values. Based on the actual situation of implementation, a revision of the indicators and targets would be a reasonable action to optimize the results framework and make the indicators more relevant for measurement of the outputs.

Recommendation 4: *The project team should undertake a specific revision of the project results framework to ensure consistency of the indicators and target values with the outputs they are supposed to measure.*

Conclusion 5: Lack of effective and timely provision of the implementation details to the key national stakeholders is not contributing to the transparency of the process and could pose risk to the level of ownership of the project results by the two governments.

Recommendation 5: *The project team should provide the progress and financial reports at least three weeks before the PSC meetings in English as well as in the two national languages.*

Conclusion 6: Better exchange of information about the results of the training component would enable the stakeholders to consider a more targeted involvement of the trainees in other activities and thus enhance sustainability of the capacity building component of this project.

Recommendation 6: *The PCU should immediately share information about the national experts that participated in the project and/or were trained with the key national stakeholders and the UNDP COs and ensure that training materials are available on-line as soon as possible after completion of each training.*

Conclusion 7: The technical reports produced by international and national experts are of a good quality but so far have limited audience since they have been used by the PCU.

Recommendation 7: *The PCU should ensure that important technical reports by international consultants are translated into local languages and together with technical reports by national experts are accessible by a wider audience, including the two UNDP COs, to ensure better uptake by relevant national stakeholders*

Conclusion 8: More effort should be placed at collecting the co-financing information as the project progresses to find out the level of actual contributions that have direct linkages to the project (such as EUWI+ project). Although the absence of the actual co-financing data does not appear to have a direct negative impact on project implementation and progress towards results, insufficient collection of the co-financing data will pose a challenge later on for the terminal evaluation of the project.

Recommendation 8: *PCU should obtain annual updates of the actual level of co-financing from parallel projects and ensure that updated information on realized co-financing is available before the start of the terminal evaluation of this project.*

Conclusion 9: Cooperation with the GCF project on local-level flood hazard mapping and vulnerability assessment can further improve the developed forecasting and early warning systems, the promoted climate-informed water management policies and the demonstrated community adaptation actions in the Kura river basin.

Recommendation 9: *The PCU in cooperation with the key national stakeholders in Georgia should establish a close cooperation with the UNDP CO that is the implementing agency of the GCF project in Georgia.*

Conclusion 10: The procurement of goods and national expert services by IRH was not conducive to the project implementation as procurement of national goods and services is optimally conducted at the national level.

Recommendation 10: *UNDP IRH together with the UNDP COs in Azerbaijan and Georgia should streamline the procurement procedures for the remainder of the project by delegating national procurement of goods and services to the UNDP COs.*

Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the UNDP/GEF project “*Kura II: Advancing IWRM across the Kura river basin through implementation of the transboundary agreed actions and national plans*” also known as the Kura II Project.

Purpose of the MTR and Objectives

As outlined in the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, Mid-Term Evaluations (also known as Mid-Term Reviews) are a mandatory requirement for all GEF-financed full-sized projects and constitute an important part of the GEF projects’ monitoring and evaluation plan. MTRs are primarily a monitoring tool to identify challenges and outline corrective actions to ensure that a project is on track to achieve maximum results by its completion. In order to fulfil the above purpose, MTRs are conducted in order to assess the projects’ progress towards results, implementation and adaptive management for improvement of outcomes, facilitate early identification of risks to sustainability and provide supportive recommendations.

The objective of MTR is to provide the project partners i.e. GEF, UNDP and the Governments of Azerbaijan and Georgia, with an independent assessment of progress towards achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document. MTR also provides independent assessment of early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. Last but not least, MTR also reviews the project’s strategy and its risks to sustainability.

As a standard requirement for all projects financed by GEF, this MTR has been initiated by the project Implementing Agency, in this case UNDP. The evaluation has been conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects.

Scope and Methodology

The evaluation will cover all activities undertaken in the framework of the project. The time scope of the evaluation is the implementation period of the project from January 2017 up to July 2019. The geographic scope of the evaluation is the Kura river basin in Azerbaijan and Georgia.

The evaluation has been carried out using a participatory approach that seeks to inform and consult with key stakeholders associated with the project using the primary evaluation criteria for GEF MTRs listed in the Terms of Reference for the evaluation, i.e. Project Strategy, Progress towards Results, Project Implementation & Adaptive Management, and Sustainability.

Below is presented a summary of the following elements that have been covered in the evaluation, based on the Evaluation Terms of Reference (TOR):

Project Strategy

- Project design

- Results framework/logframe

Progress Towards Results

- Progress towards outcomes analysis
- Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective

Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

- Management arrangements
- Work planning
- Finance and co-finance
- Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems
- Stakeholder engagement
- Reporting and communications

Sustainability

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

TOR for the mid-term review is provided as Annex 1.

MTR Approach and Data Collection Methods

The evaluation used the following evaluation instruments:

Evaluation Matrix: An evaluation matrix was constructed based on the evaluation scope presented in the TOR. The matrix is structured along the four GEF evaluation criteria for MTRs and includes principal evaluation questions. The matrix provided overall direction for the evaluation and was used as a basis for interviewing stakeholders and reviewing project documents. The Evaluation Matrix is provided as Annex 2.

Documentation Review: The evaluator conducted a review of documents that were made available by the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) as well as other documents found from various other sources. The documents served as the main source of information and for preparation for the evaluation field missions to Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Mission Agenda: After the initial review of available documents, the evaluator and PCU drafted an agenda for the evaluation missions that included key national project stakeholder institutions to be visited and interviewed by the evaluator during the mission. The interviews were planned in advance of the mission with the objective to obtain a scan of stakeholders' views during the time allocated to the mission. The agenda of the evaluation mission is presented as Annex 3.

Interviews: The evaluator conducted a number of face-to-face consultations with the key project stakeholders using semi-structured interview questions. Through the interviews, the consultant obtained information about the key informants' impressions and experiences from implementation of the project. Triangulation of results, i.e. comparing information from different sources, such as documentation and interviews, or interviews on the same subject with different stakeholders, was used to corroborate or check the reliability of evidence. The list of people interviewed is provided as Annex 4.

Project Site Visits: These visits included project sites as well as offices of key actors in the field, namely sites of the future constructed wetland in Shirvan town, Azerbaijan and in Khashuri community Georgia, as well as sites of the drip irrigation demonstration projects in Saatly, Azerbaijan, and in Ruisi, Georgia, in order to make on-site observations and obtain feedback to the problems addressed by the project.

Evaluation Report: After the data collection phase with conducting interviews, observing selected outputs and reviewing data from existing data sources, data analysis followed as the final phase of the evaluation. Data analysis involved organizing and classifying the information collected, tabulating it, summarizing it, and comparing the results with other appropriate information to extract useful information that responds to the evaluation questions and fulfils the purposes of the evaluation. In this process the evaluator took care of checking factual evidence ensuring its accuracy and translating the data into usable formats or units of analysis related to the evaluation questions. The list of documents consulted is provided as Annex 5.

Structure of the Evaluation Report

This report closely follows the structure of the evaluation report outlined in the Terms of Reference that was prepared by UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub as the commissioning unit for this evaluation.

The first part of the report describes the project background and summarizes factual information that was assembled during the initial data collection phase. The second part contains information that was collected through consultations with the key stakeholders before, during and eventually also after the evaluation mission. The third part provides evidence-based conclusions connected to the findings from the second part and recommendations in the form of corrective actions for the design, implementation, management arrangements as well as for monitoring and evaluation of the project.

Constraints and Limitations

The findings and conclusions contained in this report are based primarily on a thorough desk review of documents that were made available to the evaluator, one-week missions to Azerbaijan and Georgia, as well as follow-up exchanges by email. During the evaluation missions, the evaluator interviewed representatives of the key stakeholders in the capital cities and selected field sites in the two beneficiary countries. However, due to the complexity of the geographical scope of the project, evaluator could not visit all project sites during the one-week field missions.

The MTR consultant was able to conduct a detailed assessment of progress towards the expected results. Since time has been limited for this review and the project has delivered many and varied outputs, only a review of sample documents and reports by the MTR consultant was possible. However, the evaluator believes that those inspected have been representative of the outputs as a whole.

Project Description and Background Context

Development Context

Kura is a river with 1515 km length taking its source from height in eastern part of Turkey and flowing to Caspian Sea crossing through Georgia and Azerbaijan.

The Kura River Basin is the main transboundary water system in the geopolitically challenging region of the South Caucasus. The beneficiary countries of the Project, Azerbaijan and Georgia, have undergone significant political and economic transition since the end of the Soviet Era and are now developing rapidly across a wide range of sectors. Together Azerbaijan and Georgia cover 94,760 square km and represent 88% of the Kura basin. The Kura is the main river in the eastern half of Georgia and its basin comprises 49.6% of the total Georgian territory. Over 69% of the surface area of Azerbaijan is in the Kura river basin including the Kura delta as it flows into the Caspian. The two countries have demonstrated strong commitment to cooperate towards transboundary integrated water resources management.

Under the earlier project “Reducing Transboundary Degradation in the Kura Aras River Basin” (2011-2014), the beneficiary countries developed a transboundary Strategic Action Plan (SAP) that was formally endorsed by the Governments of Azerbaijan and Georgia in June 2014. The SAP actions derive from the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) recommendations as well as locally led national Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) Plans for Azerbaijan and Georgia. The national priorities in these plans are directly linked to the transboundary SAP. Implementation of the SAP leads to basin-wide harmonized efforts in integrated water resource management.

Recently both Azerbaijan and Georgia have indicated their commitment to modernize water management with harmonized approaches and shared information exchange in line with the EU Water Framework Directive (EU WFD). Together they seek to address the priority transboundary concerns of the TDA: changes in hydrological flows, deterioration of water quality, ecosystem degradation and flooding due to climate change. All of these are exacerbated by impacts of climate change. Currently a bilateral agreement in line with the UNECE Helsinki Convention is under negotiation to further support cooperation of management for shared water resources. Key stakeholders from all sectors in both countries are aware that outdated approaches and uncoordinated water management will have negative impacts on both economic and human development at the national and regional levels. They seek to avoid these negative externalities by implementing National IWRM Plans, the EU Association Agreement in Georgia and EU legislative approximation in line with the Presidential mandate in Azerbaijan. This includes developing intersectoral coordination protocols implementing the Strategic Action Plan that addresses these priority issues at a regional level.

Problems that the project will address

In a transboundary setting of a shared basin, barriers towards effective national and transboundary coordination are exponential. Failure to harmonize efforts at the local, national and transboundary levels will result in increased insecurity across the basin.

In the Project Document, the barriers are listed as follows:

Policy & Regulatory

- Difficulty enforcing existing and planned national and regional regulatory frameworks and legal protocols to protect water resources and the ecosystems upon which they depend;

Institutional

- Insufficient investment in capacity building to meet the specific needs and conditions across the basin and within the countries;
- Lack of ability to prioritize water resource management across the basin, though the allocation of government resources among some states is increasing;
- Low levels of harmonization of plans and approaches, as demonstrated by incompatible water quality standards between countries, resulting in a potential increase in tensions;
- Challenges meeting commitments to the bilateral agreement under negotiation on *Cooperation in the Field of Protection and Sustainable Use of the Water Resources of the Kura River Basin* due to existing challenges to institutional capacities;

Knowledge/informational

- Lack of updated information on surface and groundwater resource availability, including flow and recharge rates, and the impacts of climate change, and its use in the multi-sector development path;
- Lack of coordinated information to support an understanding of ecosystem-based management approaches that include attention to sectoral demands towards improving overall economic conditions;
- Lack of sustained human resources and financial capacity to meet the required commitments of the EU Association Agreement in Georgia and approximation of EU Directives in Azerbaijan; and

Technological

- Lack of application of technologies that can serve multiple benefits in water resource management and reduce costs of irrational water losses, pollution and environmental degradation.

The updated baseline on water resources management clearly identified gaps in both countries that, together with the strong national and regional support for the SAP, provide optimal conditions for implementation of the project.

Project description and strategy

The project strategy is based on the premise that if the above barriers are not adequately addressed, the lack of institutional capacities, legal arrangements, knowledge/information-sharing protocols and access to technologies will continue to remain major obstacles to the effective implementation of national IWRM plans and water management harmonization in line with the agreed and endorsed SAP.

The project is composed of five interlinked components as follows:

Component 1 was designed to enhance the framework for the implementation of IWRM, by supporting the harmonization of legal, institutional and regulatory protocols within and between countries for more effective governance of the shared river system and its water resources for strengthened water/food/energy/environmental security in line with pending bilateral agreement under negotiation on *Cooperation in the Field of Protection and Sustainable Use of the Water Resources of the Kura River Basin*.

Component 2 aims at strengthening the capacity of the institutions responsible for implementing IWRM in the sub-basins, the countries, and at the transboundary level across sectors. This will support the long-term implementation of the bilateral agreement and seek to support harmonization in approaches across sectors and between countries for more effective sustainable development and improved water/food/energy/environmental security.

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Component 5 has the aim to strengthen monitoring, data assessment and analysis systems in support of improved decision making, and increased exchange of comparable information and analyses between sectors and countries for improved and harmonized water resources management. This will increase applied water/food/energy/ecosystem security and climate change adaptation including conjunctive uses by increasing the empirical understanding of necessary decisions to be made to realize the shared benefits of cross sectoral coordination.

Project implementation arrangements

The implementation of the UNDP-GEF Kura II Project is fully undertaken by the UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub (IRH) through the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) as applied for regional projects. The decision to use the DIM approach was taken due to the unique circumstances in the Kura River Basin in which the pending bilateral agreement based on the UNECE Helsinki Convention will result in future projects being executed by the associated Kura River Commission.

The technical oversight support for the project is based in Istanbul with the Regional Technical Advisor for GEF International Waters. In addition to the administrative, financial and technical oversight functions, IRH also provides executive supervision of this project, to ensure that all criteria are met for a UNDP Regional Project. The three oversight functions are separated but centralized to facilitate the full regionalization of the UNDP-GEF Kura II Project. The centralization of Quality Control and Quality Assessment through the IRH provides strong support to this regional project focused on strengthening regional capacity, while building critical transboundary cooperative mechanisms.

The Project Coordinating Unit (PCU), based in Baku, is headed by the Project Chief Technical Advisor and Regional Project Coordinator (CTA/RPC) who is directly accountable to the three functional branches in IRH for day-to-day operations of the project. The PCU reports directly to IRH.

The Project Steering Committee consists of National Focal Points from the Governments, UNDP Country Office Representatives, UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor, UNDP IRH Financial and Administration Representative, and UNDP IRH Executive Representatives. The Project Steering Committee provides annual oversight of and guidance to the project implementation.

In each country, the National Focal Point designated by the beneficiary Ministry chairs a Project Advisory Group (PAG) that functions as a multi-sectoral body within the project to ensure that strong connections are built within and between the water dependent sectors in both Azerbaijan and Georgia. The two PAGs meet regularly and exchange information, experiences, and updates on water specific topics. The National Focal Points in each country provide close guidance and technical advice to the project and coordinate closely with the CTA/RPC to ensure that all project efforts align closely with national priorities of the two countries.

A full matrix of responsibilities for financial and administrative functions is in Annex.....

Project timing and milestones

The Kura II Project was approved for implementation as a full-size GEF regional project on 18 September 2014 for duration of 48 months. The specific timeline of the project is summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 2: Key dates for approval and start-up of the project

Milestone	Date
PIF Approval Date	18 September 2014
CEO Endorsement Date	17 June 2016
Project Document Signature Date (project start date)	August 2016
Project Inception Workshop	6-7 April 2017
Date of the Mid-term Review	June – August 2019
Expected Date of Terminal Evaluation	July 2020
Planned Closing Date	30 June 2020

The GEF project grant approved for the project amounts to US\$ 5,300,000 with total co-financing commitment by National partners in Azerbaijan and Georgia over \$190 million. At

the time of inception, the Kura II project this project had the second highest co-financing contribution in UNDP-GEF International Waters area in its almost 30-year history.

Main project stakeholders

Successful implementation of the Kura II Project can only occur through the involvement and participation of its many stakeholders and project partners. These include, national government agencies across multiple sectors, national and regional private sector companies and associations, civil society groups and non-governmental organizations, and academia.

Both Azerbaijan and Georgia are taking steps to align approaches with the EU Water Framework Directive (EUWFD), including application of Article 14 on Public Participation and Stakeholder Involvement. The Kura II Project also adopts this approach to showcase the application of this method, including the benefits of this approach in the planning and project implementation process.

The EU WFD refers to stakeholders in the following categories that are not mutually exclusive:

Competent Authorities are stakeholders who have professional status that enables them to make decisions, and those who implement decisions on behalf of the government at the national and local levels.

Interested Parties are stakeholders who have an active interest in water management but are not part of the government. This can include the private sector, civil society, academic institutions and other donor projects.

Public is the wider public made up of all those using water within a basin.

Findings

This section brings a summary of empirical facts based on data collected during the evaluation. The MTR team paid particular attention to cross-verification of the evaluative evidence using multiple sources of information and, to the extent possible, avoid overreliance on opinions obtained during the interviews.

Project Strategy

The evaluator conducted an analysis of the design of the project as outlined in the Project Document and assessed whether the project strategy is proving to be effective in reaching the desired results. In doing so, the evaluator judged the extent to which the project addresses country priorities and is country-driven. Furthermore, the evaluator assessed the extent to which the project objectives are consistent with the priorities and objectives of the GEF.

Project Design

The Kura II Project is aligned with several strategic planning documents in the two countries.

The Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2020-2037 regarding integrated water resources management aims at the development of water resources management and water protection as well as water supply and sanitation in Azerbaijan to better meet both international and EU level standards and objectives. The Strategy contains goals which are divided into short-term (6 years), medium-term (6 years) and long-term (6 years) goals. Strategy proposes that the regional administration would be based on the catchment areas.

With signing the EU-Georgia Association Agreement (AA) in 27 June 2014, the Georgian Government has taken a responsibility to harmonize its policies and legislation with that of the European Union, including in the sector of water resources management. Since 2016 the AA has officially entered into force. The AA obliges the Georgian Government to harmonize its legislation in the water sector with six selected European Directives related to water resources management. Moreover, the 2014 EU-Georgia Association Agenda includes water management related priorities for such as preparation for the adoption and implementation of national legislation and designation of competent authorities in the field of water policy and natural resource management, including quality of water intended for human consumption and urban wastewater treatment.

In 2015, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection with support of EU has developed a detailed Road Map on effective implementation of activities envisaged by EU-Georgia AA related to environment and climate. The Road Map covers nine areas, including water quality and water management.

In May 2014, the Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources in Azerbaijan and Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection in Georgia signed the Strategic Action Plan for the Kura River Basin (SAP) that is based on shared nationally priorities and critical needs for improved harmonization for integrated water resources management (IWRM) in the Kura Basin.

Both Azerbaijan and Georgia endorsed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted at the UN Summit in 2015 and expressed the commitment to support mainstreaming of environment, climate change and sustainable developments objectives into all policy areas and enhance cross-sectoral cooperation. The linkage between the SDGs and the Kura II Project is the water-related sustainable development Goal 6 “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”.

The 8th Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” held in Batumi, Georgia in 2016 adopted the Pan-European Strategic Framework for Greening the Economy for Europe that is expected to strengthen the delivery on environmental dimensions of the SDGs. The objectives of the Kura River II Project on advancing integrated water resources management IWRM at the local, national and transboundary levels are fully in line with the Objective 1/Focal Area 3 of the Strategic Framework: *Enhance ecosystems and ecosystem services as part of ecological infrastructure*.

The SAP implementation provides the countries with critical linkages to the GEF-6 International Waters Focal Area key outcomes in Objective 2: *Catalyze investments to balance competing water-uses in the management of transboundary surface and groundwater and to enhance multi-state cooperation*.

Furthermore, the Kura II Project aligns with Programmes 3 and 4 of the GEF-6 IW area. Under Programme 3: *Advance Conjunctive Management of Surface and Groundwater Resources*, the project addresses Outcome 3.1 regarding improved governance of shared water bodies, including conjunctive management of surface and groundwater through regional institutions and frameworks for cooperation. In line with Outcome 3.2 regarding increased management capacity of regional and national institutions to incorporate climate variability and change, this project strengthens national capacities to implement IWRM plans and cross-sectoral initiatives through concerted capacity building on environmental flow management, enhanced capacity for enforcement of laws, and for information management for informed decision making.

Under Programme 4: *Implementation of the Water/Food/Energy/Ecosystem Security Nexus*, the project addresses Outcome 4.1 regarding increased water/food/energy/ecosystem security, the project addresses improved water efficiency in different sectors that in order to increase the overall amount of water available, as well as providing a mechanism to improve ecosystem security through improved ecosystem health with improved water quality.

The Kura II project is also in line with the UNDP programmatic priorities in the two countries. The fourth programme priority of the UNDP Country Programme Document for Georgia (2016-2020) calls for strengthening of capacities in disaster risk reduction through increased ownership of coordination and capacity-building of national and local institutions, including the adoption of innovative technical solutions and management plans in high-risk areas such as the Kura River basin. The third programmatic priority of the UNDP Country Programme Document for Azerbaijan (2016-2020) demands improved environmental management and resilience to climate-induced hazards, including development of solutions for innovative management of natural resources.

The evaluator concludes that the Kura II Project is fully consistent with the needs and priorities of the two countries as well as with the and with the strategic and programmatic priorities of the donor and implementing agencies.

Results Framework/Logframe

The evaluator performed critical analysis of the Kura II Project results framework in order to establish whether it has the necessary elements and whether it enables measurement of success and progress to success. The original project results framework is provided as Annex 7.

The Project Document states on p. 44 that:

“The Kura II Project consists of five complementary and interlinked components that reflect the project rationale and strategy and are designed to collectively deliver the project development objective: Sustainable integrated water resources management in the Kura River basin using the water-energy-food-ecosystem security nexus through implementation of agreed actions in the SAP.

The above development objective mentioned in the Project Document focuses on connection between water, food, energy and ecosystems. However, the project itself is not likely to lead to many examples of such connections. The original results framework included in the Project Document does not contain the above declared development objective and starts only at the intermediate outcome level. This is a deviation from the common practice that dictates that a results framework is centred on the project goal and development objective, the achievement of which represents the ultimate impact envisioned for a set of project activities. Consequently, the project results framework does not contain indicators for the project development objective and the indicators’ target values that normally serve as a gauge for measurement of progress and achievement at the level of the project development objective.

The results framework is composed of 5 Outcomes and 22 Outputs. For measuring the achievements of the project, the results framework contains indicators and their target values at the level of the Outputs. The indicators together with the targets should facilitate monitoring and eventual conduct of remedial actions during the project implementation as well as enable evaluation of the project in order to determine status of delivery of planned outputs and outcomes and make judgement about progress towards and/or achievement of the project intended results.

As a general observation, the evaluator found the process indicators and targets in the logframe well-designed to facilitate end of the project evaluation but less useful for adaptive management and monitoring of progress on the way towards the project results.

The Kura II project results framework contains several indicators for environmental stress reduction and environmental status. However, the project appears to be mostly process-oriented and hence will not immediately lead to environmental stress reduction or changes of environmental status, at least during the project implementation period. In case of process-oriented outputs, the results framework could contain prerequisite for environmental status indicators, suitable to measure e.g. impact of the output on water management decision

making. Environmental quality and/or stress reduction indicators are purposeless for measurement of achievement of process-related outputs as it is difficult to establish a direct causal relationship between the output and the environmental status and/or stress reduction.

Inappropriate indicators from the original results framework are given in Table 2 below.

Table 2: List of indicators found inappropriate in the original results framework

Output	Original Indicator	Comment
1.1 Updated regulations for environmental flow calculation methodology	Percent change in monthly flow impacts from previous to updated calculation methodology	The output is updated regulations for e-flow methodology hence indicator should be availability of the regulations and the methodology. Change in flow impacts is not indicator for this output.
1.2 Improved protocols water flow management regulatory strategies	Verifiable estimates of water saved from application of regulations on water efficiency	As above, this measures impact of application of the output and not achievement of the output.
1.6 Public Private Partnership to foster sustainable national and regional integrated water resources management through use of green technologies	Amount of economic benefit possible for use of green technology for water use in the short medium and long-term	This indicator does not measure achievement of the output
2.3 Strengthened capacity for enforcement of water resources laws and regulations	Percent change in water quality compliance by parameter Based on output 5.3, notable empirical changes in ecosystems status during extended trainings period	This indicator does not measure achievement of the output This indicator is unclearly formulated and does not have relation to the output
2.4 Strengthened capacity on information management and data analysis for enhanced IWRM decision-making support	Number of intersectoral information exchange linkages formalized at national and transboundary levels at baseline and end of project	This indicator does not measure achievement of the output. Moreover, it would be difficult to measure as there is no reference on the number of linkages prior to the project start.

It is allowed that mid-term evaluations propose changes to the logical framework and reformulation of indicators and their target values. Based on the actual situation of implementation, a revision of the indicators and targets would be a reasonable action to optimize the results framework and make the indicators more relevant for measurement of the outputs.

Progress Towards Results

Progress towards outcomes analysis

The information presented in this section has been sourced from the Annual Progress Reports (APRs) 2017 and 2018 supplemented with information collected during the MTR mission to Azerbaijan and Georgia.

The progress towards the five project outcomes is presented for each outcome in separate Tables 3-7. Main achievements and achievement ratings for each output are listed in the tables. Relevant details are elaborated in the text below each table.

Table 3: Achievements at MTR for Outcome 1

Component 1: Establishment of effective cross sectoral IWRM governance protocols at the local, national and transboundary levels in the Kura Basin Outcome 1: Regional, national and local legal, policy and regulations harmonized within the Kura basin for strengthened IWRM implementation, including environment, agriculture, energy, municipal water and industrial sectors		
Outcomes & Outputs and Indicators⁴	Milestone and Project Targets	
1.1 Updated regulations for environmental flow calculation methodology P.I. 1.1 Calculation methodology for E Flows updated based on available information measured by percent change of standard deviation of flow from historical norm of natural flow from previous approach SRI.1.1 Percent change in monthly flow impacts from previous to updated calculation methodology Pre-ESI 1.1 Agreed status criteria including E Flows across the basin in line with EU WFD by month 42 of project	1.1.1 Plan for increased monitoring and enforcement of environmental flows regulations by month 12 in selected sub-basin based on existing information 1.1.2 Plan for updated environmental flow methodology, including monitoring approach and evaluation criteria accepted by appropriate ministries for trial in sub basin by month 12 based on existing information 1.1.3 Proposed updated methodology adopted in at least 1 sub basin in each country for at least 1 full year started by month 18 to test updated approach 1.1.4 trial methodology in sub basin to conclude by month 36 for review (Linked to Output 3.3) 1.1.5 Ministries will accept the proposed methodology for environmental flow calculations within 4 years, process started by end of project	Alija and A the p Repo progr ecolo Two curre envir 4 out nation
Output 1.2 Improved protocols water flow management regulatory strategies P.I. 1.2.1 Water efficiency included in national and sectoral plans by number of additional references to water efficiency and demand management in laws, regulations and sectoral plans SRI. 1.2.1 Verifiable estimates of water saved from application of regulations on water efficiency P.I. 1.2.2 Percent of basin covered by flood hazard & risk maps Pre-ESI. 1.2 Agreed river system status criteria includes integrated flow management	1.2.1 Develop plans to address gaps in regulatory protocols to encourage efficient water use based on assessments in 5.1, 5.2 and update review of laws, regulations and enforcement mechanisms 1.2.2 Within 12 months national level reports developed on waste water reuse regulation and potential 1.2.3 National level recommendations on updated protocols presented within 42 months of project start up based on output 5.1 and recommendations based on lessons learned 1.2.4 Preparation of flood hazards and risks maps of the Kura Basin by using existing information	Natio effici Secto effici Natio event
1.3 Institutional support for River Basin Management Organization and local authorities PI 1.3.1 Percent change in number of recommendations implemented resulting from approach with RBMO PI 1.3.2 Number of interventions funded by competent authorities and under implementation from RBMPs and Program of Measures	1.3.1 Based on appropriate international best practices, provide methodology of implementing EUWFD at national levels with institutional support to RBMOs 1.3.2 Based on appropriate international best practices review and recommend improvements to institutions to support RBMO/local authorities and intersectoral exchange/ coordination within 18 months 1.3.3 Develop EU WFD implementation guidance materials including information exchange mechanisms as per Output 5.4 within 36 months 1.3.4 Within 42 months strengthen functional and technical capacity of current RBMO at least 2 sub practical recommendations	Two and v Work
1.4 Pollution abatement plans developed with key stakeholders. PI 1.4.1 Constructed PAP/CAPs with abatement and compliance indicators detailed in text	1.4.1 Within 9 months all of point sources identified and included in the cadaster with pollution map for point sources 1.4.2 Conduct pollution source assessment, and determine causes and based on	Natio in ea Draft

⁴ Indicators: PI = Process Indicator, SRI = Stress Reduction Indicator, ESI = Environmental Status Indicator, Pre ESI = Prerequisite for Environmental Status Indicator

Outcomes & Outputs and Indicators ⁴	Milestone and Project Targets	Mid-Term Level & Assessment	Status
PI 1.4.2 Number of sites eligible for PAP/CAP within water quality surveillance monitoring network PI 1.4.3 Number of potential viable financing mechanisms for PAP implementation	this develop water quality surveillance strategy and provide technical assistance on how to make Environmental Compliance Action Plan monitoring network in the Kura River (identification of sampling points) within 18 months 1.4.3 Within 30 months of completion of cadasters for water quality, develop country specific plans for pollution abatement based on BAT and BEP for priority areas 1.4.4 National reports identifying the costs of water quality degradation to national GDP by 24 months and promote financial mechanisms 1.4.5 By 38 months a common report on pollution abatement financing mechanisms for large scale interventions	action plans Reports on green alternatives (cleaner production mechanisms) for pollution abatement	On target to be achieved
1.5 Support to intersectoral water policy coordination and harmonization at the national and transboundary levels PI 1.5.1 Number of sectors represented at national and regional meetings (PI) PI 1.5.2 Pre-and post-workshop and study tour perceptions surveys for participants	1.5.1 Meetings and workshops for intersectoral water team/NWPD members and associates to highlight what each sector is doing, provide trainings/workshops on specific approaches towards harmonization of approaches to water management held 2 times per year in each country and 2 regional meetings per year 1.5.2 Study tours at local, national and regional levels, with 1 tour per year per country 1.5.3 International study tour to observe intersectoral projects within 24 months	Two meeting of the Regional Project Advisory Group (RPAG) in 2018 Three meetings of the National Project Advisory Groups Formation of two Regional Working Groups (RWG) on Water Quality Indicators, and Ground and Surface Water Assessment Sava River Basin Study Tour	On target to be achieved
1.6 Public Private Partnership to foster sustainable national and regional integrated water resources management through use of green technologies PI 1.6.1 Number of private sector organizations involved in the PPP PI 1.6.2 Amount of economic benefit possible for use of green technology for water use in the short medium and long-term SRI 1.6.1 Number of businesses applying green technologies for improved water management PI 1.6.2 Number of agreed metrics for green businesses for improvements in water management (Pre ESI)	1.6.1 Based on recommendations of PSC and NWPD recruit core members of the PPP to receive priority support towards green business development within 6 months of project start up, and meetings held 2 times per year with the National Water Policy Dialog/Inter-ministerial committee meetings 1.6.2 Within 12 months complete Report on Economic benefits of green technology for water use in national languages 1.6.3 Within 12 months develop metrics for green-businesses to determine baseline and improvements for improved water management 1.6.4 Within 18 months develop Sector specific catalog of green technologies for sustainable water use and income generation, with source database on line updated bi-monthly 1.6.5 Working with PPP develop “Green Business Award Program” to be awarded annually starting in year 2, based on sectors and improvements	Report on economic benefits of green technology for water use Sector specific catalogue of green technologies for sustainable water use and income generation Green Business Awards Programme	On target to be achieved

Output 1.1: The work under this output has progressed quite well and the first three milestones have been achieved by the time of MTR. Three river sub-basins have been established for piloting the methodology instead of one anticipated in the original project logframe. The remaining field surveys for environmental flow data collection are planned on June 2019, August 2019, Oct. 2019, January 2020, and March 2020.

Based on the data collection and findings, a report on the assessment of the implementation of the staged methodology for calculating the environmental flow and the recommendations for the two countries to adapt the most appropriate methodology that fits with the existing capacities. A final meeting is planned for April 2020 in each country to present the outcomes of the environmental flow study in the pilot sub-basins and recommendations for the next steps forward.

Output 1.2: Under this output, regional reports were compiled on current water availability and the legal instruments governing the water availability in the basin. National experts also developed two national plans for enhanced efficiency for agricultural and municipal consumption, including gap filling plan in the current policies and regulations, as well as two national reports on the historical flood events in the Kura basin in the two countries. Further planned work includes assessment of the current plans for flood risk management by an international hydrological expert. The latter will also define gaps and recommend measures to strengthen the national plans to be in line with the EU flood directive.

Output 1.3: In the original workplan, this output focused on aligning the national institutions with the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) approaches for river basin management. In 2018, one international expert prepared two sets of national reports on the baseline and work plans for national level EU WFD Working Groups that were expected to facilitate necessary institutional reforms in both countries. As approximation the EU WFD has been subject under the parallel EUWI+ Project, the PSC of the Kura II Project took a decision that implementation of this output would no longer be necessary.

Output 1.4: In 2018, one International Expert in pollution abatement and law enforcement developed national reports with recommendations for adapting and strengthening legal instruments for reducing point source pollution. National experts have been contracted to support the development hotspot reports.

In 2019, two international experts in environmental law enforcement and inspection, and an additional expert for industrial and municipal sewage pollution abatement have been working together with national experts to develop pollution abatement plans for each point source pollution sector. This work will be summarized in a report on sectoral pollution abatement plans to relevant ministries in each country with recommendations for improved pollution abatement regulations and strengthened law enforcement.

Output 1.5: In 2018 two sets of National Project Advisory Groups (NPAGs) and two meeting of the Regional Project Advisory Group (RPAG) were held. The meetings resulted in strengthened understanding of the project work and sharing of national and regional water priorities within and across sectors. At the request of RPAG members, two Regional Working Groups (RWGs) were formed to facilitate information exchange on Water Quality Indicators

and on Ground and Surface Water Assessment. Both RWGs had their first meeting and have agreed on joint work plans and indicators to be shared for each RWG.

Sava River Basin Study Tour was conducted on 7-13 April 2019. Six delegates from each of the two countries and 4 project team members visited Budapest, Zagreb, and Ljubljana and discussed pertinent matters with the relevant stakeholders of the Sava River Basin Programme. This activity is counted as an additional Regional Working Group Meeting.

Two more meetings of each NPAG and two meetings of RPAG are planned for the period September 2019 – May 2020.

Output 1.6: Under this output, one International Expert in Environmental and Water Resource Economics drafted the “*Report on economic benefits of green technology for water use*”. The report was translated into national languages. Furthermore, the project has developed metrics for green businesses to determine baseline and recommendations for improved water management with focus on the hotel industry.

The Kura River H2Otel Awards Programme was launched in 2019 to honour water saving measures taken by participating hotels. The programme has been based on the International Tourism Partnership criteria and guidance with support of the project team under the supervision of international experts. On 18 June 2019, the Kura II Project participated in the Georgia Tourism Awards Conference to debut the H2Otel Awards with participation of about 300 hotels from the country. H2Otel Awards Programme will organize trainings for participating hotels that will be recognized for their efforts in an awards event scheduled for late 2019.

In Azerbaijan, the international expert held meetings with the Sustainability Working Group of the Azerbaijan Hotel Association and the State Tourism Agency of Azerbaijan. The meetings emphasized the importance of focusing on water in the overall sustainability agenda for the hospitality industry and indicated strong support for promotion and launching the H2Otel Awards in Azerbaijan by the end of 2019.

Summary Assessment of Outcome 1:

The full EU WFD river ecological status criteria require a long series of historical data on river hydrological, ecological, morphological, and socio-economic parameters in the river basin. The project developed a guideline for establishment of the monitoring plan to collect these data for the Kura river basin. However, full implementation of the status criteria would require 5-10 years for all necessary data collection. The project developed an alternative and simplified methodology for hydrological monitoring and provided recommendations for use of results of the ecological monitoring in environmental flow calculations, including combination of newly collected information with previously accumulated biomonitoring data that had not been systematized. One pilot sub-basin in each country was designated and total 8 field campaigns have been planned to implement this monitoring plan in the pilot sub-basins, out of which 4 campaigns have been conducted by the mid-term review.

Creation of flood risk maps requires topographic survey for riverbeds at multiple cross sections that is not available in either of the beneficiary countries. The work under this Component created grounds for future flood risk mapping and development of instruments needed to

reduce the risks of losses due to floods at the national and regional level and recommendations on water flow allocation and regulation between sectors. These results were shared with an International Hydrological Expert who will assess the current plans for flood risk management and recommend measures to strengthen these national plans to be in line with the EU flood directive⁵.

After some initial work on the institutional support for RBMOs and local authorities, the project team took an adaptive management decision to drop this activity as this has been focus of the parallel EUWI+ project.

Due to delays in hiring of international and national consultants, the work on elaboration of Pollution Abatement Plans (PAPs) and Compliance Action Plans (CAPs) was delayed from the original time frame, and recently hindered by unexpected withdrawal of the international expert on pollution abatement. Nevertheless, the project team has intensified the work and currently is on track to ensure that all deliverables are provided by the project completion. An important part of this work is preparation of a workshop to attract donors for financing of the elaborated PAPs/CAPs.

The work on green technologies for water use raised awareness of methods and technologies that both save water resources and protect the environment and provided thus a foundation for modernized approaches to water management in the basin by the two countries. Further highlighting and showcasing these approaches will provide incentives for the public and private sector to adopt and employ these approaches.

The project has initiated discussions on shared water quality indicators and water quantity management, developed a structure of a Water Council and presented it to the focal point ministries in both countries. The structure will enable the water management institutions to continue information sharing and cooperation after the finalization of the project. In a semi-formal manner. Although the national and regional harmonization of the integrated water resources management is on track, realization of plans for institutionalization of intersectoral coordination between two countries have not yet started due to unsure levels of political will in both countries.

Based on the above, **the achievement rating for Outcome 1 is Highly Satisfactory (HS).**

⁵ Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood risks

Table 4: Achievements at MTR for Outcome 2

Component 2: Strengthening national capacities to implement multi-sectoral IWRM in the Kura basin		
Outcome 2: Enhanced capacity for sectoral ministries and agencies to successfully harmonize and implement national IWRM Plans		
Outcomes & Outputs and Indicators	Milestone and Project Targets	
2.1 Capacity building training programs for IWRM professionals for different target groups Indicators: PI 2.1.1 Number of identified gaps in capacity filled by trainings across sectors PI 2.1.2 Pre- and post-training aggregated test scores PI 2.1.3 Number of training components applied professionally by the water managers at end of project	2.1.1 Gap analysis of sectoral capacity needs for water managers within 9 months of start-up 2.1.2 Establish inter-ministerial water training center within 9 months 2.1.3 Development of interlinked on-the-job trainings for IWRM Professionals within 12 months of project start-up 2.1.4 Conduct at least 6 topic specific on-the-job training curriculum for 24 months, from months 12-36, with quarterly face to face meetings and updates 2.1.5 Develop online trainings based on curriculum of developed trainings. Database created in first 6 months of trainings and updated quarterly 2.1.6 Document trainings and training materials available on line for certification of subsequent generations of water managers beginning after 30 months	Se ea Tr mi im da Tr stu su im to
2.2 Enhanced capacity for institutions to implement river basin management plans PI 2.2.1 Number of competent authorities and interested parties represented in RBMOs training PI 2.2.2 Percent of basin covered at baseline and at project completion by RBMOs/RBMPs PI 2.2.3 Number of implementable measures linked to SAP with in the POMs for RBMPs	2.2.1 Needs assessment for selected localized river management organizations within 9 months 2.2.2 Capacity building plans for trial in targeted areas based on best practices initiated within 12 months, with updates every 4 months, to include identification on reference conditions and biomonitoring in line with the EU WFD 2.2.3 Application of trial capacity building for targeted area based with regular trainings on site 3 times per year with RBMP/POMs 2.2.4 Strategy for expansion of capacity building efforts to additional targeted areas by 24 months 2.2.5 All training materials on line with trainings initiated by in final year 2.2.4 Draft and share lessons learned reports in final year	Ne im cap Cu job ov EU W ins
2.3 Strengthen capacity for enforcement of water resources laws and regulations	2.3.1 Assessment of needs and gaps in enforcement capacity, including roles for water pollution and water allocation, laws	Tw of anc sec Tra pro ent Co wa

Outcomes & Outputs and Indicators	Milestone and Project Targets	Mid-Term Level & Assessment	Status
<p>I 2.3.1 Number of laws and regulations not in compliance at baseline compared to numbers of laws and regulations brought into compliance at end of project</p> <p>RI 2.3.1 Percent change in water quality compliance by parameter</p> <p>I 2.3.2 Number of incentives developed for improved compliance</p> <p>SI 2.3.2 Based on output 5.3, notable empirical changes in ecosystems status during extended trainings period</p>	<p>and equipment, for existing and anticipated regulations. Identify enforcement priorities within 9 months</p> <p>2.3.2 Develop capacity building strategy working with enforcement bodies, to address enforcement priorities by 12 months</p> <p>2.3.3 Develop budget for enforcement needs and staged budget allocation strategy with enforcement responsibilities matrix within 18 months</p> <p>2.3.4 Conduct targeted 24-month trainings for prioritized enforcement areas with on-the-job trainings</p> <p>2.3.5 Develop report with recommendations for sustaining effective enforcement mechanisms</p>		
<p>2.4 Strengthened capacity information management, data analysis for enhanced IWRM decision-making support</p> <p>PI 2.4.1 Number of gaps at baseline assessment and filled at end of project</p> <p>PI 2.4.2 Percent change increase in digitized data and accessibility for use by decision-makers</p> <p>PI 2.4.3 Number of intersectoral information exchange linkages formalized at national and transboundary levels at baseline and end of project</p>	<p>2.4.1 Assessment of needs and gaps in information management, data analysis for IWRM and identify decision support priorities within 9 months</p> <p>2.4.2 Develop capacity building strategy working with information producing and management bodies, including indicators development, modeling, intersectoral GIS use, and analysis to address priorities by 12 months</p> <p>2.4.3 Develop staged budget allocation strategy for information data management needs and equipment with agreed intersectoral responsibilities matrix within 18 months, including quality control for data, and models applications</p> <p>2.4.4 Conduct targeted 24-month trainings for prioritized information management and decision support areas with on-the-job trainings</p>	<p>Needs and gaps assessment for IWRM</p> <p>Technical report on the IWRM information system analysis and design</p> <p>Training courses on GIS and remote sensing techniques</p>	<p>On target to be achieved</p>

In this Outcome, as with all those focusing on capacity building, international consultants with expertise in capacity building on specific topics as identified in the capacity needs assessment were contracted to conduct trainings for the representatives of different stakeholders in the two countries. Experts include in environmental and water resources economics, river system ecology assessment, gender mainstreaming, international climate change adaptation, and pollution abatement planning and compliance. In each course, course evaluation reports are drafted by international experts.

Output 2.1: In 2018 the following multi-day/multiple block courses were offered:

- Water Resources Economics (3 blocks)
- IWRM for Rising Decision Makers (3 blocks)
- Laboratory Quality Management in line with ISO 17025 (3 blocks)
- Water-Energy-Food NEXUS
- Gender Mainstreaming in IWRM
- Climate Change and Water Management
- River Basin Ecology, and
- Hydrological Modeling

In 2019, the Project is conducting the following training courses:

- Hydrological Modelling (2 blocks)
- River Basin Ecology (2 blocks)
- Laboratory Quality Management (3 blocks)
- GIS and remote sensing techniques for water management (3 blocks)

Training on the use of Economic Models in Environmental Management is scheduled to kick-off with the first of the 3 blocks in autumn 2019 and will continue in the first half of 2020.

Output 2.2: An international consultant with expertise in supporting development and implementation of the EU WFD and capacity building for RBMOs was recruited in 2018. This expert conducted a needs assessment and developed curriculum for training and on-the-job professional development for those charged with oversight and implementation of the EU-WFD. Courses on national capacities to implement RBM and EU WFD were conducted in both countries as well as a workshop in RBMP institutionalization.

Output 2.3: In 2018, an internationally recruited expert conducted needs and gaps assessment and elaborated capacity building strategies for party enforcement issues and a matrix of responsibilities with estimated enforcement budget. Furthermore, the expert produced curriculum and training materials for an extended professional development course for enforcement bodies. Another course on emission inventory for sewage waste was held in both Azerbaijan and Georgia.

In 2019, two further courses will be offered to participants from the national law enforcement bodies, namely Water Law Enforcement (3 Blocks) and Auditing Polluting Sources/ Development of Abatement Plans (3 Blocks).

Output 2.4: One international consultant with expertise in Decision Support Systems (DSS), Hydrological Modeling, and Water Resources Planning was recruited in 2018. The expert started with needs and gaps assessment, reviewed the progress on information management under the parallel EUWI+ and SEIS projects and produced a detailed technical report on the

IWRM information system analysis and design, capacity building strategy for IWRM information system, and proposed a training curriculum and materials for decision support and information management systems.

It was originally planned to carry out extended on-the-job-training on development of a DSS system and data information needs. However, the lead water management experts in both countries feared that the development of the DSS would not lead to effective results due to lack of reliable information and data in both countries. Consequently, the project team decided to focus on training for the use of GIS and remote sensing techniques for water management and contracted national GIS experts to conduct this training in 3 blocks in June - October 2019.

Summary Assessment of Outcome 2:

The Component 2 was developed to involve actors coming from different institutions and achieve mutual understanding of issues, key concepts and the fundamental terminology. The initial needs assessment for the capacity building component resulted in categorization of training needs and their prioritization on three levels. As a next step, a capacity building plan was developed in a modular format where the first modules are dedicated to a conceptual framework to provide an overview over the wealth of information and key concepts in a systematic fashion. The second modules aim to use the primary information for adoption of new technologies relevant to the various professionals involved in data collection. The third modules target more IT experienced staff who will be involved in the development of IT tools to make possible the management of the information, according the conceptual framework introduced.

By the MTR stage, total 291 professionals were trained, 151 from Azerbaijan and 140 from Georgia. All trainings have been recorded with the aim to develop online training materials in national languages. A remarkable participation of women in the trainings was recorded as 51.0 % of the trainees from Azerbaijan and 59.5% from Georgia were females. It is worth mentioning that the project also included representatives from the polluting facilities in the training on the development of the PAPs.

While the development and implementation of the training component has produced remarkable results so far both in the technical areas and in gender mainstreaming, some of the key stakeholders, namely relevant ministries and the two UNDP COs, expressed concerns about lack of involvement in the process of the trainees' selection and suboptimal sharing of information about the pool of trainees. Better exchange about the results of the training component would enable the stakeholders to consider a more targeted involvement of the trainees in other activities and thus enhance sustainability of the capacity building component of this project.

In relation to Output 2.3 it has to be pointed out, that changes of the legislative base for water resources management is a long-term process that is beyond the time scope of the GEF intervention, hence the project focused on building needed capacities for strengthening of the law enforcement and assisted with identification of gaps in the permitting systems in order to provide guidance on strengthening of these systems.

Based on the above, **the achievement rating for Outcome 2 is Highly Satisfactory (HS).**

Table 5: Achievements at MTR for Outcome 3

Component 3: Stress reduction in critical areas and pre-feasibility studies to identify investment opportunities for improving river system health		
OUTCOME 3: Stress reduction in critical areas, and pre-feasibility studies in support of investment opportunities to improve river system health		
Outcomes & Outputs and Indicators	Milestone and Project Targets	M
3.1 Showcase technologies to reduce factual water losses in different sectors SRI 3.1. Amounts of water and amount of money saved by application of green technologies at the local and national levels compared to costs and 5, 10 and 20 years spans.	3.1.1 National assessment reports of physical water supply system for agricultural and municipal sectors with prioritized recommendations within 12 months 3.1.2 Preparation of plans for enhanced efficiency for agricultural and municipal consumption within 18 months 3.1.3 Apply 4 sector-specific water use efficiency interventions and lessons learned for up scaling from each country within 39 months,	Two na water s municipi recom Two na for enh municipi Pilot d sites in Social campa
3.2 Conduct pre-feasibility studies for select projects identified in pollution abatement plans SRI 3.2.1 Improvement expected from implementation of pollution abatement PI 3.2.1 Baseline indicators and metrics developed to determine scale and scope of improvements PI 3.2.2 Amount of support and interest measured by pre-commitments from donors and other sources	3.2.1 Identify 2 top priority water quality hotspots Working with NWP, PPP, and key stakeholders from Component 1, within 12 months 3.2.2 Identify pollution abatement projects to maximize impacts for stress reduction in line with the pollution abatement plan development in Component 1, and in collaboration with capacity building efforts in Component 2, within 15 months 3.2.3 Conduct study tour for key stakeholders to learn about technologies and approaches used in similar cases in 24 months 3.2.4 Conduct costed and detailed prefeasibility studies with detailed evaluation criteria, stakeholder analysis, expected benefits, and alternate approaches with final recommendations for presentation to governmental and private sector at the 36 months of project with international and national experts	Prioriti abatem Selecti project Trainin for poi
3.3 River restoration projects for improved ecosystem health using integrated flow management ESSI 3.3.1 Change in baseline to completion assessment of river ecosystem status SRI 3.3.1 Kilometers of river impacted by river restoration activities PI 3.3 Number of stakeholders involved in river restoration activities, including diverse city of stakeholder groups represented	3.3.1 Identify prioritized sites suitable for river restoration projects to maximize impacts for stress reduction in collaboration with capacity building efforts in Component 2, within 12 months 3.3.2 Develop detailed river restoration plans for specific sites within 18 months, and collect baseline data and anticipated social, economic and environmental benefits in line with Components 4 and 5 3.3.3 Initiate river restoration activities with integrated flow management documenting progress and key lessons learned with close monitoring of costs and impacts. Within 24 months of project start up 3.3.4 Conclude initial river restoration project at least 6 months prior to project completion with detailed replication strategy and lessons learned	Baselin demon 5 techn commu Design for con Approv constru municipi

Output 3:1: An international consultant with expertise in water saving technologies for municipal water management and low water use irrigation technologies worked with national experts in both countries to assess the water supply and demand system for each sector. The expert produced the following deliverables:

- two national reports on the current status of the physical water supply system for agricultural and municipal sectors in each country with prioritized recommendations;
- two technical reports on the assessment of current and planned laws, regulations and enforcement mechanisms in the water sector; and
- two national reports on the national plans for enhanced efficiency for agricultural and municipal consumption;

An agricultural drip irrigation technology is being demonstrated on 3.5 ha of agriculture land of the Regional Amelioration Experimental and Training Center in Saatly, Azerbaijan. The Center has more than 100 years of history and experience with development of new crop varieties and possesses land for the demonstration interventions. The Center has allocated 2.5 ha of agricultural land for growing of a cotton variety Adana with the drip irrigation technology. Another 1.0 ha earmarked for growing of fruit trees (apples, pears, pomegranate apples) has been split, one half for drip irrigation and the other half for classical irrigation for comparison. In May 2019, the project tendered installation of the drip irrigation technology to a local company AZAD 92. The Adana cotton variety was seeded and about 300 2-3 year old fruit trees were planted for the demonstration. At the time of the evaluation mission (end of June 2019), the cotton variety was found in a good condition and a machine harvest is expected at the end of September/beginning of October 2019. The fruit tree part of the demonstration will probably yield the first results in the 2020 harvest.

Since the Georgian Amelioration Ltd. (a governmental agency under the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia) was not able to provide its own site for the demonstration of the drip irrigation, PMU arranged the latter to be implemented on 3 privately owned plots of agriculture land in Tsalka, Gori, and Kakheti with the total area of 10.5 ha belonging to a local farmer. The crops used for the demonstration are onion, potato and wine grapes. Installation of the drip irrigation systems by a local contractor was ongoing at the time of the MTR with completion expected by beginning of August 2019. The drip irrigation technology will be handed over to the local farmer on condition that trainings on site will be allowed and information on water consumption and crops production will be made available to the project.

All demonstration pilots include establishment of baseline measures, evaluation criteria with scaling/replication strategy, and stress reduction indicators. However, the demonstration interventions have been affected by delays in determining the site locations and slow procurement, particularly in Georgia.

Water conservation demonstration projects were identified in two sectors. A municipal water conservation demonstration project was developed for implementation in Sabunchi district of Baku with the support of IDEA and AzerSu, while another demonstration project for municipal water conservation was elaborated for Gori city, Georgia. The Gori demonstration

pilot commenced in with a kick-off meeting in late May 2019. However, the sister pilot demo in the Sabunchi district of Baku had to be abandoned due to lack of eligible applicants for the demonstration activities.

Output 3.2: In line with the EU WFD approaches to water management, an international expert on pollution abatement and law enforcement was contracted in 2018 to support development and oversight of pre-feasibility studies for pollution abatement. The expert also conducted a training program on emission inventory for point sources of pollution and how to calculate the emission loads from certain facility.

In 2019, a process engineer with expertise in the EU WFD was recruited. The two experts have been working with key local and national stakeholders, to develop prefeasibility studies for one selected industry in each country and identify the main polluting sectors in each country and develop a guideline for the development of the pollution abatement plans for these sectors. The results of this work will be presented in a workshop with the governments, private sector, and interested International Finance Institutions in order to seek support for future replication of these works for stress reduction on the river environment. Experience and evidence collected during the study tour to the Sava River Basin will be used to increase political will in the beneficiary countries for implementation and scaling-up of these approaches.

Output 3.3: River restoration projects for improved ecosystem health using integrated flow management

An international river system ecologist has been contracted to work with national experts and local firms to select key sites and conduct scoping studies with recommendations, for a constructed wetland project to treat wastewater. The expert provided detailed plans as well as guidelines for the construction of the engineered wetlands.

A: Azerbaijan

The demonstration pilot is being implemented near the Hajigabul lake in Shirvan town. The site for the constructed wetland was selected near a community of cca 200 houses that discharge untreated sewage. The site election was agreed with the Regional Office of MENR located in Shirvan and with the municipality. The latter officially approved the use of the land for the constructed wetland in May.

Design specifications and drawings for a constructed wetland of cca 163x 46 m size had been prepared by an international company and a local tender for construction of the wetland was announced at the beginning of July 2019. The construction is expected to be completed by November 2019.

B: Georgia

A similar demonstration pilot is being implemented in the community of Surami and Khashuri on the Suramula river in Georgia. The site selection was finalized with agreement of the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture and local municipal authority. National experts were hired to assess the current solid waste management status in Surami

and Khashuri districts to develop an action plan for improving the solid waste management collection and final disposal along the river in these districts.

However due to some discrepancies in reports regarding previous solid waste and plastics management implemented by various NGOs, the decision was made to send a socio/cultural anthropologist and team to the community of Surami, and specifically to the upstream portion of the community Surami to conduct an ethnography. The survey indicated that the plastics waste was due to easily resolved logistical challenges in the collection scheme. The lack of local will to remove rubbish from the river came as a result of a large discharge of untreated wastewater directly into the river from Surami, via unsanctioned waste collection from approximately 200 households. Plans for updating the wastewater treatment facility nearby would not address this community. As a result, the community asked the Kura II Project to support in provision of the demonstration waste water treatment facility.

An international expert hired by the project has elaborated a concept of a constructed wetland within a local park area, that will be used both for improving river conditions and can serve as an educational center for other marginal communities wishing to improve local water conditions.

This intervention can only proceed once the land is transferred to the Surami municipality. At the time of the evaluation mission, in mid-June 2019, there were unresolved issues about land ownership that hindered progress with this demonstration pilot.

Summary Assessment of Outcome 3:

Several of the interviewed stakeholders emphasized the value of the Component 3 with pilot demonstration projects as the latter add an important dimension to the technical and capacity building activities conducted under the Components 1,2,4 and 5. However, in implementation of Component 3 the project team faced a variety of challenges that resulted in substantial delays in relation to the original implementation plan contained in the Project Document.

Firstly, the assessment of the possible locations for the water conservation projects in Georgia and Azerbaijan took considerable time and the respective sites of Gori (Georgia) and Sabunchi (Azerbaijan) were selected for implementation in early 2019. However, due to challenges with the procurement process, it proved not possible to conduct the awareness raising campaign in Sabunchi. The project team together with the collaborating partners took a decision to develop a mobile phone application to enable instant reporting water leakages to municipal water authorities. The application will also feature educational games and information about water resource management and may include augmented reality for mobile devices based on the Kura Box educational toolkit.

The project document states that the project will “demonstrate 4 sector-specific water use efficiency interventions and lessons learned for up scaling from each country within 39 months, with testing being undertaken for at least 18 months and regular measurements taken of impacts compared to a control study case and that final reports will include lessons learned and recommendations for up scaling and replication.” Due to the delays in operationalization of the demo pilots, it will not be possible to collect more than 9 months of data for these demonstrations within the current timeline of the project. This means that not enough

information will be collected on experience from the operation of the demonstration pilots for formulation of recommendations for scaling up and replication of the pilots.

Although the output on PAPs/CAPs was proceeding well, in May 2019 the international expert for municipal and industrial pollution abatement unexpectedly withdrew from his involvement in the project due to serious health concerns. The project team has identified a replacement in line with the UNDP procurement rules and the recruitment process was ongoing during the MTR but this will certainly create some delays in implementation.

The most serious delays have been experienced in the river restoration sub-components in the two countries. Both demonstration pilots suffered from the unresolved issues of land ownership and transfer between the central authorities and municipalities in the target areas. The Georgian part on the Suramula river in the Surami and Khashuri communities started well with surveys and 5 technical reports on solid and liquid waste but further progress has been hindered by unresolved land ownership for the constructed wetland. Reportedly, additional paperwork and legal proceedings were initiated in June 2019 to solve this problem and this was still unresolved at the time of MTR mission and finalization of the MTR report.

For the sister pilot at Hajiquabul lake in Azerbaijan, an Italian company was contracted to provide detailed design drawings for the constructed wetland. As the land ownership was finally agreed between the relevant authorities in mid-June 2019, the project team has prepared a national tender for construction of the wetland to be launched by the Istanbul Regional Hub. However, issues on operation and maintenance of the wetland will have to be agreed with MENR before the construction can start.

The construction wetland demonstration projects in both countries, if successfully completed, will assist in resolving long-lasting challenges on missing liquid waste treatment in the target areas. From the recipient community in Shirvan, only 80 out of the total 900 houses are connected to the existing sewage treatment facility. Similar situation is in the Surami/Khashuri community in Georgia. Successful implementation of the demonstration pilots was also expected to generate information and experience for the national companies providing water supply and sanitation services to consider replication and upscaling. Similar to the drip irrigation pilots, the constructed wetlands implemented by the project may not produce enough robust data on reduction of waste load into the waterbody and related environmental stress reduction by the end of the project implementation period.

Based on the above, **the achievement rating for Outcome 3 is Moderately Satisfactory (MS).**

Table 6: Achievements at MTR for Component 4

Component 4: Targeted education and involvement projects to empower stakeholders in implementing local / national / regional actions in support of SAP implementation OUTCOME 4: Stakeholder Education with academic, civil society, private sector, and local communities to gain experiences to increase their involvement in national and regional IWRM applications and innovations.			
Outcomes & Outputs and Indicators	Milestone and Project Targets	Mid-Term Level & Assessment	Rating
Output 4.1 A team of diverse professional IWRM trainers to work with stakeholders PI 4.1.1 Number of stakeholder groups trained PI 4.1.2 Number of stakeholders reached through additional training activities PI 4.1.3 Number of training modules developed PI 4.1.4 Number of IWRM Trainer certificates (in person and online) awarded by end of project	4.1.1 Conduct stakeholder analysis survey to determine training needs, willingness to participate, and incentives to change water use behaviors by stakeholder groups within 9 months of project start up 4.1.2 Establish a targeted recruitment of IWRM trainers for stakeholders to draw from academic institutions, NGOs, WUAs, RBMO/local authorities, journalism/media, women's organizations, youth organizations and others, within 9 months of project start for internship program 4.1.3 Establish training curriculum, specific to stakeholder types, for training of trainers, and recruit national and international experts to provide trainings within 12 months of project start-up WUA, Women's Groups, Journalists, RBMO, Youth 4.1.4 Conduct at least 6 topic specific training curriculums for trainers, and support training outreach programs, with quarterly face to face meetings and updates 4.1.5 Development of online trainings based on curriculum of developed trainings. Database created in first 12 months and updated quarterly 4.1.6 Training materials on line for certification of subsequent generations beginning by 24 months with evaluation of impacts	Stakeholder analysis survey results and assessment with recommendations for curriculum development Roster of stakeholder trainers, and internship program selection criteria for rotating junior experts throughout project implementation Training of hortel operators on	On target to be achieved
Output 4.2 Annual academic IWRM conferences PI 4.2.1 Number of academic articles presented at conference PI 4.2.2 Number of academic articles published in peer-reviewed journals after presentation conferences PI 4.2.3 Number of recommendations developed as a result academic inputs adopted at local and national levels. PI 4.2.4 Number of masters students training topic specific activities approaches to water resource management from key universities	4.2.1 Determine themed annual academic conferences to be held each year working with national universities, and other water management organizations 4.2.2 Sponsor academic IWRM conference including lecturers and IWRM MSc and other graduate students from national and regional institutions to present research related to improving water management in the Kura Basin in 2 day regional academic conference 4.2.3 Sponsor joint IWRM MSC trainings for 1 week annually on selected topics in line with themed topics to be presented at annual academic conference to be presented by regional and international academic experts 4.2.4 Training materials available on line for certification of subsequent generations beginning in 24 months	Establishment of the Kura River Basin Academic Committee (KRBAC) International academic conference on Water, Environment, and Construction in Azerbaijan (2018)	On target to be achieved
Output 4.3 Empowering social marketing campaigns to improve impacted stakeholders understanding of their role in water management PI 4.3.1 Number of stakeholders targeted to number stakeholders reached PI 4.3.2 Number of webpage hits and social media statistics PI 4.3.3 Impacts based on stakeholder analysis, and outreach activities PI 4.3.4 Percent change in perceptions from baseline Survey in 5.2 to	4.3.1 Develop strategy for staged targeted social marketing campaigns for stakeholders to include use of social media, public information materials, and metrics to gauge impacts within 15 months Based on Stakeholder Analysis survey in 4.3 4.3.2 Design at least 4 social marketing campaigns to be implementing in at least 3 stages for gender mainstreaming, farmers and water user association members, RBMO/local authorities, and municipal water users within 18 months working with international, regional and national experts and interns, 4.3.3 Conduct mid-term review of impacts to determine effectiveness of	Strategy report and baseline metrics Social marketing campaign plans for targeted groups	On target to be achieved

Outcomes & Outputs and Indicators	Milestone and Project Targets	Mid-Term Level & Assessment	Rating
end of project survey	campaigns and adjust accordingly, within 30 months 4.3.4 Conduct social media educational and outreach activities to increase exposure of efforts within 30 months 4.3.5 Conduct end stage stakeholder analysis to gauge impacts and draft report on replication, and recommended next steps at least 4 months prior to project completion		
Output 4.4. Local competitions and regional showcasing of local stakeholder innovations for climate change adaptation related to water PI 4.4.1 Number of innovation submitted PI 4.4.2 Number of categories for awards PI 4.4.3 Number of awards given PI 4.4.4 Number of social media hits for innovations PI 4.4.5 Number of stakeholder innovations shared at regional and international forums	4.4.1 identify and nominate select stakeholder innovations for first year awards for innovations working with NWRD members, IWRM Trainers, Interns and PPP 4.4.2 Conduct local and national competitions to encourage innovations from stakeholders on adaptation measures related to water management, to be held annually, as part of social marketing and public outreach campaign 4.4.3 Promote replication of innovative adaptation measures at national and regional technology conferences, through social media, and through international forums, within 18 months and updated quarterly	Innovations for development: Mobile App for municipal water leak reporting Innovations for development: H2Otel Awards akin to the Trip Advisor awards Partnerships with Welcome to Georgia and Azerbaijan Hotel Association	On target to be achieved
Output 4.5 Project information and experiences shared through IW:LEARN activities supported PI 4.5 Number of experiences formally shared with other projects	4.5.1 Contribution of at least 6 Experience Notes to IW:LEARN covering project activities and lessons learned with at least 2 drafted by year 2 of project 4.5.2 Participation in regional and international IW:LEARN conferences and trainings, pending availability 4.5.3 Project Key Stakeholders Participate in GEF International Waters Conference(s) during project implementation	Confirmed participation at the International Conference in Marakesh (October 2019)	On target to be achieved

Output 4.1: IWRM trainings for the project stakeholders

In 2018, initial trainings were conducted for the project Junior Experts in Azerbaijan. Work was initiated for trainings of youth in the municipal authorities on water conservation to be implemented through the demonstration project on water conservation in municipal areas in both Azerbaijan and Georgia.

In 2019, these trainings have continued, including those in line with the demonstration projects and the farmers and Water User Associations will be trained through the demonstration project featuring drip irrigation. Additional trainings have been made in both Azerbaijan and Georgia to train NGOs, women's groups. Within the third quarter of 2019, a concentrated effort will be put on training journalist and electronic press about water management issues, and communities in Hajiqabul and Surami, about water conservation, protection, and management of constructed wetlands. Further in Azerbaijan several participants of the project trainings have now been conducting trainings on water management issues throughout the country.

Output 4.2 Annual academic IWRM conferences

Based on the IWRM MSc curriculum developed under the previous UNDP-GEF Project, Baku State University and Tbilisi State University IWRM for MSc students and lecturers, the project supports participation in IWRM Academic conferences on specific water management topics.

In 2018, the Project co-hosted an international academic conference on water, environment, and construction with Azerbaijan State University of Architecture and Construction which featured panels on the Kura River with participants from Baku State and Tbilisi State University and focused on issues of the Kura River.

In 2019 the Project will co-host a similar event in Tbilisi with Georgian institutions. Calls for papers have been made and the Kura River Basin Academic Conference will be held in September 2019 in Tbilisi with both Georgian and Azerbaijani participants presenting papers. The proceedings of these will be made available by partner institutions.

Due to delays in implementation of component 4, a third round of academic conference and trainings may not be feasible before the end of the original project implementation period.

Output 4.3: Empowering social marketing campaigns to improve impacted stakeholders understanding of their role in water management

Social marketing campaigns use approaches employed by the advertising industry to inform and shift behaviours of stakeholders. In this project social marketing campaigns are being developed to help stakeholders understand their role and water management including turning off the tap, conserving water and avoiding activities that lead to surface and groundwater pollution.

These efforts will be tested in line with the water conservation demonstration projects, and the river restoration demonstrations projects work. After testing in those communities initially before plans to upscale these to wider national and regional audiences. This will begin in 2019 and be completed within the scope of the Project in 2020.

Output 4.4: Local competitions and regional showcasing of local stakeholder innovations for climate change adaptation related to water

In 2018, a first round of competitions was held that featured local ideas of developing a mobile phone app for locating municipal water leaks to report to the appropriate authorities for output 3.1, approaches needed to increase recycling of plastic wastes in Azerbaijan and Georgia for output 3.3, and development of the trip advisor based approach to the H2Otel Awards. The first training of hotel operators in Georgia was conducted in June and similar training for the group from Azerbaijani hotels is planned for July/August 2019.

In 2019 these will be put under development by the project to be upscaled based on initial testing results. Additionally, in 2019 in the fourth quarter, additional innovations will be sought from communities where water conservation 3.1 demonstrations projects are conducted.

Output 4.5 Project information and experiences shared through the coordinating offices, contributing to GEF International Waters Learning Exchange & Resource Network (IW:LEARN)

The GEF International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network provides critical support to International waters projects through trainings, conferences, and information exchange opportunities.

In 2018 the Project participated in the GEF International Waters Conference, GEF IW:LEARN Water Economics Conference, Twinning Activities with the UNDP-GEF Dniester River Project, year-long gender mainstreaming webinars and information sharing and newsletters. In 2019 and through 2020, it is expected that the Project will continue to remain active in the IW:LEARN Community. Additionally, the Kura II Project was selected to participate in the IW:LEARN 2019 Project Steering Committee Meeting to provide input to the PSC about the project benefits from IW:LEARN and to provide inputs for the upcoming IW:LEARN phase of the project.

Summary Assessment of Outcome 4:

Implementation of this project component was based on a stakeholder survey that showed which modes of media communication are preferred by groups, and for showing that most stakeholders consider water management to be the responsibility of state actors. The project extends the benefits of the trainings by continuing to engage with the same communities, thus building social capital and deepening the opportunities for knowledge exchange. Organizing the social marketing campaigns was mainly based on information collection conducted during the stakeholder trainings when trainers and other project staff had opportunity to submit additional survey questions, gauge gaps in knowledge, and build relationships with participants that offer additional access to particular stakeholder communities. More robust approach based on a change in baseline perceptions as anticipated in the project document would require a secondary stakeholder analysis for which the project does not currently have enough time for conducting.

This component also provides for engagement and empowerment of academic stakeholders across the Kura River Basin by bringing them together, building their capacities in water

management and facilitating sustainable information exchange. The project team drew upon the expertise of academics and IWRM MSc students for organizing regional academic conferences on IWRM themes and assistance of the newly formed Kura River Basin Academic Committee (KRBAC). The KRBAC is expected to continue to unite academics in the Kura River Basin beyond the project completion and thus provide sustainability of the academic exchanges in the region.

Based on the above, **the achievement rating for Outcome 4 is Highly Satisfactory (HS).**

Table 7: Achievements at MTR for Component 5

Component 5: Enhancing science for governance by strengthening monitoring, information management and data analysis systems for IWRM Outcome 5: Azerbaijan and Georgia using integrated monitoring, and information management systems for sustainable IWRM at national and transboundary levels			
Outcomes & Outputs and Indicators	Milestone and Project Targets	Mid-Term Level & Assessment	Rating
Output 5.1: Improved assessment of geographic distribution of ground and surface water availability and seasonal fluctuations PI 5.1.1 Number of sectors using hydrological modeling software and GIS with remote-sensing at beginning midpoint and end of project PI 5.1.2 Percent of basin covered in Azerbaijan and Georgia by digital data suitable for effective modeling	5.1.1 Assessment of available ground and surface water availability in river basin within 12 months 5.1.2 Analyze the historical hydromet station data along the river basin to estimate the seasonal variability along the river within 18 months 5.1.3 Conduct intersectoral trainings on hydrogeological modeling software and use of GIS and remote sensing techniques for delineation of ground water aquifer within 24 months 5.1.4 Apply the hydrogeological modeling in one sub basin for each country within 36 months, to include water quality waste water discharges from point source pollution based on available information 5.1.5 Develop the final report on the basis of the historical materials and the results obtained by means of detailed hydro-geological observation works and hydro-monitoring studies regarding the respective sections on the territories of each country within 42 months	Baseline assessment report on available data Report on surface and ground water distribution and temporal availability Analysis of historical flow trends Guideline for the conjunctive use of both groundwater and surface water resources (under development)	On target to be achieved
Output 5.2: An assessment of the economic and social benefits per unit of water used in different sectors PI 5.2.1 Level of baseline economic, social and hydrological information available compared to end of project PI 5.2.2 Stakeholder survey results on perceptions of water users on water quality, water use and unanticipated water needs across sectors with compared to 2005 survey and end of project abbreviated study PI 5.2.3 Application of market transaction prices and deductive methodology models in the decision support systems y sector	5.2.1 Conduct a baseline assessment of available data sources based on all key sectors within 12 months 5.2.2 Conduct stakeholder surveys on water use, water quality and anticipated water needs across sector based users within 15 months 5.2.3 Train sector representatives on integrated nexus approaches for: Water pricing, cost recovery, and pollute pays principals starting within 24 months 5.2.4 Develop O&M costs for water sector management including environmental, agriculture, municipal water and hydropower sectors to deliver to Ministries within 24 months 5.2.5 Determine market transaction prices, using inductive methods with econometric estimation of production and cost functions for agriculture and energy, and municipal water demand functions within 36 months 5.2.6 Construct models for deductive methodologies for mathematical programming, value-added and alternative costs modeling within 36 months	Baseline assessment report Stakeholder analysis survey results for economic and social assessment Two technical reports of the cost of water services on each sector, one in Azerbaijan and one in Georgia; One report on economic benefits of green technology for water use Two national reports identifying costs of water quality degradation to national GDP and advocating for financial incentives	On target to be achieved
Output 5.3 Staged river system ecological assessment PI/Pre ESI 5.3.1 Number of indicator species identified for river system health PI/Pre ESI 5.3.2 Number of endemic species identified and cataloged PI/Pre ESI 5.3.3 Number of reference conditions criteria identified PI 5.3.1 Number of categories for classification of river ecosystems PI 5.3.2 Percent increase in database completion for ecosystem status	5.3.1 Assessment of available data, and report on information gaps and needs within 12 months 5.3.2 Develop 2-year plan for assessment to be extended at the national level following the project within 18 months working with national and international universities 5.3.3 Create database for ecological assessment to include macro-invertebrates within 18 months 5.3.4 Create ecosystem classification structure within 18 months 5.3.5 Begin to fill data base to include species counts and seasonal flow variation within 21 months working with local authorities, universities and	A regional database on the Access database platform Two reports on the updated version of the River Basin classification structure in line with the EU WFD 2-year plan for Kura River basin ecological assessment	On target to be achieved

Outcomes & Outputs and Indicators	Milestone and Project Targets	Mid-Term Level & Assessment	Rating
	ministries (contracted firm) 5.3.6 Develop final report on Kura River Ecosystem with recommendations for sustainable research to support continued data collection by 42 months		
Output 5.4 Protocols in place to support data and information exchange, for sound IWRM decision-making at national and transboundary levels. PI/Pre ESI 5.4.1 Number of commonly agreed indicators and parameters PI/Pre ESI 5.4.2 Number of standard operating procedures harmonize between laboratories PI/Pre ESI 5.4.3 Percent of database categories for common indicators actively used and agreed by end of project	5.4.1 Develop sets of agreed indicators for information exchange for water quantity, quality and all project outputs to be shared in an annual “State of the Kura River” Report 5.4.2 Review and update current regulations on water quality in line with EU/WFD within 12 months 5.4.3 Harmonize the laboratory analysis methodologies and standard operating procedures for sampling and analysis of water quality including quality control and quality assurance within 36 months 5.4.4 Develop a harmonized regional database from an agreed set of indicators to show status of water quality status in TB status within 36 months 5.4.5 Outline steps for ISO 17025 accreditation for both national laboratories within 24 months 5.4.6 Train staff on use of harmonization measurements and indicators within 36 months 5.4.7 Detailed final report on harmonization with assessment of work to date and recommendations for next steps by 42 months	Set of agreed indicators, baselines and annually updated for “State of the Kura River Report” Two reports with ISO 17025 recommendations for laboratories	On target to be achieved

Output 5.1: Improved assessment of geographic distribution of ground and surface water availability and seasonal fluctuations

National reports on the assessment of groundwater and surface water availability in the river basin was produced in 2018, together with training materials for a 3-level training course on the use of hydrological models for water resources management.

As mentioned under Output 1.5, a regional working group to explore information exchange for regional ground and surface water assessment was created. To support the working group, two international experts were contracted to develop a guideline for the conjunctive use of groundwater and surface water resources.

Total 7 sites (4 in Georgia and 3 in Azerbaijan) were selected in the Alazani Ghanik Aquifer for improved ground water monitoring. Equipment for online real time water monitoring was procured with assistance from UNESCO International Hydrological Programme (IHP) and its International Groundwater Resources Assessment Center (IGRAC). The first data from the on-line monitoring stations were collected in May/June 2019. After initial testing, the on-line monitoring stations will be handed over to the participating countries. The work will be supported by on-the-job training facilitated by the IGRAC's international expert. With the support of IGRAC, a regional report will be developed on the assessment of groundwater in the Alazani-Iori transboundary aquifer and the main challenges to effective management of the aquifer.

Output 5.2: Assessment of the economic and social benefits per unit of water used in different sectors

Trainings in the economics of water resources were conducted by an international expert in 2018, and the following reports were completed:

- two technical reports of the cost of water services on each sector, one in Azerbaijan and one in Georgia;
- a report on economic benefits of green technology for water use; and
- two national reports identifying the costs of water quality degradation to national GDP and promote financial mechanisms;

Moreover, the international expert conducted a training on Water-Energy-Food Nexus approach and how to mainstream economic dimension into water resources management.

In 2019, the international expert will start trainings on the use of economic models for water resources management. The training will be in 3 blocks in the use of one of the WEAP model, one of the most widely used economic models developed by the World Bank. The expert will also develop a report on the cost per unit of water in each water consumption sectors.

Output 5.3 Staged river system ecological assessment programs

A regional database was designed and developed in 2018 on the Access database platform, and the national experts started to collect data on this within the scope of Output 1.1 on environmental flows. National experts continue to fill in the database in cooperation with the environmental flow team. These experts will produce the final information for the database in 2020 for the Aragvi basin in Georgia, and the Samkir chay and Alijan chay in Azerbaijan. Two reports were developed on the updated version of the River Basin classification structure in line with the EU WFD, and the 2-year plan for Kura River basin ecological assessment.

Output 5.4: Protocols in place to support data and information exchange, for sound IWRM decision-making at national and transboundary levels

In 2018, the regional working groups on water quality and water quantity were established. The water quality working group selected 5 water quality parameters to be monitored by the two countries. These parameters are nitrate, nitrite, BOD5, heavy metals, and phenol. This working group also selected sites in each country along the Kura River to start monitoring of these parameters and exchange the results. The water quantity working group agreed to keep the current mechanism for hydrological data exchange between the two countries in line with the flood risk management program.

The Project also supported the two countries in the assessment of the laboratory quality management systems where the following reports were developed by the international expert in line with ISO/IEC 17025: a technical report on the assessment of conditions of the laboratories and needed capacities to commence the ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation process, a report on the capacity building plan for implementing the ISO/IEC 17025, and a report on the SOPs for water quality sampling and laboratory analysis. The international expert also facilitated a 3-blocks training program on implementing the ISO/IEC 17025 SOPs in the sampling and laboratory analysis of water samples in the two laboratories.

In 2019, these working groups will continue to meet, the ISO 17025 trainings will continue with focus on the sampling and analysis of the agreed set of shared water quality indicators. For ensuring laboratory harmonization, exchange of experts between the two laboratories has been initiated labs will be exchanged to learn how each laboratory is applying these practices and protocols. Also, the ground and surface water modelling and monitoring will be shared in order to facilitate communications between the governments of Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Summary Assessment of Outcome 5:

This component of the project addresses critical urgent needs that had been identified within the TDA, national IWRM plans, and regional SAP, namely the need to make scientific information readily accessible for improved governance for balanced and sustainable water management.

The on-line monitoring focuses on areas of shared ground and surface water resources in the Kura river basin and aims at assistance to the project beneficiaries for better understanding of information on ground water and surface water availability and seasonal fluctuations. Important part of the work is technical support by UNESCO IHP and IGRAC and exchanges of experiences among specialists from both countries. The results will be presented in a format that supports environmentally beneficial decision-making across sectors and will

contribute to harmonization of water management approaches based on standardized measurements and shared information.

Following up on the previous projects efforts in rapid ecological assessment, the work under this component has been building a system for information collection for judging the impacts of development and climate change on ecosystems in the Kura basin. The two countries currently exchange data on water levels and water flows at key points along the river for combating the impacts of flooding. This is expected to provide critical support to environmental flows regulations to reduce impacts of development and climate change on the river basin.

The programme of laboratory specialists' exchanges has been contributing to compatibility and comparability of the monitoring data for the shared water quality indicators and harmonization of data collection. Communication of findings and sharing of results enhances transparency of the data collection process and creates grounds that is necessary for improved transboundary water management.

Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective

From the above listed achievements under the five project components it is obvious, that the project has made remarkable progress on removal of a majority of the barriers that had been identified at the project inception.

On the institutional side, the project has increased capacities on integrated river basin management of a number of individuals from relevant entities of the governments, academia and private sector in the two countries. The project has also enabled synchronisation of river basin management approaches, harmonization of agreed water quality standards for water quality and quantity monitoring and contributed thus to building mutual trust and understanding between the two countries. In tandem with the parallel EUWI+ initiative, the project has contributed to national expert capacities for meeting the requirements under the EU Association Agreement in Georgia and under the approximation of EU Directives in Azerbaijan.

In the area of knowledge and information, the project has generated numerous studies and analyses of historical data in the fields of hydrological flow modelling, availability of surface and groundwater resources, standard operation procedures for environmental laboratories, economics of water use as well as inventories of water pollution for use of the experts groups as immediate beneficiaries in the two countries.

Through the selected pilots, the project has initiated demonstration of technologies that can provide multiple benefits in water resource management through water conservation and elimination of water losses as well as pollution and environmental degradation. Due to delays in operationalization of the demonstration pilots, it seems unlikely that within the originally agreed project implementation period it will be possible to collect all information about performance of the demonstrated technologies that will be a prerequisite for successful future upscaling and replication of the new technologies.

The project has also made some effort on analysis in the field of water policies and regulatory frameworks. Although this work revealed gaps in the existing legislation, it is beyond the reach of this type of intervention to bring about any notable improvements in this field due to complexity and length of the legislative processes. The protracted amendment and/or revision of the existing water legislation in both Azerbaijan and Georgia is a case in point. Another area where the project will not yield a noteworthy contribution is enforcement of the existing legislation on water use. Therefore, it is likely that some barriers in the field of legislative and regulatory frameworks will persist beyond the project completion.

Project Implementation and Adaptive Management Arrangements

This section of the evaluation report provides assessment of the seven components of the project implementation and adaptive management, namely management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation, management of risks, stakeholder engagement, as well as reporting and communications.

Management arrangements

The Kura II Project is being implemented by the UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub (IRH) using the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM). The decision to use the DIM approach was justified due to the unique circumstances in the Kura River Basin in which the pending bilateral agreement based on the UNECE Helsinki Convention is expected to lead to execution of future projects by the associated Kura River Commission. Additional benefit of this approach is that the financial and administrative oversight of the project is performed by IRH in line with DIM for regional projects. The project is under managerial oversight of the Senior Programme Coordinator of IRH.

The responsibilities of the IRH are as follows:

- project planning, overall coordination, management, monitoring and reporting;
- procurement of goods and services, including human resources;
- financial management, including overseeing financial expenditures against project budgets;

The centralization of Quality Control and Quality Assessment through the IRH ensures strong focus on strengthening regional capacity, while building critical transboundary cooperative mechanisms. The implementation of the project is under substantive technical oversight by the UNDP Regional Technical Advisor for International Waters based also in Istanbul. In addition, IRH also provides executive oversight of the project to ensure that all criteria are met for a UNDP Regional Project. Although the administrative, financial, and technical oversight functions are centralized to the IRH office, they are in fact separated in their functions and reporting arrangements.

A Project Coordination Unit (PCU) has been established in Baku, Azerbaijan and a small field office in Tbilisi. The PCU responsibilities include the following:

- day-to-day coordination and oversight of the project;
- financial and administrative management (with support of IRH);

- periodic reporting to the PSC and National Focal Points, and
- (co)-execution of selected project activities;

The PCU Terms of Reference is provided in the Project Document.

The PCU is headed by the CTA/Project Manager and each country has a National Coordinator charged with substantive matters and a Project Officer providing administrative support. Three other technical experts are located in the Baku office, namely the Senior Capacity Building Expert, Regional Project Analyst, and the Communication Expert.

The UNDP Country Offices in Azerbaijan and Georgia provide advisory and execution support and assume the following responsibilities:

- assistance and advice to the PCU with procurement of goods and services at the national level;
- assistance and advice to the PCU in recruiting staffing of national specialists for the National Project Offices as well as national staff for the regional PCU;
- assistance and advice to the PCU in organization and logistics of project-related meetings;

A Project Steering Committee (PSC) has been established to oversee the project execution and ensure continued regional ownership. The PSC provides overall strategic policy and management direction and plays a critical role to review project progress, make recommendations and adopt the annual project work plans and budget. The PSC Terms of Reference is provided in the Project Document.

The Kura II Project Steering Committee is composed of national representatives from each participating country, representatives of the GEF Agency (UNDP) and representative of the Executing Agency. Other parties, including the Project Advisory Groups representatives, are invited as observers to the PSC as deemed relevant for implementation of the Kura II Project.

The Project Document anticipated at least five full meetings of the PSC to take place during the implementation, namely at project inception, at the end of year 1, at project mid-term (end of year 2), at the end of year 3, and at project closure (end of year 4).

The Inception Workshop for the Kura II Project took place on 6-7 April 2017 in Baku, Azerbaijan. The 2nd PSC meeting was held on 10-11 May 2018 in Tbilisi, Georgia. The 3rd PSC meeting is planned for 8-9 July 2019 in Azerbaijan.

Based on the review of the Minutes of the Inception Workshop (considered as the 1st PSC meeting) and of the 2nd PSC meeting, the MTR consultant considers that the PSC has adequately exercised both the supervisory and guidance roles to the project.

One regional and two national Project Advisory Groups (PAGs) have been established consisting of the main implementation partner organizations with the following specific functions:

- analyze, discuss and support issues pertaining to project implementation at the regional and national levels;
- provide overall strategic policy and management guidance to the project;
- review project activities to support the progress of the implementation;

- facilitate and promote regional and national intra-project coordination;
- provide advisory guidance in coordination with the National Focal Point;

The National Focal Point from the Focal Point Ministry chairs the National PAG in each country. The PAG has been made up of representatives of the water sector and key stakeholders from other government ministries, agencies and sectors as determined relevant by the Focal Point Ministry. The PCU serves as the Secretariat to the PAGs. There were two meetings of the regional PAG, on 20 July 2017 and on 16 October 2018, respectively. The national PAGs have met five times so far during the project implementation period.

The Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the predecessor Kura I project found suboptimal coordination between the PCU and the UNDP Country Offices. In the management response to the TE, UNDP agreed to develop a matrix of responsibilities between all parties involved, including the PCU, UNDP COs and IRH. The matrix was finalized in April 2017 and the project implementation has been conducted accordingly.

The MTR consultant considers that the established managerial arrangements and frequency of PSC and Advisory Groups meetings are adequate for the size and level of complexity of the project and functioned well since the inception phase of the Project. The frequency of national PAG meetings shows strong commitment and ownership of the project by the implementing partners in the two countries. Therefore, **the management arrangement component is rated Highly Satisfactory (HS).**

Work planning

PCU prepares formal annual workplans and presents to the meetings of PSC for approval. The 1st annual work plan was presented to the project Inception Workshop and included a detailed plan for the 1st year of the project and the workload distribution per each of the Project's 5 Components. Further annual work plans are usually part of the progress reports in English that are presented to the PSC meetings. The progress report presented to the 2018 PSC meeting did not contain the annual work plan and the latter was presented only during the meeting. The annual workplan included in the progress report to the 2019 PSC meeting was in the form of a Gantt chart with month-by-month split of the activities for each of the 22 outputs of the project. The last progress report was provided to the PSC members at the end of June 2019, about one week before the PSC meeting.

On the grounds of the annual work plans, PCU prepares operational quarterly workplans and reviews for project outputs. The operational workplans include quarterly updates of the annual procurement and travel plans. On a monthly basis, CTA prepares informal monthly notes to the project team and PSC members.

In the discussions with the evaluator, the key national focal point ministries and PSC members pointed out that they did not have enough time to review the annual work plans before giving the approval at the PSC meetings. The annual workplans were presented directly at the first two PSC meetings (the inception meeting and the 2018 PSC meeting). For the 2019 PSC meeting, the annual work plan was provided within a short period before the meeting in the progress report in English. The expeditious presentation of the work plans did not allow for a more detailed analysis of the annual workplans by the two focal point

ministries and precluded them to provide more feedback on the plans of project activities. Based on the above, **the work planning is rated as Satisfactory (S).**

Monitoring and evaluation

The Project Document states that performance of the Kura II project will be monitored through the standard UNDP/GEF M&E activities that consist of the PSC meetings, quarterly/annual progress reports as well as site visits.

The first meeting of the PSC was organized within 3 months of the start of the implementation also the frequency of PSC meetings so far was in line with the expectations made at the inception. Site visits have been documented in more than 20 Mission Reports during the 2.5 years of the implementation. However, majority of the Mission Reports reflect visits of Georgia but this is reflection of the fact that the PCU is located in Azerbaijan.

Annual Progress Reports (APRs) were produced for the 2nd and 3rd meetings of the PSC. While the 1st APR described progress in delivery at the level of the project outcomes, the 2nd APR is more detailed and describes progress in delivery at the level of the project outputs under each of the 5 substantive project components. The latest APR also contains expenditure report for the previous two years, annual work programme for the next period as well as UNDP ATLAS annual performance review and a section on challenges and adaptive management.

The GEF PIR for 2017/2018 complies with the GEF reporting requirements as a multiparty document and reflects the implementation progress from the perspectives of the implementing Project Manager and the UNDP/GEF Regional Technical Advisor. As the project is implemented under DIM, the perspectives on implementation from the national focal ministries is not provided in the document.

The Mid-Term Review is being implemented in the third year of the project implementation.

The Monitoring and evaluation is rated Satisfactory (S).

Identification and management of risks

A list of risks and related mitigation countermeasures was compiled at the design phase of the Kura II project and a detailed Risk Matrix was included as Annex 3 of the Project Document.

The evaluator considers the initial identification of risks and countermeasures at the project inception sufficiently detailed as it addressed a variety of project risk areas such as nature/size of project activities, technical/ policy/institutional complexities, as well as stakeholder ownership and PCU capabilities to manage at the regional level. However, no risks were identified in relation to the extent and nature of co-financing arrangements. The re-assessment of the project-related risks provided as parts of the Progress Reports to the PSC was not based on the original Risk Matrix.

Based on the above, the MTR consultant **rates the risk identification and management Satisfactory (S).**

Finance and co-finance

The tables below provide a summary of resources allocation for the project and of level of disbursement of the GEF grant funds as well as the estimated actual amount of co-finance up to MTR. It has to be pointed out that this is just a review of the financial information and not a financial audit.

Table 8 below displays financial summary of the project implementation.

Table 8: Allocation and disbursement of GEF funds (as of 30 June 2019)

Outcome		Budget	Disbursement		Remaining budget
No.	Title	US\$	US\$	Rate %	US\$
1	Component 1	617,109	290,378.02	47.05%	326,730.98
2	Component 2	1,239,830	596,735.31	48.13%	643,094.69
3	Component 3	1,652,167	469,790.26	28.43%	1,182,376.74
4	Component 4	751,290	373,498.89	49.71%	377,791.11
5	Component 5	815,273	444,510.00	54.52%	370,763.00
6	Component 6 (Project Management)	253,783	90,542.69	35.68%	163,240.31
	Project Total	5,329,452	2,265,455.17	42.51%	3,063,996.83

The financial data in Table 8 shows that as of 30 June 2019 the total disbursement of funds amounted to US\$ 2,265,455.17 that gives the rate of implementation 42.51%. The remaining balance of US\$ 3,063,996.83 represents a substantial budget available for the remaining implementation period of the project. The financial data clearly highlight the need to significantly increase the rate of implementation during the final period of the project.

Table 9 summarizes yearly disbursements on the project individual components.

Table 9: Total project disbursements to date according to years

No.	Title	2017	2018	2019	2017-2019
1	Component 1	92,304.22	125,481.04	72,592.76	290,378.02
2	Component 2	197,764.20	269,072.85	129,898.26	596,735.31
3	Component 3	142,782.30	200,939.40	126,068.56	469,790.26
4	Component 4	91,702.23	194,946.96	86,849.70	373,498.89
5	Component 5	162,822.09	200,726.23	80,961.68	444,510.00
6	Component 6 (Project Management)	36,105.16	37,047.33	17,390.20	90,542.69
	Project Total	723,480.20	1,028,213.81	513,761.16	2,265,455.17

The data in the above tables shows relatively even disbursement patterns for all substantive components of the project during the implementation period. The low delivery rate on Component 3 (only 28.43%) is reflection of the fact that only preparatory work for the demonstration projects has been completed while capital investments for procurement of goods and services have not yet been made. The relatively low share of Component 6 -

Project Management (only 4% of the total disbursements) reflects the fact that part of the costs of the PCU have been spread under the five substantive components and only the remaining part charged to Component 6. This arrangement is in line with the budget breakdown stipulated in the Project Document.

The project budget balance reports submitted to the PSC meetings indicate strong control over the budget by the project management and budget revisions made to best suit the project needs while aligning with the GEF budgeting guidelines.

The evaluator considers the current financial controls for the project sufficient and that the project finances have been managed well. No serious financial issues were found during the MTR.

The co-financing information given at the project inception consists of a list of estimated activities of key national ministries and agencies as well as projects by international donors (UNDP and World Bank). Table 9 below summarizes data on co-financing by source.

Table 9: Allocation of resources for the project by funding source

Funding Source	Amount (US\$)		Type of co-financing
	At Inception	At MTR	
GEF	5,329,452	2,265,455	cash
UNDP Georgia	6,703,510 ⁶	3,261,670	cash
Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources Azerbaijan	770,000	-	In-kind
Ministry of Environment and Natural Resource Protection, Georgia	770,000	-	In-kind
World Bank - Georgia Irrigation and Land Development Project	45,650,000	18,910,000	cash
Azerbaijan Amelioration and Water Management OJSC	100,000,000	114,300,000	cash
AzerSu Joint Stock Company	44,430,000	-	cash
TOTAL	200,211,122	138,737,125	

About 200 million US\$ had been pledged at project inception including more than two thirds of the co-financing total associated with infrastructure projects for rehabilitation of out-of-date irrigation systems in the two countries. The information is somewhat superficial as the irrigation rehabilitation cover activities in wider areas than just the Kura river basin.

The status at MTR is based on confirmation letters provided by the donors. Nevertheless, the above data show that 68.12 % of the co-financing pledged at the project inception has actually been realized up to the MTR stage of this project.

The evaluator found that at the MTR stage the co-financing information from the parallel projects and from the national governments has been somewhat difficult to obtain. The letters confirming the actual levels of co-financing were obtained upon request of PCU couple of weeks after the MTR mission from some but not all contributing partners. The Georgian Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture could not provide the updated co-

⁶ The initial pledge by UNDP has been increased by additional US\$ 3,441,840 as it launched two new large scale initiatives funded by the Green Climate Fund and the Swiss Government. The two initiatives cover 11 river basins including the Kura river basin.

financing letter, since they have encountered difficulty to calculate already spent and expected in-kind contribution. They have not done this before for any other project. Also, AzerSu refused to provide the co-financing information.

More effort should be placed at collecting the co-financing information as the project progresses to find out how the value of actual contributions that have direct linkages to the project, such as the EUWI+ project or the USAID projects for which the respective donors refused to provide update on actual co-financing to PCU. Although the absence of the actual co-financing data does not appear to have a direct negative impact on project implementation and progress towards results, insufficient collection of the co-financing data will pose a challenge later on for the terminal evaluation of the project.

The rating for finance and co-finance component is Satisfactory (S).

Stakeholder engagement

During the design phase of the project, a remarkably wide circle of stakeholders was involved through baseline surveys and consultation workshops/meetings. The extensive stakeholder engagement has been continuing during the project implementation to date. An impressive array of diverse stakeholders, including government officials of the key line ministries and associated agencies, representatives of the academia, NGOs and representatives of private sector have been substantively engaged in the project.

Stakeholder engagement in the project has been based on the initial report that suggested a series of local professional stakeholder engagement inputs in activities under Component 2, namely environmental flows methodologies, river restoration activities, and rational water use for the agricultural and municipal sectors. Despite the differences among the sectors and outputs, the recommendations presented in the report aimed at finding ways to connect with local stakeholders early and repeatedly in the process of engagement, moving beyond the simple provision of information towards the co-production of policy and implementation, and building in mechanisms to re-evaluate and revise strategies on a consistent basis.

The engagement of professional stakeholders was further complemented by preparation of the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy for under Component 4 that was based on a review of project documents, a formal stakeholder survey (conducted in fall 2017), participant observations and interviews during field activities and empirical and theoretical research conducted on the basin. The Strategy integrates best practices in stakeholder engagement in water management with the concrete on-the-ground realities in the Kura river basin and combines theoretical insights from literatures in transboundary river basin management with practical insights and empirical knowledge of the specific case of the Kura river basin. The Strategy's approach to stakeholder engagement aims at building long-term relationships and social capital between sets of relevant stakeholders and developing stakeholder-specific social marketing campaigns and innovation competitions.

The above text expresses the evaluator's impression of an exceptionally good stakeholder engagement planning and execution.

The stakeholder engagement in the project formulation and implementation is rated Highly Satisfactory (HS).

Reporting and communication

Internal communication within the project implementing team has been commendable as the Project Manager has maintained regular and effective communication channels and has demonstrated strong leadership towards key personnel from both parts of the PCU. However, the situation is different with respect to external communication and reporting. In the interviews with the evaluator, representatives of the two UNDP Country Offices and MENR in Azerbaijan expressed discontent with the level and frequency of communications and reporting from the PCU and reiterated their apprehensions during the 3rd PSC meeting. The expressed concerns were related to the overall information about the progress in implementation as well as to the specific parts of the project, in particular the capacity building component. This appears to be a sort of repetition of the similar situation from the previous Kura I project, where the PSC meeting in 2012 hinted at “*suboptimal communication between the PCU and the countries’ NFPs as well as the UNDP offices*”.

Some of the problems in communication with the national stakeholders in Azerbaijan could be originating from the fact that within the first 30 months of implementation there were 3 changes at the position of the National Focal Point and, due to the forthcoming maternity leave of the current NFP, the Government will have to appoint a replacement in the immediate future.

The key national stakeholders also raised concerns that the progress and financial reports had been provided only shortly before the PSC meetings in English version only that precluded a more detailed examination of the substantive and financial information by the key national stakeholders and PSC members. Lack of effective and timely provision of the implementation details to the key national stakeholders is not contributing to the transparency of the process and could pose risk to the level of ownership of the project results by the two governments.

The project has its own dedicated web site of a very good quality that provides a lot of substantial information about the project objectives and component structure. At the time of the MTR, the project already had a Facebook and Instagram pages and the former received more than 14,000 visits in the period February – May 2019. In late April 2019, the project promoted the National Project Officer in Azerbaijan to the role of the new Communication Officer with the immediate task to prepare a new communication and outreach strategy. The latter will address a large variety of target audiences, from national agencies and legislative bodies, through private sector, mass media, academia and civic society, to donors and other international partners.

While the preparation of the new strategy is commendable, it is oriented on the wider circle of stakeholders and the public at large. A more targeted external communication would be desirable to ensure that the key stakeholders receive regular overview as well as specific information about the project’s activities and ensure thus that the project achieves its full potential for producing impacts at national as well as regional level.

The reporting and communication component is rated Moderately Satisfactory (MS).

Overall rating for the project implementation and adaptive management is based on aggregation of the above ratings for the individual sub-components above. Therefore, **the overall rating for project implementation and adaptive management is Satisfactory (S).**

Mainstreaming

During the implementation, the project team made a concerted effort women's involvement in the project, including hiring women experts both at national and international levels, inclusion of the representative of the State Committee on Family, Women and Children Affairs to the National Project Advisory Group in Azerbaijan, as well as encouraging women to participate in all project trainings. Moreover, the project conducted training workshops on gender mainstreaming in both countries that aimed at explaining and emphasizing the women's role in municipal and agricultural water management.

The statistics about the participants in the training component at the MTR stage show a very good gender balance of the trainees. In Azerbaijan, there were 77 females out of the total 151 trainees (51.0%), while in Georgia the ratio of females was even higher, namely 83 females out of the total 140 training participants (59.3%).

Sustainability

The sustainability is defined as continuation of benefits from an intervention, after the development assistance has been completed. The important aspect here is the sustainability of results, not necessarily the sustainability of activities that produced the results. Assessment of sustainability requires evaluation of risks that may affect the continuation of the project outcomes.

The Kura II Project completes about a decade of GEF support for transboundary cooperation in the Kura river basin. It is reasonable to assume that after the Kura II Project there could be no immediate further funding from GEF and this elevates post-project sustainability as a key success criterion.

The commitment of the two recipient governments to sustain results of the current project is judged by examining the existence of the legal and institutional frameworks, prospect of financial resources' availability for future remediation as well as socio-economic and environmental concerns.

Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability

The Kura II Project has been supporting innovative water management and transboundary planning work and as such is providing effective and tangible institutional benefits to the national authorities in Azerbaijan and Georgia and enables them to cope with wider responsibilities of implementing integrated river basin management.

The work under the project is aligned with the key ministries and agencies responsible for water management in both countries. The project activities under Component 1 so far have resulted in production of information and harmonization of methodologies for water flow monitoring and flood risk mapping that are highly aligned with the stated objectives of the countries with regards to transboundary water resources. Moreover, the capacity building

Component 2 provided training and re-training to a number of qualified national experts from the leading national institutions and the private sector. Many national experts had participated and received support in the previous phase of the Kura project. Collectively, the two components of the Kura II project have further strengthened the already existing institutional base in the two countries, provided robust information for good governance based on IWRM and reinforced the mutual trust for information sharing between the two countries.

The principal issue for sustainability of the regional institutional and governance frameworks and mechanisms established under the two phases of the Kura project is the destiny of the bilateral agreement between the two countries⁷. In particular, Article 6 of the draft bilateral agreement envisages that:

“....a Joint Commission will be established as the organ of intergovernmental cooperation between the Parties in the area of protection and rational utilization of the water resources of the Kura River basin.

Negotiations on the bilateral agreement have already started during the Kura I phase and although a modest progress has been reported there is no clue whether and if at all the process will be successfully completed.

Azerbaijan has signed a number of international conventions covering international watercourses and water bodies (lakes) and has already two similar agreements in place on its trans-boundary rivers. An agreement, dating from the Soviet period applies to the Araz river between Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, and, in 2013 another agreement was made between Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation for the Samur river. Georgia does not have any bilateral agreement with neighbouring countries.

The progress towards the bilateral agreement on the Kura river is further complicated by the uneven status of the two countries towards the Helsinki Convention⁸. While Azerbaijan has been party to the Helsinki Convention since 2000, Georgia has not yet joined the Convention.

The project has elaborated a proposal to establish a Water Council and presented it to the both focal point Ministries. The structure of the Water Council would enable the national water management institutions to maintain and continue the current cooperation and information sharing after the completion of the project in case there is not sufficient political will to sign the bilateral agreement.

The evaluator has no doubts about sustainability of the national institutional and governance frameworks created and/or strengthened under this project. However, sustainability of the frameworks and mechanisms for transboundary cooperation at the regional level such as further harmonization of methodologies and information exchange will be fundamentally tied to eventual signing of the bilateral agreement that in turn will enable establishment of the Joint Commission. Absence of the legally binding bilateral agreement for transboundary management of the Kura river could seriously undermine the sustainability of the project results. Only the existence of the bilateral agreement and in particular of the Joint

⁷ Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of Georgia on Cooperation in the Field of Protection and Sustainable Use of the Water Resources of the Kura River Basin

⁸ The Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes was adopted in Helsinki in 1992 and entered into force in 1996.

Commission will provide sufficient assurances that the regional institutional and governance frameworks and mechanisms established by the two phases of the project will be sustained in the future.

Financial risks to sustainability

The financial drivers for sustainability are primarily the potential incentives for households and farmers that will attract other households and farmers to engage in similar activities that are conducted under Component 3 of the project. At the mid-term stage, there is a risk that due to the delays in implementation of the demonstration projects on urban water conservation and drip irrigation the project will not produce enough information to ensure uptake of the results of the demonstration pilots and upscaling and replication of the activities. Production of robust and convincing information from the demonstration pilots would enhance sustainability.

Socio-economic risks to sustainability

Commitment to water conservation and prevention of water pollution in urban and rural settings in the Kura river basin are the main issues for socio-economic sustainability. The demonstration pilots implemented under the project create grounds for benefits to the socio-economic conditions in the two countries. These are primarily the pilots on drip irrigation and water conservation that have the potential to have positive effect on incomes of the direct beneficiaries in the pilot areas and after replication on incomes of the entire population in the Kura river basin. Due to the delayed start of the demonstration pilots, there are no results available that would indicate the potential upscaling and replication. Quantification of income effects from the demonstration drip irrigation farming coupled with wide dissemination of the results are actions that would enhance sustainability and minimize the socio-economic risks.

Environmental risks to sustainability

Absence of the signed bilateral agreement and the Joint Commission for the Kura river basin at the project closure would place at risk the countries' commitments for transboundary cooperation expressed in the SAP that had been developed and signed under the Kura I phase. This would increase environmental risks associated with increased extraction and gradual deterioration of water quality in the Kura river.

Institutionalization of the cooperation at the regional level is the main issue for sustainability of the project results. Therefore, rating of the project sustainability depends on this critical element. The evaluator has no doubt that a majority of planned results will be achieved by the project closure. However, whether the outcomes and outputs will carry on after the project closure is fundamentally tied to the fate of the draft bilateral agreement that has been negotiated by the two countries. **Overall, the evaluator rates sustainability of the project outcomes and outputs as Moderately Likely (ML) in case the participating countries fail to sign the bilateral agreement by the end of the project. Should the participating countries sign the bilateral agreement and establish the Joint Commission for the Kura river basin, the rating of sustainability is Likely (L).**

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the previous section of empirical facts collection, this section synthesizes and interprets the findings into conclusions that make judgments supported by one or more specific findings. The first part provides overall conclusions about the project while the following part gives specific conclusions and recommendations as corrective specific actions to be taken by various project stakeholders.

Overall, the Kura II Project has built on the solid foundations laid by the predecessor Kura I Project and has been instrumental in advancing cooperation and collaboration between the two countries in the field of water resources management in the Kura river basin. The two countries currently exchange data on water levels and flows at key points along the river. Through harmonization of IWRM governance protocols and monitoring procedures they enhance compatibility and comparability of the monitoring data for the shared water quality indicators and through communication of findings and sharing of results enhance transparency of the data collection and build mutual trust in the monitoring results. All these create grounds necessary for improved transboundary water management in the Kura river basin.

On the governance level, the project has provided a guidance for long-term monitoring according to the EU WFD river ecological status criteria and developed an alternative and simplified methodology for hydrological monitoring in the river basin. It also provided recommendations for use of results of the ecological monitoring in environmental flow calculations, including combination of newly collected information with previously accumulated biomonitoring data. Furthermore, the project set the stage for flood risk mapping and development of instruments and mechanisms for reduction of the risks of losses due to floods and for water flow allocation and regulation between sectors.

The project has initiated discussions on shared water quality indicators and water quantity management, developed a structure of a Water Council and presented it to the focal point ministries in both countries. The structure will enable the water management institutions to continue information sharing and cooperation after the finalization of the project. In a semi-formal manner. Although the national and regional harmonization of the integrated water resources management is on track, realization of plans for institutionalization of intersectoral coordination between two countries have not yet started due to unsure levels of political will in both countries.

In the field of the capacity building of water professionals, the project has substantially progressed with assistance to the countries to meet the standards required by the EU WFD. Following the capacity building plan developed by the project, remarkable numbers of beneficiaries and stakeholders have participated in trainings organized in a modular format to address the needs of different groups of water resource professionals from the two countries and bring them to the same level of understanding of issues, key concepts and the fundamental terminology in hydrological modelling, river basin ecology, water resources economics, laboratory quality management, water-energy-food nexus and gender

mainstreaming in IWRM. All trainings have been recorded with the aim to develop online training materials in national languages.

The project has duly executed its firm commitment to education of a wide range of stakeholders, stretching from state and private sectors to community actors and aims at integrating best practices in stakeholder engagement in water management with on-the-ground realities in the Kura river basin. Based on a dedicated Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, the project combines theoretical insights in transboundary river basin management with practical cases and empirical knowledge of the specific conditions in the Kura basin.

Through the educational toolkit Kura Box, the project has reached out to the population at large as ultimate beneficiaries of this intervention. It also fostered engagement and empowerment of academic stakeholders across the Kura river basin by bringing them together, building their capacities in water management and facilitating sustainable information exchange. More recently, the project has started engagement with hotels as one of the main water-consuming industries in the region. Good cooperation has been established with the Georgia Tourism Awards and the Azerbaijan Hotels Association.

The specific component with pilot demonstration projects augments the technical and capacity building activities with an important additional dimension. In implementation of this component, the project team faced a variety of challenges that resulted in substantial delays in relation to the original implementation plan, including complicated procurement procedures, changes and restructuring of the key participating ministries, and unresolved issues of land ownership. Although it is likely that the demonstration pilots will be operational by the original project completion date, suboptimal amount of information will be collected on experience from the operation that are necessary to produce recommendations for scaling up and replication of the pilots.

The established managerial arrangements and frequency of the project governance body's meetings are adequate for the size and level of complexity of the project and has been functioning well since the inception phase of the Project. The establishment and frequency of meetings of the various advisory and working groups show strong commitment and ownership of the project by the key stakeholders in the two countries.

The current financial controls for the project are sufficient and the project finances have been managed well. As of 30 June 2019, the total disbursement of the GEF funds amounted to US\$ 2,265,455.17 that gives the rate of implementation 42.51%. The remaining balance of US\$ 3,063,996.83 represents a substantial budget available for the remaining implementation period of the project. The financial data clearly highlight the need to significantly increase the rate of implementation during the final period of the project. However, the co-financing information from the parallel projects and from the national governments has been somewhat difficult to obtain and the absence of the periodic co-financing data collection requires immediate attention of the PCU.

Internal communication within the project implementing team has been commendable as the Project Manager has maintained regular and effective communication channels and has demonstrated strong leadership towards key personnel from the PCU. However, the situation

is different with respect to external communication and reporting. A more targeted external communication would be desirable to ensure that the key stakeholders receive regular overview as well as specific information about the project's activities and ensure thus that the project achieves its full potential for producing impacts at national as well as regional level.

The main issue for sustainability of the project is whether the two countries sign the bilateral agreement and establish the Joint Commission for the Kura River basin by the end of the project. The evaluator has no doubt that a majority of planned results will be achieved by the project closure. However, whether the outcomes and outputs will carry on after the project closure is fundamentally tied to the fate of the draft bilateral agreement that has been negotiated by the two countries.

In order to better link the conclusion/recommendation pairs to the evaluative evidence, a concise finding statement is presented first and then followed by the relevant conclusion and recommendation.

Concise Finding 1: The implementation of the demonstration pilot projects on construction wetlands for river restoration in Shrivani, Azerbaijan, and Surami/Khashuri, Georgia, have experienced an array of challenges that resulted in substantive implementation delays *vis-à-vis* the original implementation plan.

Conclusion 1: Due to the nature and complexity of procurement of construction works and maintenance services for the constructed wetlands under Output 3.3 the completion of the output could drag out towards the end of the project implementation period.

***Recommendation 1:** The project team in cooperation with the Procurement Unit in UNDP IRH should accelerate implementation of procurement of the works and services for Output 3.3 and closely monitor the performance of the local contractors in Azerbaijan and Georgia to ensure all deliverables under this output are realized by the end of the 1st quarter 2020.*

Concise Finding 2: The project was expected to demonstrate 4 sector-specific water use efficiency interventions and undertake data collection and measurements on impacts compared to a control study case for at least 18 months and provide final reports with lessons learned and recommendations for up scaling and replication. However, the implementation of the demonstrations has fallen well behind the original schedule.

Conclusion 2: Due to the delays in operationalization of the demo pilots, it will not be possible to collect more than 9 months of data for these demonstrations within the current timeline of the project. This means that not enough information will be collected on experience from the operation of the demonstration pilots for formulation of recommendations for scaling up and replication.

***Recommendation 2:** UNDP IRH on behalf of the Governments of Azerbaijan and Georgia should submit to the GEF Secretariat a request for a non-cost extension of the project by 6 months until February 2021 to ensure sufficient time for the collection of data and experience from the demonstration pilots. Based on the project funds*

disbursement to date, it is reasonable to assume that there will be sufficient financial resources to continue the project until the extended completion date.

Concise Finding 3: Negotiations between the two governments on the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Protection and Sustainable Use of the Water Resources of the Kura River Basin had started during the Kura I phase and although a modest progress has been reported there is no clue whether and if at all the process will be successfully completed.

Conclusion 3: Absence of the signed bilateral agreement and the Joint Commission for the Kura river basin at the project closure would place at risk the countries' commitments for transboundary cooperation expressed in the SAP that had been developed and signed under the Kura I phase. It is desirable to consider alternative solutions for continued regional cooperation.

***Recommendation 3:** The project team in cooperation with the focal point ministries in Azerbaijan and Georgia should elaborate an exit strategy to be pursued in case the two countries fail to institutionalize the cooperation at the regional level by the end of the current project. The strategy should be presented to the final meeting of the Project Steering Committee and should consider short-term options such as operationalization of temporary regional structures and longer-term options such as preparation of another project under GEF-7 or GEF-8 funding cycles.*

Concise Finding 4: The Kura II project results framework contains several indicators for environmental stress reduction and environmental status. However, the project appears to be mostly process-oriented and hence will not immediately lead to environmental stress reduction or changes of environmental status, at least during the project implementation period. Environmental quality and/or stress reduction indicators are purposeless for measurement of achievement of process-related outputs as it is difficult to establish a direct causal relationship between the output and the environmental status and/or stress reduction.

Conclusion 4: It is allowed that mid-term evaluations propose changes to the logical framework and reformulation of indicators and their target values. Based on the actual situation of implementation, a revision of the indicators and targets would be a reasonable action to optimize the results framework and make the indicators more relevant for measurement of the outputs.

***Recommendation 4:** The project team should undertake a specific revision of the project results framework to ensure consistency of the indicators and target values with the outputs they are supposed to measure.*

Concise Finding 5: The progress and financial reports presented to the PSC meetings have been provided only shortly before the PSC meetings in English version only. The late provision of the report precluded a more detailed examination of the substantive and financial information by the key national stakeholders and PSC members.

Conclusion 5: Lack of effective and timely provision of the implementation details to the key national stakeholders is not contributing to the transparency of the process and could pose risk to the level of ownership of the project results by the two governments.

Recommendation 5: *The project team should provide the progress and financial reports at least three weeks before the PSC meetings in English as well as in the two national languages.*

Concise Finding 6: Some of the key stakeholders, namely relevant ministries and the two UNDP COs, expressed concerns about lack of involvement in the process of the trainees' selection and suboptimal sharing of information about the pool of trainees.

Conclusion 6: Better exchange of information about the results of the training component would enable the stakeholders to consider a more targeted involvement of the trainees in other activities and thus enhance sustainability of the capacity building component of this project.

Recommendation 6: *The PCU should immediately share information about the national experts that participated in the project and/or were trained with the key national stakeholders and the UNDP COs and ensure that training materials are available on-line as soon as possible after completion of each training.*

Concise Finding 7: A number of international and national experts has been engaged by the project and more than two dozen technical reports were produced on an array of topics such as assessment of water infrastructure, enforcement of legislation in water sector, evaluation of legal and institutional capacities for IWRM, analysis and design of the IWRM information management and decision support systems, economic impacts of environmental degradation, economic benefits of application of green technologies in water sector, and harmonization of environmental monitoring and testing.

Conclusion 7: The technical reports produced by international and national experts are of a good quality but so far have limited audience since they have been used by the PCU.

Recommendation 7: *The PCU should ensure that important technical reports by international consultants are translated into local languages and together with technical reports by national experts are accessible by a wider audience, including the two UNDP COs, to ensure better uptake by relevant national stakeholders*

Concise Finding 8: About 200 million US\$ had been pledged at project inception including more than two thirds of the co-financing total associated with infrastructure projects for rehabilitation of out-of-date irrigation systems in the two countries. The evaluator found that at the MTR stage the co-financing information from the parallel projects and from the national governments has been somewhat difficult to obtain.

Conclusion 8: More effort should be placed at collecting the co-financing information as the project progresses to find out the level of actual contributions that have direct linkages to the project (such as EUWI+ project). Although the absence of the actual co-financing data does not appear to have a direct negative impact on project implementation and progress towards results, insufficient collection of the co-financing data will pose a challenge later on for the terminal evaluation of the project.

Recommendation 8: *PCU should obtain annual updates of the actual level of co-financing from parallel projects and ensure that updated information on realized co-financing is available before the start of the terminal evaluation of this project.*

Concise Finding 9: Since the start of the implementation, parallel projects with direct linkages to the Kura II project have commenced, namely EUWI+ and SEIS projects. More recently, UNDP Georgia started implementation of the seven-year project “Scaling-up multi-hazard early warning system and the use of climate information in Georgia” with financial support from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Swiss Government. The latter project will assist to upgrade and expand the hydrometeorological and agrometeorological monitoring network, and support establishment of a centralized multi-hazard risk information and knowledge system. The GCF project is expected to achieve its goals by scaling-up of several projects and initiatives already under implementation.

Conclusion 9: Cooperation with the GCF project on local-level flood hazard mapping and vulnerability assessment can further improve the developed forecasting and early warning systems, the promoted climate-informed water management policies and the demonstrated community adaptation actions in the Kura river basin.

Recommendation 9: *The PCU in cooperation with the key national stakeholders in Georgia should establish a close cooperation with the UNDP CO that is the implementing agency of the GCF project in Georgia.*

Concise Finding 10: The project faced several challenges in procurement of goods and national expert services. Due to the complicated procurement procedures and sub-optimal staffing of the IRH procurement unit, some activities were delayed and/or required changes by adaptive management.

Conclusion 10: The procurement of goods and national expert services by IRH was not conducive to the project implementation as procurement of national goods and services is optimally conducted at the national level.

Recommendation 10: *UNDP IRH together with the UNDP COs in Azerbaijan and Georgia should streamline the procurement procedures for the remainder of the project by delegating national procurement of goods and services to the UNDP COs.*

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Mid-term Review Terms of Reference

Consultant for UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (IRH)

Location :	home-based with missions to Baku and Georgia
Application Deadline :	25-Mar-19 (Midnight New York, USA)
Time left :	2d 13h 58m
Type of Contract :	Individual Contract
Post Level :	International Consultant
Languages Required :	English
Duration of Initial Contract :	Estimated March-July 2019
Expected Duration of Assignment :	app. 25 working days

Background

Project Title Kura II:

Advancing IWRM Across the Kura River Basin through implementation of the transboundary agreed actions and national plans

Project Description:

This is the Terms of Reference for the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of the full -sized project titled Kura II: Advancing IWRM Across the Kura River Basin through implementation of the transboundary agreed actions and national plans (5325#) implemented through the UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub, which is to be undertaken in 2019. The project started on the 23 August 2016 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). The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects.

The project was designed to:

The UNDP-GEF Kura Project “Advancing Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) across the Kura river basin through implementation of the transboundary agreed actions and national plans” 2016-2020 is implementing the Strategic Action Program for the Kura River Basin in partnership with the Governments of Georgia and Azerbaijan. The SAP is framed around four agreed Ecosystem Quality Objectives (EQO) which are:

- To achieve sustainable utilization of water resources to ensure access to water and preserve ecosystem services;
- To achieve water quality such that it would ensure access to clean water for present and future generations and sustain ecosystem functions in the Kura river basin;
- To achieve and maintain ecosystem status whereby they provide essential environmental and socio-economic services in a sustainable manner in the Kura River Basin; and,
- To achieve mitigation of adverse impacts of flooding and climate change on infrastructures, riparian ecosystems and communities.

The GEF 6 supports priority activities towards these objectives. The GEF funded SAP implementation Project has the objective “to integrate water resources management in the Kura river basin to address water-energy-food-ecosystem security nexus through the implementation of agreed actions in the SAP”.

There are five components to support the countries to achieve this objective. These are:

- Project Component 1: Establishment of effective cross sectoral IWRM governance protocols at the local, national and transboundary levels in the Kura Basin;
- Project Component 2: Strengthening national capacities to implement multi-sectoral IWRM in the Kura basin;
- Project Component 3: Stress reduction in critical areas and pre-feasibility studies to identify investment opportunities for improving river system health;
- Project Component 4: Targeted education and involvement projects to empower stakeholders in implementing local / national / regional actions in support of SAP implementation;
- Project Component 5: Enhancing science for governance by strengthening monitoring, information management and data analysis systems for IWRM.

The UNDP-GEF Kura II Project Coordination Unit is located in Baku Azerbaijan, and has an additional office and training center in Tbilisi Georgia. There are 6 full time project staff in the Baku PCU and 3 in the Tbilisi Office. There are over 60 national and international consultants working on the project. The primary beneficiaries are the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia. Additional involved stakeholders include (inter alia): the Amelioration Joint Stock Company of Azerbaijan, Ministry of Emergency Situations of Azerbaijan, Parliament of Azerbaijan, AzerSu Joint Stock Company of Azerbaijan, The National Environment Agency of Georgia, Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia, United Water Supply Company of Georgia, Georgia Ministry of Sustainable Development, The GEF Grant for the Project budget is \$5,329,452, with over \$190,000,000 in co-financing from national partners in Azerbaijan and Georgia.

The UNDP GEF Kura II Project is under Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) via UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub. This is a pilot both for DIM for GEF IW Project, and for IRH to have a project team remotely located.

Duties and Responsibilities

Consultant 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 Steering 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 an 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 Azerbaijan and Georgia), including the following project sites (Baku, Hajigabol, Tbilisi, Gori, Khashuri). Additionally, the findings of the review will be presented at the second Annual Steering Committee Meeting 20-21 June 2019 in Ganje, Azerbaijan.

Consultant 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.

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.

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.

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

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 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 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 should make no more than 15 recommendations total.

Expected Outputs and Deliverables

The MTR consultant shall prepare and submit:

- MTR Inception Report: MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of the Midterm Review no later than 4 weeks before the MTR mission. To be sent to the Commissioning Unit and project management. Approximate due date: (3 April)
- Presentation: Initial Findings presented to project management and the Commissioning Unit at the end of the MTR mission. Approximate due date: (10 May)
- Draft Final Report: Full report with annexes within 5 weeks of the MTR mission to the Project Steering Committee Meeting. Approximate due date: (27 May)
- 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: (19 July)

*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.

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 Istanbul Regional Hub.

The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with Consultant to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

Duration of the Work

The total duration of the MTR will be approximately 25 of days over a period of 17 of weeks starting 29 March, and shall not exceed five months from when the consultant is hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

- (22 March 2019): Application closes
- (26 March 2019): Selection of MTR Team
- (29 March 2019): Preparation of Consultant (handover of project documents)
- (29 March - 3 April 2019) app. 3 days: Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report

- (4 April 2019) app. 1 day: Finalization and Validation of MTR Inception Report-6 May, latest start of MTR mission
- (30 April – 10 May 2019) app. 11 days: MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits
- (10 May): Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of MTR mission
- (13-27 May 2019) app. 7 days: Preparing draft report
- (27 May – 5 July 2019) app. 1 days: Incorporating audit trail on draft report/Finalization of MTR report
- (20-21 June 2019) app. 2 Days: Presentation of draft report to the Project Steering Committee
- (12 July 2019): Preparation & Issue of Management Response
- (19 July 2019): Expected date of full MTR completion
- The date start of contract is (22 March 2019).

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

Duty Station

Home based with travel to Baku Azerbaijan, as well as field trips to Hajigabol Azerbaijan, Tbilisi Georgia with field trips to Gori and Khashuri/Suramin in Georgia. Attendance at Project Steering Committee in Genge Azerbaijan

Travel:

- International travel will be required to (Azerbaijan and Georgia) during the MTR mission;
- BSAFE security course must be successfully completed prior to commencement of travel;
- Individual Consultants are responsible for ensuring they have vaccinations/inoculations when travelling to certain countries, as designated by the UN Medical Director.
- Consultants are required to comply with the UN security directives set forth under <https://dss.un.org/dssweb/>

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.

Competencies

Corporate competencies:

- Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP;
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability;
- Treats all people fairly without favoritism;
- Fulfills all obligations to gender sensitivity and zero tolerance for sexual harassment.

Functional competencies:

- Excellent communication skills
- Demonstrable analytical skills

Required Skills and Experience

Education:

- A Master's degree in water resources management, applied water resources evaluation or other closely related field.

Experience:

- Recent experience (within 5 years) with result-based management evaluation methodologies required
- Experience applying SMART targets and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios required
- Experience in adaptive management, as applied to GEF International Waters transboundary fresh water systems required
- Experience working with the GEF evaluations required
- Experience working in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Caucasus in fresh water management required, in evaluation of project implementation preferred
- Work experience in transboundary fresh water management for at least 5 years required
- Experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis and demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and GEF International Waters is an asset
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset

Language skills:

- English is the working language of the UNDP-GEF Kura II Project and it required, the ability to communicate in Russian is an asset.

Evaluation of Applicants

Individual consultants will be evaluated based on a cumulative analysis taking into consideration the combination of the applicants' qualifications and financial proposal.

The award of the contract should be made to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as: a) responsive/compliant/acceptable, and b) having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical (P11/CV desk reviews, methodology evaluation and interviews) and financial criteria specific to the solicitation.

Only candidates who will get min. 70% of points in desk review and methodology evaluation (criteria A-G) will be invited for an interview. Only candidates who receive 70% or more of points in technical evaluation (Criteria A-J) will be considered for financial evaluation.

Technical Criteria - 70% of total evaluation – max. 100 points:

- Criteria A – (desk review) Education in water resources management, applied water resources evaluation or other closely related field. max. 10 pts
- Criteria B - (desk review) Experience applying SMART targets and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios; max. 5 pts
- Criteria C – (desk review) Experience with adaptive management, as applied to GEF International Waters transboundary fresh water systems; max. 15 pts
- Criteria D - (desk review) Work experience in transboundary fresh water management; max. 10 pts

- Criteria E - (desk review) Experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis and demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and GEF International Waters: max. 5 pts
- Criteria F - (desk review) Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset; max. 5 pts
- Criteria G - (methodology) Demonstrable analytical skills, communication skills, language skills; max. 25 pts
- Criteria H - (interviews) Recent experience (within 5 years) with result-based management evaluation methodologies; max. 5 pts
- Criteria I - (interviews) Experience working with the GEF evaluations; max. 10 pts
- Criteria J - (interviews) Experience working in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Caucasus in fresh water management required, in evaluation of project implementation; max. 10 pts

Financial Criteria - 30% of total evaluation – max. 43 points.

Application Process

The application submission is a two-step process. Failing to comply with the submission process may result in disqualifying the applications.

Step 1: Interested candidates must include the following documents when submitting the applications (Please group all your documents into one (1) single PDF attachment as the system only allows upload of one document):

- Cover letter and 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)
- Personal CV or a P11 Personal History form 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
(http://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/dam/rbec/docs/P11_modified_for_SCs_and_ICs.doc);

Step 2: Submission of Financial Proposal - Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted and requested to provide a financial offer. Price offer must not be included in the online application.

Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration. Please make sure you have provided all requested materials.

Payments will be made only upon confirmation of UNDP on delivering on the contract obligations in a satisfactory manner.

Individual Consultants are responsible for ensuring they have vaccinations/inoculations when travelling to certain countries, as designated by the UN Medical Director. Consultants are also required to comply with the UN security directives set forth under dss.un.org.

Annex 2: Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
Project Strategy	<p>Are the project's objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame?</p> <p>Does the progress so far indicate that the project could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects that could be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis?</p> <p>Are broader development and gender aspects of the project being monitored effectively?</p> <p>Develop and recommend SMART 'development' indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits</p> <p>How relevant is the project strategy to address the country priorities? Is the project in line with the national sector development priorities and plans?</p> <p>To what extent were perspectives of those affected by project decisions and of those who could affect the outcomes, taken into account during project design processes?</p> <p>Does the project strategy provide an effective route towards expected/intended results?</p> <p>To what extent were lessons learned from other relevant projects incorporated into the project design?</p> <p>Are the underlying assumptions for the problem addressed by the project still valid?</p>	<p>Project activities in line with the country development and sectoral priorities and plans</p> <p>Activities produce outputs according to the project logframe</p> <p>Lessons learned from previous projects taken into account for implementation</p> <p>Assumptions and risks identified are effectively managed</p>	<p>UNDP programme/project documents</p> <p>UNDP programme/project Annual Work Plans</p> <p>Programmes/projects/ thematic areas evaluation reports</p> <p>Government's national planning documents</p> <p>Human Development Reports</p> <p>MDG progress reports Government partners</p> <p>progress reports</p> <p>Interviews with beneficiaries</p> <p>UNDP staff</p> <p>Development partners (UN agencies, bilateral development agencies)</p> <p>Government partners involved in specific results/thematic areas</p> <p>Concerned civil society partners</p> <p>Concerned associations and federations</p>	<p>Desk reviews of secondary data</p> <p>Interviews with government partners</p> <p>Interviews with NGOs partners/service providers</p> <p>Interviews with funding agencies and other UNCT</p> <p>Interviews with UNDP staff, development partners and government partners, civil society partners, associations, and federations</p>
Progress Towards Results	<p>Which are the aspects of the project that have already been successful and how the project can further expand these benefits?</p> <p>How does the GEF Tracking Tool at the Baseline compare with the GEF TT completed before the Midterm Review?</p> <p>How far has the regional context been taken into consideration while selecting the project/ programme?</p> <p>Was there any partnership strategy in place for implementation of the project and if so how effective was it?</p>	<p>GEF TT used as project management instrument</p> <p>The project has partnership strategy and actions taken to promote cooperation between partners</p>	<p>Project/programme/thematic areas evaluation reports</p> <p>Progress reports on projects UNDP staff</p> <p>Development partners Government partners</p> <p>Beneficiaries</p> <p>Progress reports on projects</p> <p>Programme documents</p> <p>Annual Work Plans/Progress Reports</p> <p>Evaluation reports</p> <p>MDG/Human Development Reports</p>	<p>Desk reviews of secondary data</p> <p>Interviews with government partners, development partners, UNDP staff, civil society partners, associations, and federations</p>
Evaluation	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods

Criteria				
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	<p>Has the project or programme been implemented within the original timeframe and budget?</p> <p>To what extent the work-planning processes are results-based?</p> <p>To what extent has the project's results framework/logframe been used as a management tool and were there any changes to it since the project start?</p> <p>Have UNDP and the PMU taken prompt actions to solve implementation issues?</p> <p>Have there been any delays in project start-up and implementation and if so what were the causes and how they have been solved?</p> <p>What mechanisms does UNDP have in place to monitor implementation? Are these effective?</p> <p>Have there been any outside factors (e.g. political instability) affecting on implementation effectiveness?</p>	<p>Project implementation within the original timeframe and budget</p> <p>Annual workplans elaborated according to the logframe</p> <p>Implementation issues solved by PMU/UNDP</p> <p>Implementation monitoring tools in place and effectively used</p>	<p>Programme documents</p> <p>Annual Work Plans</p> <p>Annual Progress Reports</p> <p>Evaluation reports</p> <p>Government partners Development partners</p> <p>UNDP staff (Programme Implementation Support Unit)</p>	<p>Desk reviews of secondary data</p> <p>Interviews with government partners and development partners</p>
	<p>To what extent financial controls have been established that allow the project management to make informed decisions regarding the budget at any time and allow for the timely flow of funds?</p> <p>Has there been over-expenditure or under-expenditure on the project?</p> <p>Were the resources focused on the set of activities that were expected to produce significant results?</p> <p>Were the project resources concentrated on the most important initiatives or were they scattered/spread thinly across initiatives?</p>	<p>Financial controls established and used to provide feedback on implementation</p> <p>Activities prioritized for achievement of significant results</p>	<p>Programme documents</p> <p>Annual Work Plans</p> <p>Annual Progress Reports</p> <p>Evaluation reports</p> <p>Government partners Development partners</p> <p>UNDP staff (Programme Implementation Support Unit)</p>	<p>Desk reviews of secondary data</p> <p>Interviews with government partners and development partners</p>
	<p>Have changes been made and are they effective?</p> <p>Are the existing responsibilities and reporting lines clear?</p> <p>To what extent is decision-making in the project transparent and undertaken in a timely manner?</p>	<p>Decision-making on implementation transparent and timely</p> <p>Implementation of components with multiple responsible partners clear and timely</p>	<p>Programme documents</p> <p>Annual Work Plans</p> <p>Annual Progress Reports</p> <p>Evaluation reports</p> <p>Government partners Development partners</p> <p>UNDP staff (Programme Implementation Support Unit)</p>	<p>Desk reviews of secondary data</p> <p>Interviews with government partners and development partners</p>

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management (continued)	Has the project developed and leveraged partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders? Do the stakeholders have roles in project decision-making that support efficient and effective project implementation? To which extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives and are there any limitations to stakeholder awareness of project outcomes/ participation in project activities?	Mechanisms for involvement of other stakeholders in place Other stakeholders aware of the project and involved in implementation	Programme documents Annual Work Plans Annual Progress Reports	Desk reviews of secondary data
	How the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfill the GEF reporting requirements? To what extent have lessons derived from the adaptive management process been documented, shared with and internalized by key partners and incorporated into project implementation? Have the PIRs been shared with the Project Board and other key stakeholders?	Quality reporting according to GEF reporting requirements Lessons for adaptive management documented and taken into account for implementation	Evaluation reports Progress reports UNDP programme staff	Desk reviews of secondary data Interview UNDP programme staff
	How regular and effective has been the internal project communication with project stakeholders? Are there any ways of external communication established to inform about the project progress the public? Are there any aspects of the project that might yield excellent communications material as additional project output?	Quality and effectiveness of internal communication Possibilities for additional communication material identified	Evaluation reports Progress reports UNDP programme staff	Desk reviews of secondary data Interview UNDP programme staff

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
Sustainability	<p>What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends?</p> <p>To what extent financial and economic instruments and mechanisms have been established or will be established to ensure the ongoing flow of benefits once the GEF assistance ends?</p> <p>What additional factors are needed to create an enabling environment for continued financing?</p>	<p>Existence of counterpart/stakeholder funding for the project outcomes</p> <p>Additional factors for continued financing identified</p>	<p>Programme documents</p> <p>Annual Work Plans</p> <p>Annual Progress Reports</p> <p>Evaluation reports</p> <p>Government partners Development partners</p> <p>UNDP staff (Programme Implementation Support Unit)</p>	<p>Desk reviews of secondary data</p> <p>Interviews with government partners and development partners</p>
	<p>Has the project put in place frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes that will create mechanisms for institutional and technical knowledge transfer after the project's closure?</p> <p>To what extent has the project been developing institutional capacity (systems, structures, staff, expertise, etc.) that will be self-sufficient after the project closure date?</p> <p>Has the project achieved stakeholders' consensus regarding courses of action after the project's closure?</p>	<p>Institutional frameworks for continuation of activities established</p> <p>Level of self-sufficiency of the established institutional frameworks</p>	<p>Programme documents</p> <p>Annual Work Plans</p> <p>Annual Progress Reports</p> <p>Evaluation reports</p> <p>Government partners Development partners</p> <p>UNDP staff (Programme Implementation Support Unit)</p>	<p>Desk reviews of secondary data</p> <p>Interviews with government partners and development partners</p>
	<p>Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes?</p> <p>Are there any environmental factors that could undermine and reverse the project's outcomes, including factors that have been identified by project stakeholders?</p> <p>What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained?</p> <p>Is there sufficient public/ stakeholder awareness in support of the objectives of the project?</p>	<p>Social, political and environmental risks identified and taken into account</p> <p>Level of stakeholder awareness and ownership of the project results</p>	<p>Programme documents</p> <p>Annual Work Plans</p> <p>Annual Progress Reports</p> <p>Evaluation reports</p> <p>Government partners Development partners</p> <p>UNDP staff (Programme Implementation Support Unit)</p>	<p>Desk reviews of secondary data</p> <p>Interviews with government partners and development partners</p>

SAMPLE QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE PROMOTION OF UN VALUES FROM A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE				
Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
Supporting policy dialogue on human development issues	<p>To what extent does the initiative support the government in monitoring achievement of MDGs?</p> <p>What assistance has the initiative provided supported the government in promoting human development approach and monitoring MDGs? Comment on how effective this support has been.</p>	Level of contribution of the project to the achievement of MDGs	<p>Project documents</p> <p>Evaluation reports</p> <p>HDR reports</p> <p>MDG reports</p> <p>National Planning Commission</p> <p>Ministry of Finance</p>	<p>Desk review of secondary data</p> <p>Interviews with government partners</p>
Contribution to gender equality	<p>To what extent was the UNDP initiative designed to appropriately incorporate in each outcome area contributions to attainment of gender equality?</p> <p>To what extent did UNDP support positive changes in terms of gender equality and were there any unintended effects?</p> <p>Provide example(s) of how the initiative contributes to gender equality.</p> <p>Can results of the programme be disaggregated by sex?</p>	Level of monitoring of gender related issues	<p>Project documents</p> <p>Evaluation reports</p> <p>UNDP staff</p> <p>Government partners</p> <p>Beneficiaries</p>	<p>Desk review of secondary data</p> <p>Interviews with UNDP staff and government partners</p> <p>Observations from field visits</p>
Addressing equity issues (social inclusion)	<p>To what extent does the project take into account the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged to promote social equity, for example, women, youth, disabled persons?</p> <p>Provide example(s) of how the initiative takes into account the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, for example, women, youth, disabled persons.</p> <p>How has UNDP programmed social inclusion into the initiative?</p>	Level of monitoring of social inclusion related issues	<p>Project documents</p> <p>Evaluation reports</p> <p>UNDP staff</p> <p>Government partners</p> <p>Beneficiaries</p>	<p>Desk review of secondary data</p> <p>Interviews with UNDP staff and government partners</p> <p>Observations from field visits</p>

Annex 3: MTR Mission Itinerary

Georgia

Date	Time	Organization
10/06/2019	09:00	Kura II Project Team Georgia
	14:00	Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia
	16:00	National Environmental Agency Laboratory
	17:00	UNDP Georgia
11/06/2019	09:00	Departure for field trip
	11:00	Village of Ruisi, Kareli Municipality, Drip Irrigation Demo Site
	14:00	Khashuri site of the constructed wetland project
	15:00	Khashuri Municipality City Hall
12/06/2019	10:00	National Environmental Agency
	14:00	United Water Supply Company of Georgia
	15:15	Ministry of Culture, Sports, Science and Education
	17:00	Georgian Amelioration <i>Meeting in KURA II office</i>
13/06/2019	10:00	KRBAC (Kura River Basin Academic Council) <i>Meeting in KURA II office</i>
	10:45	ED (Environment and Development NGO) <i>Meeting in KURA II office</i>
	12:00	EUWI+ project
	14:00	Georgia Hotel Awards
	16:00	Kura II Project
14/06/2019	10:00	UNDP Georgia debriefing

Azerbaijan

Date	Time	Organization
24/06/2019	10:00	UNDP Kura II Project Team Azerbaijan
	15:00	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan
	17:00	UNDP-CO in Azerbaijan
25/06/2019	10:00	Meetings with national experts at the Kura II PCU
	11:00	
	14:00	Meeting with national experts at the Kura II PCU
	15:00	Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan
	16:00	Azerbaijan Amelioration and Water Management OJSC
	17:00	Azerbaijan Tourism Agency
26/06/2019		Field Trip to visit the demo projects sites The drip irrigation project implementation site in the Jafarkhan village, in Saatly region Hajigabul Lake – the demo site for the building of the constructed wetlands for treatment of household sewage in Shirvan town
27/06/2019	10.00	“ <i>Sukanal</i> ”- Scientific-Research and Design Institute of the AZERSU JSC
	11:00	
	15:00	“IDEA” Public Union
	16:30	Azerbaijan Hotel Association

Annex 4: List of Persons Interviewed

Georgia:

Name	Organization	Position
Mariam Makarova	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture	Head of Environment and Climate Change Department, Water Division, Kura II Project Focal Point
Nino Tkhilava	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture	Head of Environment and Climate Change Department, GEF Focal Point
Gizo Chelidze	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture	Head of Hydromelioration and Land Management Department
Marine Arabidze	National Environmental Agency	Head of Environmental Pollution Monitoring Department, KURA II Water Quality Expert
Elina Bakradze	National Environmental Agency	Head of Atmospheric Air, Water and Soil Analysis Laboratory; KURA II Senior Physio-chemical Monitoring and Assessment Expert
Giorgi Kordzakhia	National Environmental Agency	Deputy Head of Hydrometeorology Department, KURA II Water Resources Management Expert
Irakli Megrelidze	National Environmental Agency	Deputy Head of Hydrometeorology Department, KURA II Senior Hydro-morphology Expert
Bichiko Baliashvili	Farmer	Farmer
Giorgi Guraspashvili,	Khashuri Municipality	Mayor
Archil Shalibashvili	Khashuri Municipality	KURA II Environmental Awareness Raising Local Expert
Avtandil Tabatadze	Khashuri Municipality	KURA II River Restoration Expert
Vepkhvia Bliadze	Khashuri Municipality	KURA II Municipal Solid Waste Management Expert
Keti Chomakhidze	United Water Supply Company of Georgia, Environmental Department	KURA II Senior Municipal Water Demand Expert
Teona Tigishvili	Ministry of Culture, Sports, Science and Education, Department of Preschool and Secondary Education Development	KURA II Geography Expert;
Baadur Ukleba	Georgian Amelioration	Chief Hydrologist; KURA II Irrigation Water Demands Expert
Davit Kereselidze	Tbilisi State University	Head of Hydrology, Oceanology and Meteorology Department, KURA II Hydrogeological Expert
Kakha Bakhtadze	Environment and Development NGO	Director
Zurab Jincharadze	EUWI+ Initiative	Project Representative in Georgia and Caucasus Coordination
Eliso Barnovi	EUWI+ Initiative	Project Representative in Georgia, KURA II Georgian River System Ecology Expert

Azerbaijan

Name	Organization	Position
Rasim Sattarzade	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	Head of the Environmental Policy Division
Emin Garabaghly	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	Head of the International Cooperation Division
Mutallim Abdulhasanov	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	Chief of Section
Aynur Aliyeva,	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	NFP for the UNDP-GEF Kura II Project
Asif Verdiyev	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	Chief Hydrologist, National Hydrometeorological Department
Shamil Huseynov	Milli Majlis Parliament of Azerbaijan	Chief Adviser, Committee on Natural Resources, Energy and Environment
Ramina Abdullayeva	Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan	National Expert
Nijat Mammadli	Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan	Head of International Cooperation Division
Mammad Asadov	Azerbaijan Amelioration and Water Management OJSC	Head of the Department of the Science, Design, Construction, and International Cooperation
Ajdar Javadov	Azerbaijan Amelioration and Water Management OJSC	Head of the Department of Exploitation of Irrigation Systems
Azer Orujov	Azerbaijan Tourism Agency	Adviser
Kanan Karimli	Regional Ecological Entity of MENR for Hajigabul and Shirvan regions	Director
Mirza Akberov	Mugan Amelioration and Experimental Station of Amelioration JSC	Director
Shakir Alilyev	Azad 92 company	Director
Farda Imanov	“Sukanal”- Scientific-Research and Design Institute of the AZERSU JSC	Deputy Director
Surkhay Shukurov	“IDEA” Public Union	Executive Director
Gunay Saglam	Azerbaijan Hotel Association	Secretary General
Gunay Bayramova	State Tourism Agency	Head of the Tourism Industry and Project Management Divisiom
Chingiz Mammadov	UNDP-CO	Senior Programme Adviser

Kura Project Coordination Unit

Name	Organization	Position
Vladimir Mamaev	UNDP IRH	GEF Regional Technical Advisor for International Waters
Mary Matthews	PCU Baku	Chief Technical Advisor and Regional Project Coordinator
Ahmed Abu Elseoud	PCU Baku	Senior Capacity Building Expert
Jeanene Mitchell	PCU Baku	International Expert on Stakeholder Engagament
Elchin Mamedov	PCU Baku	National Coordinator
Sona Gulieva	PCU Baku	National Officer and Communication Expert
Hajar Huseynova	PCU Baku	Project Analyst
Maia Ochigava	PCU Tbilisi	Financial and Administrative Officer
Tamar Gugushvili	PCU Tbilisi	National Coordinator
Lana Manjgaladze	PCU Tbilisi	National Officer
Ia Bakuradze	PCU Tbilisi	Junior Expert
Ani Gabrichidze	PCU Tbilisi	Junior Expert
Tornike Bubashvili	PCU Tbilisi	Junior Expert

Annex 5: List of Documents Consulted

1. Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects UNDP-GEF, 2014
2. The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, GEF Evaluation Office, 2010
3. UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, UNDP, 2019
4. Outcome-Level Evaluations, A Companion Guide, UNDP, 2011
5. Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management, OECD, 2010
6. Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations, UNEG, 2008
7. Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations, UNEG, 2014
8. Kura II: Advancing IWRM across the Kura river basin through implementation of the transboundary agreed actions and national plans, Project Document, UNDP, 2016
9. Advancing IWRM Across the Kura River Basin, Inception Workshop Report, UNDP, 2017
10. Kura II: Minutes of the Second Steering Committee Meeting, UNDP, 2018
11. Kura II Annual Review: Status Update of Project Deliverables January 2017 – June 2018, PCU, June 2018
12. Kura II 2018 – mid 2019 Progress Report and Work Plan through 2020, PCU, June 2019
13. Combined Delivery Reports (CDRs) for 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 to date, UNDP, July 2019
14. Reports by international and national experts, PCU, 2017-2019
15. CTA Notes, 2017 – April 2019, PCU
16. Reducing Transboundary Degradation in the Kura-Aras River Basin, Final Terminal Evaluation Report, David Aubrey (International Consultant), July 2014
17. Management Response to the Terminal Evaluation for the project : Reducing Transboundary Degradation in the Kura-Aras River Basin, UNDP, December 2014

Annex 6: MTR Rating Scales

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 (MU)	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

<p>Output 1.2 Improved protocols water flow management regulatory strategies</p> <p>P.I 1.2.1 Water efficiency included in national and sectoral plans by</p>	<p>Current water management policies do not sufficiently support coordinated rational water use. In Georgia new Water Law is anticipated to be delivered to Parliament, with sub-laws including</p>	<p>1.2.1 Develop plans to address gaps in regulatory protocols to encourage efficient water use based on assessments in 5.1, 5.2 and update review of laws, regulations and enforcement mechanisms</p>	<p>National level pro legislation amend efficient water use baselines, to mini support sustainabl use, and promote</p>
<p>number of additional references to water efficiency and demand management in laws, regulations and coordination with environment, agriculture, energy, municipal water and industrial sectors</p>	<p>Association Agreements</p>	<p>1.2.2 Within 12 months national level reports developed on waste water reuse regulation and potential</p>	<p>boundary levels in the IWRM implement Sectoral guideline</p>
<p>Component 1: Establishment of effective cross sectoral IWRM governance</p> <p>Outcome 1: Regional, national and local legal, policy and regulations harmonized within the Kura basin for strengthened IWRM implementation</p> <p>Outcomes & Outputs and SRI. 1.2.1 Indicators</p> <p>1.1 Updated regulations for environmental flow calculation methodology</p> <p>1.2.2 Percent of basin covered by flood hazard & risk maps</p> <p>Pre-ESI 1.2 Agreed river system status criteria includes integrated methodology for E Flows updated based on available information measured by percent change of standard deviation of flow from historical norm of natural flow from previous approach</p>	<p>To apply the water nexus for integrated basin management there is a need to account for climate change impacts. This will improve updating environmental flow approaches, including those explored in the Foundational Phase. Sufficient information still is needed updated regulations for enforcement mechanisms for a staged approach. The previous Kura Aras Project emphasized need to update environmental flow calculation from the 10% average annual flow used in the Soviet era to more closely approximate seasonal flows using updated staged statistical and ecosystem based approaches. In AZ National Science Foundation is supporting early work in Ganga Chay Basin.</p>	<p>Milestone and Project Targets</p> <p>1.2.3 National level recommendations on updated protocols presented within 42 months of project start up based on output 5.1 and recommendations based on lessons learned</p> <p>1.1.1 Plan for increased monitoring and enforcement of environmental flows regulations by month 12 in selected sub-basin based on existing information</p> <p>1.1.2 Plan for updated environmental flow methodology, including monitoring approach and evaluation criteria accepted by appropriate ministries for trial in sub basin by month 12 based on existing information</p> <p>1.1.3 Proposed updated methodology adopted in at least 1 sub basin in each country for at least 1 full year started by month 18 to test updated approach</p>	<p>water use efficient sustainable</p> <p>Source of Available</p> <p>groundwater use, Report on the supply description of the integrated flow management information) Draft methodology of environmental decision makers of authorities</p> <p>Summary report/ National level achieved progress based on outcome</p> <p>Lessons learned basin trials</p> <p>Support for prepar response method application in prac</p>
<p>SRI.1.1 Percent change in monthly flow impacts from previous to updated calculation methodology</p> <p>Pre-ESI 1.1 Agreed status criteria including E Flows across the basin in line with EU WFD by month 42 of project</p>	<p>seasonal flows using updated staged statistical and ecosystem based approaches. In AZ National Science Foundation is supporting early work in Ganga Chay Basin.</p>	<p>1.1.4 trial methodology in sub basin to conclude by month 36 for review (Linked to Output 3.3)</p> <p>1.1.5 Ministries will accept the proposed methodology for environmental flow calculations within 4 years, process started by end of project</p>	<p>National reports of environmental management legis strategy</p> <p>Report on environ criteria to include the basin.</p>

Annex 7: Results framework from the Kura II Project Document

¹ Indicators: PI = Process Indicator, SRI = Stress Reduction Indicator, ESI = Environmental Status Indicator, Pre ESI = Prerequisite for Environmental Status Indicator. Assume baseline measures are established within the initial phase of the project implementation.

<p>1.3 Institutional support for River Basin Management Organization and local authorities</p> <p>PI 1.3.1 Percent change in number of recommendations implemented resulting from approach with RBMO</p> <p>PI 1.3.2 Number of interventions funded by competent authorities and under implementation from RBMPs and Program of Measures</p>	<p>The countries are rapidly moving towards approximating EU water management approaches. This requires appropriate authority is assured to RBMOs and institutions to inform decision making regarding water use by local and national authorities. Both RBMO and local basin authorities will need institutional mandates to function effectively.</p> <p>Previous projects have developed RBMPs but bodied do not have authority to implement or supervise these.</p> <p>Appropriate institutional structures are needed to support RBMO and local authorities in order to ensure sustainability.</p>	<p>1.3.1 Based on appropriate international best practices, provide methodology of implementing EUWFD at national levels with institutional support to RBMOs</p> <p>1.3.2 Based on appropriate international best practices review and recommend improvements to institutions to support RBMO/local authorities and intersectoral exchange/ coordination within 18 months</p> <p>1.3.3 Develop EU WFD implementation guidance materials including information exchange mechanisms as per Output 5.4 within 36 months</p> <p>1.3.4 Within 42 months strengthen functional and technical capacity of current RBMO at least 2 sub practical recommendations</p>	<p>Institutional review reports for RBMO/local authorities and inter-sectoral coordination</p> <p>Recommendations for improved institutional support to RBMOs</p> <p>Guidance materials for RBMOs and supervising institutions</p>	<p>Assumption: suitable sub basin RBMO/local authorities for trialing of EUWFD approach (linked to outputs 2.2 and output 4.2)</p> <p>Risk: climate change impacts could vary water availability during trial period</p>
<p>1.4 Pollution abatement plans developed with key stakeholders.</p> <p>PI 1.4.1 Constructed PAP/CAPs with abatement and compliance indicators detailed in text</p> <p>PI 1.4.2 Number of sites eligible for PAP/CAP within water quality surveillance monitoring network</p> <p>PI 1.4.3 Number of potential viable financing mechanisms for PAP implementation</p>	<p>Current pollution abatement plans are nascent for water pollution, and are based on permitting that requires more robust enforcement. Previous projects have focused on water quality monitoring but not on actual abatement and compliance measures.</p> <p>In Azerbaijan regulations will be updated before 2016. In Georgia new legal mechanisms are under development in line with the EU Association Agreement.</p>	<p>1.4.1 Within 9 months all of point sources identified and included in the cadaster with pollution map for point sources</p> <p>1.4.2 Conduct pollution source assessment, and determine causes and based on this develop water quality surveillance strategy and provide technical assistance on how to make Environmental Compliance Action Plan monitoring network in the Kura River (identification of sampling points) within 18 months</p> <p>1.4.3 Within 30 months of completion of cadasters for water quality, develop country specific plans for pollution abatement based on BAT and BEP for priority areas</p> <p>1.4.4 National reports identifying the costs of water quality degradation to national GDP by 24 months and promote financial mechanisms</p> <p>1.4.5 By 38 months a common report on pollution abatement financing mechanisms for large scale interventions</p>	<p>Cadaster of pollutants</p> <p>Report on types of pollution and surveillance monitoring network design map</p> <p>Draft pollution abatement and compliance action plans working with key enforcement and polluters</p> <p>Reports on green alternatives for pollution abatement</p> <p>Reports and location of financing mechanisms promotion workshop</p> <p>Report to be submitted to ministries on pollution abatement strategies and environmental</p>	<p>Assumption: Link with pollution abatement activities in Output 2.1 to develop strategic abatement approaches, and Output 2.3 to build enforcement capacity, and Output 3.2 to showcase effective approaches</p> <p>Assumption: willingness of polluting sector/industry to participate in abatement plan development (link to output 1.6)</p> <p>Assumption: Sufficient national capacity to enforce pollution abatement plans (linked to Output 2.3)</p>

			compliance action plans	
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Component 2: Strengthening national capacities to implement multi-sectoral IWRM in the Kura basin OUTCOME 2: Enhanced capacity for sectoral ministries and agencies to successfully harmonize and implement national IWRM Plans				
Outcomes/Outputs/Indicators	Baseline	Milestone and Project Targets	Source of Verification	Risks and Assumptions
2.1 Capacity building training programs for IWRM professionals for different target groups Indicators: PI 2.1.1 Number of identified gaps in capacity filled by trainings across sectors PI 2.1.2 Pre- and post-training aggregated test scores PI 2.1.3 Number of training components applied professionally by the water managers at end of project	The Ministry of Environment Protection in Georgia has initiated a Center for Environmental Information and Education with facilities under development – providing training on a wide range of environmental issues. The Ministry of Agriculture has also initiated a Scientific Research Center. In Azerbaijan UNESCO IHP has linked with Baku State University, for some hydrological trainings. Additionally, AzerSu, the Azerbaijan Amelioration JSC, and Ministry of Emergency Situations have conducted trainings for staff. Inter-sectoral trainings will strengthen approaches, facilitate data exchanges, and improve integrated planning and use of water resources for sustainable	2.1.1 Gap analysis of sectoral capacity needs for water managers within 9 months of start-up 2.1.2 Establish interministerial water training center within 9 months 2.1.3 Development of interlinked on-the-job trainings for IWRM Professionals within 12 months of project start-up 2.1.4 Conduct at least 6 topic specific on-the-job training curriculum for 24 months, from months 12-36, with quarterly face to face meetings and updates 2.1.5 Develop online trainings based on curriculum of developed trainings. Database created in first 6 months of trainings and updated quarterly 2.1.6 Document trainings and training materials available on line for certification of subsequent generations of water managers beginning after 30 month	Sectoral capacity needs reports for each country Training center logs, equipment uses, media reports on uses. Trainings materials, with baseline, midpoint and final assessment of impacts Training logs, curriculum materials, student reports, certificates of successful completion reports on impacts of training on organization Database accessible on line All training materials available in national languages and online training courses on webpage, with secure certifications for successful completion	Assumption: Topics will include environmental economics, river basin ecology, cross sector integrated flow management with environmental flows stakeholder and gender mainstreaming, pollution abatement strategies with compliance action plans, and climate change and adaptation for professional water managers Assumption: Trainings will be transferable across sectors and scheduling can conform to work schedules of participants Risk: Uneven capacity between sectors and departments Risk: There may be a strong need to train additional staff from ministries if existing staff is not sufficient or available. In this case, young professionals and graduate students may be trained by the project
2.2 Enhanced capacity for institutions to implement river basin management plans PI 2.2.1 Number of competent authorities and interested parties represented in RBMOs training PI 2.2.2 Percent of basin covered at baseline and at project completion by RBMOs/RBMPs PI 2.2.3 Number of implementable measures linked to SAP with in the POMs for RBMPs	In Georgia the EU Association Agreement has been signed and the draft roadmap for implementation draft highlights the need to build capacity of national and local stakeholders to meet the requirements. In Azerbaijan, there is an awareness that to improve sustainable water management in line with the EU WFD and there is a high need to build capacity in line with international best practices, including among local authorities	2.2.1 Needs assessment for selected localized river management organizations within 9 months 2.2.2 Capacity building plans for trial in targeted areas based on best practices initiated within 12 months, with updates every 4 months, to include identification on reference conditions and biomonitoring in line with the EU WFD 2.2.3 Application of trial capacity building for targeted area based with regular trainings on site 3 times per year with RBMP/POMs 2.2.4 Strategy for expansion of capacity building efforts to additional targeted areas by 24 months 2.2.5 All training materials on line with	Needs assessment report Capacity building plans and regular reports of all trainings conducted Capacity building impact reports, and materials for training in national languages Lesson learned reports,	Assumption: This will be supported by improved governance for stress reduction in critical areas in Component 3, output 3.2 Assumption: this will be linked with Output 4.1 Training of Trainers for Interested Parties in RBMOs, with Documentation of approach used adapted for other stakeholders Assumption: continuity of trainings following project completion

		<p>trainings initiated by in final year</p> <p>2.2.4 Draft and share lessons learned reports in final year</p>	<p>strategy reports, on line access reports, subsequent training report formats delivered from first sets of trainings</p>	
<p>2.3 Strengthen capacity for enforcement of water resources laws and regulations</p>	<p>In both Georgia and Azerbaijan environmental monitoring and enforcement will require strengthening as both countries come more into line with international best practices. The monitoring and enforcement bodies currently need updated capacity and strengthened coordination to ensure improved conditions</p>	<p>2.3.1 Assessment of needs and gaps in enforcement capacity, including roles for water pollution and water allocation, laws and equipment, for existing and anticipated regulations. Identify enforcement priorities within 9 months</p> <p>2.3.2 Develop capacity building strategy working with enforcement bodies, to address enforcement priorities by 12 months</p> <p>2.3.3 Develop budget for enforcement needs and staged budget allocation strategy with enforcement responsibilities matrix within 18 months</p> <p>2.3.4 Conduct targeted 24 month trainings for prioritized enforcement areas with on-the-job trainings</p> <p>2.3.5 Develop report with recommendations for sustaining effective enforcement mechanisms</p>	<p>Needs assessments</p> <p>Capacity building strategy with priority enforcement</p> <p>Responsibilities matrix for enforcement, and enforcement capacity budget allocated</p> <p>Training logs, curriculum materials, student reports, certificates of successful completion reports on impacts of training on organization</p> <p>Final report for sustainable enforcement</p>	<p>Assumption: Monitoring and enforcement bodies are able to share information openly with each other (Linked with Outputs 1.5, 2.4, 5.1, 5.3, and 5.4)</p> <p>Assumption: Enforcement agencies are suitably staffed to fulfill missions (Linked to Output 5.2)</p> <p>Risk: relationship between monitoring and enforcement are clearly articulated in organizational mission</p> <p>Risk: Insufficient political will or institutional capacity for effective enforcement</p>
<p>2.4 Strengthened capacity information management, data analysis for enhanced IWRM decision-making support</p> <p>PI 2.4.1 Number of gaps at baseline assessment and filled at end of project</p> <p>PI 2.4.2 Percent change increase in digitized data and accessibility for use by decision-makers</p> <p>PI 2.4.3 Number of intersectoral information exchange linkages formalized at national and transboundary levels at baseline and end of project</p>	<p>In Georgia the Ministry of Environmental Protection Center for Environmental Information and Education is establishing a data management and unified database and linked with NEA and will need support for populating and analysis, as well as decision support. In Azerbaijan, the IWRM Plan developed under the previous GEF project highlighted the need to construct and maintain a harmonized database for integrated intersectoral water management</p>	<p>2.4.1 Assessment of needs and gaps in information management, data analysis for IWRM and identify decision support priorities within 9 months</p> <p>2.4.2 Develop capacity building strategy working with information producing and management bodies, including indicators development, modeling, intersectoral GIS use, and analysis to address priorities by 12 months</p> <p>2.4.3 Develop staged budget allocation strategy for information data management needs and equipment with agreed intersectoral responsibilities matrix within 18 months, including quality control for data, and models applications</p> <p>2.4.4 Conduct targeted 24 month trainings for</p>	<p>Needs assessments</p> <p>Capacity building strategy with priority information needs, modeling approaches</p> <p>Responsibilities matrix for information data management needs and equipment and budget allocated</p>	<p>Assumption: Successful operation of systems developed in component 5</p> <p>Assumption: Willingness of sectors to share data across platform and to contribute to national water resources data base (Linked to Output 1.5, and 5.1)</p> <p>Assumption: Data available and reliable through QA/QC measures (Linked to Output 2.1, and Component 5)</p> <p>Risk: Gaps and errors in historic data may provide partial or faulty analysis parameters</p>

		prioritized information management and decision support areas with on-the-job trainings	Training logs, curriculum materials, student reports, certificates of successful completion, reports on impacts of training on organization	
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Component 3: Stress reduction in critical areas and pre-feasibility studies to identify investment opportunities for improving river system health				
OUTCOME 3: Stress reduction in critical areas, and pre-feasibility studies in support of investment opportunities to improve river system health				
Outcomes & Outputs and Indicators	Baseline	Milestone and Project Targets	Source of Verification	Risks and Assumptions
3.1 Showcase technologies to reduce factual water losses in different sectors SRI 3.1. Amounts of water and amount of money saved by application of green technologies at the local and national levels compared to costs and 5, 10 and 20 years spans.	Currently there are not specific programs in place for water conservation in Georgia using green technologies. Irrigation approaches currently used will benefit from improved efficiency. In Azerbaijan some farmers are using newer technologies such as drip irrigation, but to date there are not programs specifically targeting this approach with clear focus on use reductions	3.1.1 National assessment reports of physical water supply system for agricultural and municipal sectors with prioritized recommendations within 12 months 3.1.2 Preparation of plans for enhanced efficiency for agricultural and municipal consumption within 18 months 3.1.3 Apply 4 sector-specific water use efficiency interventions and lessons learned for up scaling from each country within 39 months,	National assessment report of physical water supply systems for each sector Preparation plans with baseline measures, budget, evaluation criteria scaling, replication strategy, and clear stress reduction indicators Report with empirical measures of stress reduction impacts, evaluation criteria assessment and up-scaling, replication strategy	Assumption: Data available on water use to successfully gauge factual water losses (linked to Output 1.2, 2.1, 2.4 and 5.1) Assumption: Effectiveness of efforts to successfully change water use patterns and improve efficiency (linked to Output 4.1, and 4.4) Assumption: Willingness of sectors to participate at local levels and sufficient incentives for cooperation (linked to Output 1.6) Risk: damage to or loss of equipment for improved water efficiency, including from severe weather event
3.2 Conduct pre-feasibility studies for select projects identified in pollution abatement plans. SRI 3.2.1 Improvement expected from implementation of pollution abatement. PI 3.2.1 Baseline indicators and metrics developed to determine scale and scope of improvements PI 3.2.2 Amount of support and interest measured by pre-commitments from donors and other sources	International and bilateral initiatives in the water sector have focused primarily on water quality monitoring and support to updated legal measures. Both countries are ready to move forward towards application of technologies that will improve conditions. Application of internationally accepted environmentally beneficial and low cost approaches to priority water quality improvement for priority areas.	3.2.1 Identify 2 top priority water quality hotspots Working with NWP, PPP, an key stakeholders from Component 1, within 12 months 3.2.2 Identify pollution abatement projects to maximize impacts for stress reduction in line with the pollution abatement plan development in Component 1, and in collaboration with capacity building efforts in Component 2, within 15 months 3.2.3 Conduct study tour for key stakeholders to learn about technologies and approaches used in similar cases in 24 months 3.2.4 Conduct costed and detailed prefeasibility studies with detailed evaluation criteria, stakeholder analysis, expected benefits, and	Prioritized list of hotspots for pollution abatement pre-feasibility study Selection criteria for pollution abatement projects and selection report Study tour participants list, itinerary, report, and impact assessment from participants Detailed Pre-feasibility plan for presentation to government and private sector	Assumption: The focus will be on projects with highest transboundary water quality improvement impacts, linked to Output 1.3, 2.1 and 2.3 Assumption: Availability of cost effective options for pollution abatement linked to output 1.6, and output 2.1 Assumption: sufficient data available for monitoring impacts of project implementation within prefeasibility study (linked to output 5.1) Assumption: availability of appropriate incentives for private sector to adopt pollution abatement (linked to Output 1.6 and 5.2) Risk: shift in political will or lack of financial support for project once prefeasibility study is completed

Component 4: Targeted education and involvement projects to empower stakeholders in implementing local / national / regional actions in support of SAP implementation OUTCOME 4: Stakeholder Education with academic, civil society, private sector, and local communities to gain experiences to increase their involvement in national and regional IWRM applications and innovations.				
Outcomes & Outputs and Indicators	Baseline	Milestone and Project Targets	Source of Verification	Risks and Assumptions
4.1 A team of diverse professional IWRM trainers to work with stakeholders PI 4.1.1 Number of stakeholder groups trained PI 4.1.2 Number of stakeholders reached through additional training activities PI 4.1.3 Number of training modules developed PI 4.1.4 Number of IWRM Trainer certificates (in person and online) awarded by end of project	In Georgia the Ministry of Environmental Protection Center for Environmental Information and Education is being established and will focus on a wide range of environmental issues including stakeholder engagement in line with the EU Directives. Both Azerbaijan and Georgia have Aarhus Centers for public information. Many previous projects have done training for stakeholders, though the long term impacts are not evaluated. To date there is not an established team of IWRM Trainers who draw from local and national bodies to support stakeholders for improved water management in the face of climate change	4.1.1 Conduct stakeholder analysis survey to determine training needs, willingness to participate, and incentives to change water use behaviors by stakeholder groups within 9 months of project start up 4.1.2 Establish a targeted recruitment of IWRM trainers for stakeholders to draw from academic institutions, NGOs, WUAs, RBMO/local authorities, journalism/media, women's organizations, youth organizations and others, within 9 months of project start for internship program 4.1.3 Establish training curriculum, specific to stakeholder types, for training of trainers, and recruit national and international experts to provide trainings within 12 months of project start-up WUA, Women's Groups, Journalists, RBMO, Youth 4.1.4 Conduct at least 6 topic specific training curriculums for trainers, and support training outreach programs, with quarterly face to face meetings and updates 4.1.5 Development of online trainings based on curriculum of developed trainings. Database created in first 12 months and updated quarterly 4.1.6 Training materials on line for certification of subsequent generations beginning by 24 months with evaluation of impacts	Stakeholder analysis survey results and assessment with recommendations for curriculum development Roster of stakeholder trainers, and internship program selection criteria for rotating interns throughout project implementation Trainings materials, with baseline, midpoint and final assessment of impacts Training logs, curriculum materials, student reports, certificates of successful completion, reports on impacts of training on organization Database accessible on line All training materials available in national languages and online training courses on webpage, with secure certifications for successful completion	Assumption: Strong stakeholder desire for additional water conservation, climate change adaptation information (linked to Outputs 1.6, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 and 4.4) Assumption: Sufficient number of stakeholders interested and available in becoming trainers (Linked to Output 4.2) Assumptions: materials developed for training relevant to stakeholder groups and transferability of stakeholder involvement approaches (Linked to Output 5.2) Assumption: Available number of interns interested in working as Trainers, and supporting the development of the ToT approach (Linked to Outcome 4.2) Assumption: Sufficient project staff time allotted to supervise interns (Linked to Outcome 4.2)
4.2 Annual academic IWRM conferences PI 4.2.1 Number of academic articles presented at conference PI 4.2.2 Number of academic	Following the efforts to support the design of linked regional IWRM graduate programs under the previous UNDP-GEF Kura Aras Project, both Baku State	4.2.1 Determine themed annual academic conferences to be held each year working with national universities, and other water management organizations 4.2.2 Sponsor academic IWRM conference	Themed annual conference plans for 3 conferences, with dates, locations, and number of participants Annual conference proceedings,	Assumption: Strong interest in academic conference and agreement on priority themes (Linked to outputs 1.3, 2.1 2.2 and others)

<p>articles published in peer-reviewed journals after presentation conferences</p> <p>PI 4.2.3 Number of recommendations developed as a result academic inputs adopted at local and national levels.</p> <p>PI 4.2.4 Number of masters students training topic specific activities approaches to water resource management from key universities</p>	<p>University and Tbilisi State University have now developed a linked IWRM MSc Curriculum that are currently undergoing approval processes. In order to further facilitate coordination between programs, and contribute to harmonization of approaches to water management the linkages and experience sharing should be maintained.</p>	<p>including lecturers and IWRM MSc and other graduate students from national and regional institutions to present research related to improving water management in the Kura Basin in 2 day regional academic conference</p> <p>4.2.3 Sponsor joint IWRM MSC trainings for 1 week annually on selected topics in line with themed topics to be presented at annual academic conference to be presented by regional and international academic experts</p> <p>4.2.4 Training materials available on line for certification of subsequent generations beginning in 24 months</p>	<p>including all materials presented to be published as academic conference report online, in national languages and English for distribution to international organizations and academic resource centers.</p> <p>Training logs, curriculum materials, student reports, certificates of successful completion, reports on impacts of training on organization</p> <p>All training materials available in national languages and online training courses on webpage, with secure certifications for successful completion</p>	<p>Assumption: Scheduling of conferences with academic schedule allows for sufficient preparation time for logistics</p>
<p>4.3 Empowering social marketing campaigns to improve impacted stakeholders understanding of their role in water management</p> <p>PI 4.3.1 Number of stakeholders targeted to number stakeholders reached</p> <p>PI 4.3.2 Number of webpage hits and social media statistics</p> <p>PI 4.3.3 Impacts based on stakeholder analysis, and outreach activities</p> <p>PI 4.3.4 Percent change in perceptions from baseline Survey in 5.2 to end of project survey</p>	<p>Many stakeholders outside of water management are not aware of their potential to positively impact water resource use and availability. Social marketing campaigns help raise awareness and induce small behavioral changes that can have cumulative impacts. To date, a substantial social marketing campaign for improved water management in the face of climate change has not yet been conducted in either Azerbaijan or Georgia</p>	<p>4.3.1 Develop strategy for staged targeted social marketing campaigns for stakeholders to include use of social media, public information materials, and metrics to gauge impacts within 15 months Based on Stakeholder Analysis survey in 4.3</p> <p>4.3.2 Design at least 4 social marketing campaigns to be implementing in at least 3 stages for gender mainstreaming, farmers and water user association members, RBMO/local authorities, and municipal water users within 18 months working with international, regional and national experts and interns,</p> <p>4.3.3 Conduct mid-term review of impacts to determine effectiveness of campaigns and adjust accordingly, within 30 months</p> <p>4.3.4 Conduct social media educational and outreach activities to increase exposure of efforts within 30 months</p> <p>4.3.5 Conduct end stage stakeholder analysis to gauge impacts and draft report on replication, and recommended next steps at least 4 months prior to project completion</p>	<p>Strategy report and baseline metrics</p> <p>Social marketing campaign plans for targeted groups</p> <p>Social marketing materials and distribution logs</p> <p>Mid-term review assessment with recommendations</p> <p>Educational and outreach activity logs and materials online as appropriate</p> <p>End stage stakeholder analysis report and final report</p>	<p>Assumption: Representativeness of stakeholder analysis survey</p> <p>Assumption: Suitability of social marketing materials and approaches</p> <p>Assumption: ability to successfully reach targeted audience</p> <p>Assumption: ability of social marketing campaign to influence stakeholder behaviors</p> <p>(All assumptions linked to Outputs 4.1 and 5.2)</p>
<p>4.4. Local competitions and regional showcasing of local stakeholder innovations for climate change adaptation</p>	<p>Currently most stakeholders are adapting to climate change independently, without a venue to showcase adaptation innovations.</p>	<p>4.4.1 identify and nominate select stakeholder innovations for first year awards for innovations working with NWPD members, IWRM Trainers, Interns and PPP</p>	<p>Innovations catalog and panel decisions</p>	<p>Assumption: Sufficient stakeholder interest in climate change adaptation (Linked to Output 5.2)</p>

related to water PI 4.4.1 Number of innovation submitted PI 4.4.2 Number of categories for awards PI 4.4.3 Number of awards given PI 4.4.4 Number of social media hits for innovations PI 4.4.5 Number of stakeholder innovations shared at regional and international forums	Many turn to national and international governments to address challenges of adaptation without realizing they can be empowered to address matters themselves. Local efforts and innovations should be recognized and where possible replicated in order to improve climate change adaptation and to empower all stakeholders.	4.4.2 Conduct local and national competitions to encourage innovations from stakeholders on adaptation measures related to water management, to be held annually, as part of social marketing and public outreach campaign 4.4.3 Promote replication of innovative adaptation measures at national and regional technology conferences, through social media, and through international forums, within 18 months and updated quarterly	Awarded prizes for innovations Promotional materials for innovations and regional conference awards	Assumption: this will be linked to social marketing campaign and PPP green business awards (Linked to Outputs 1.6, 4.3 and 4.5) Risk: innovations may not be original design
4.5 Project information and experiences shared through IW:LEARN activities supported PI 4.5 Number of experiences formally shared with other projects	As per all GEF International Waters Projects, experience sharing through the IW:LEARN Project will enable the Project team and key stakeholders to contribute to and learn from shared experiences globally	4.5.1 Contribution of at least 6 Experience Notes to IW:LEARN covering project activities and lessons learned with at least 2 drafted by year 2 of project 4.5.2 Participation in regional and international IW:LEARN conferences and trainings, pending availability 4.5.3 Project Key Stakeholders Participate in GEF International Waters Conference(s) during project implementation	Experience Notes Participation reports GEF IWC Conference Reports and Participation Report	Assumption: Transferability of experiences to other GEF IW Projects, and beyond (Cross-cutting) Assumption: regional and international conference topics relevant to Project implementation (Cross-cutting)

Outcomes & Outputs and Indicators	Baseline	Milestone and Project Targets	Source of Verification	Risks and Assumptions
Component 5: Enhancing science for governance by strengthening monitoring, information management and data analysis systems for IWRM				
OUTCOME: Azerbaijan and Georgia using integrated monitoring, and information management systems for sustainable IWRM at national and transboundary levels				
5.1 Improved assessment of geographic distribution of ground and surface water availability and seasonal fluctuations PI 5.1.1 Number of sectors using hydrological modeling software and GIS with remote-sensing at beginning midpoint and end of project PI 5.1.2 Percent of basin covered in Azerbaijan and Georgia by digital data suitable for effective modeling	Within the IWRM Plans drafted during the prior GEF Kura Aras Project, both countries stressed the need to improve data assessment and modeling of water resources. To date, this need still exists and is key to overall IWRM, RBMO and improved water resources management for conjunctive use	5.1.1 Assessment of available ground and surface water availability in river basin within 12 months 5.1.2 Analyze the historical hydromet station data along the river basin to estimate the seasonal variability along the river within 18 months 5.1.3 Conduct intersectoral trainings on hydrogeological modeling software and use of GIS and remote sensing techniques for delineation of ground water aquifer within 24 months 5.1.4 Apply the hydrogeological modeling in one sub basin for each country within 36 months, to include water quality waste water discharges from point source pollution based on available information 5.1.5 Develop the final report on the basis of the historical materials and the results obtained by means of detailed hydro-geological observation works and hydro-monitoring studies regarding the respective sections on the territories of each country within 42 months.	Baseline assessment report on available data Report on surface and ground water distribution and temporal availability Analysis of historical flow trends Training logs, curriculum materials, student reports, certificates of successful completion, reports on impacts of training on organizations Model outcomes, scenarios and recommendations report	Assumption: Information to gauge flow rate impacts on water quality and ecosystem health (linked to Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.3, 5.2, and 5.4) Assumption: Sufficient data for modeling purposes (Linked to Outputs 1.2, 2.1 and 2.4) Assumption: data quality sufficient for accurate modeling and assessment (Linked to Outputs 1.2, 2.1 and 2.4) Assumption: access to all relevant data, including groundwater and hydromet historical data (Linked to Outputs 1.5, 2.4 and 4.4)
5.2 An assessment of the economic and social benefits per unit of water used in different sectors PI 5.2.1 Level of baseline economic, social and hydrological information available compared to end of project PI 5.2.2 Stakeholder survey results on perceptions of water users on water quality, water use	Within the IWRM Plans drafted during the prior GEF Kura Aras Project, both countries stressed the need to for conducting an economic assessment, including social benefits of water use across sectors. While initial efforts have been made in this direction, larger scale assessments in line with the EU WFD approaches and water nexus are needed here.	5.2.1 Conduct a baseline assessment of available data sources based on all key sectors within 12 months 5.2.2 Conduct stakeholder surveys on water use, water quality and anticipated water needs across sector based users within 15 months 5.2.3 Train sector representatives on integrated nexus approaches for: Water pricing, cost recovery, and pollute pays principals starting within 24 months 5.2.4 Develop O&M costs for water sector	Baseline assessment report Stakeholder analysis survey results for economic and social assessment baseline for future studies Training logs, curriculum materials, student reports, certificates of successful completion, reports on impacts of training on organizations	Assumption: Availability of relevant information from all sectors (Linked to Output 1.5) Assumption: Pricing rates are accurate (Linked to Output 1.5) Assumption: Data from 5.1 is sufficient to support economic analysis and modeling data Assumption: sufficient staff for trainings (Linked to output 2.1) Assumption: Accountability of data and econometric data fluctuations

<p>and unanticipated water needs across sectors with compared to 2005 survey and end of project abbreviated study</p> <p>PI 5.2.3 Application of market transaction prices and deductive methodology models in the decision support systems y sector</p>		<p>management including environmental, agriculture, municipal water and hydropower sectors to deliver to Ministries within 24 months</p> <p>5.2.5 Determine market transaction prices, using inductive methods with econometric estimation of production and cost functions for agriculture and energy, and municipal water demand functions within 36 months</p> <p>5.2.6 Construct models for deductive methodologies for mathematical programming, value-added and alternative costs modeling within 36 months</p>	<p>Report and presentations for decision makers</p> <p>Reports based on sector of the estimated costs and benefit for each sector per unit of water, based on available information and qualified assumptions as necessary, including economic analysis report</p> <p>Mathematical modeling to be applied to econometric water management approaches to support informed decision making</p>	(Linked to Output 5.1)
<p>5.3 Staged river system ecological assessment</p> <p>PI/Pre ESI 5.3.1 Number of indicator species identified for river system health</p> <p>PI/Pre ESI 5.3.2 Number of endemic species identified and cataloged</p> <p>PI/Pre ESI 5.3.3 Number of reference conditions criteria identified</p> <p>PI 5.3.1 Number of categories for classification of river ecosystems</p> <p>PI 5.3.2 Percent increase in database completion for ecosystem status</p>	<p>Only project based ecological assessments related to EIAs etc. There is a planned Permit database as part of the Center Information & Education in Georgia. This will include a data base for all environmental information planned with staged access.</p> <p>In Azerbaijan there is not yet an established governmental program to conduct river ecosystem assessments</p>	<p>5.3.1 Assessment of available data, and report on information gaps and needs within 12 months</p> <p>5.3.2 Develop 2 year plan for assessment to be extended at the national level following the project within 18 months working with national and international universities</p> <p>5.3.3 Create database for ecological assessment to include macro-invertebrates within 18 months</p> <p>5.3.4 Create ecosystem classification structure within 18 months</p> <p>5.3.5 Begin to fill data base to include species counts and seasonal flow variation within 21 months working with local authorities, universities and ministries (contracted firm)</p> <p>5.3.6 Develop final report on Kura River Ecosystem with recommendations for sustainable research to support continued data collection by 42 months</p>	<p>Assessment reports</p> <p>Plans for assessments with indicators for measurement criteria</p> <p>Database online for public use of regional data</p> <p>Classification structure and methodology</p> <p>Populated database for regional use as needed</p> <p>Final report</p>	<p>Assumption: Availability of expertise nationally, regionally and internationally (Linked to Output 2.1)</p> <p>Assumption: selected monitoring sites are representative of river system ecology (Linked to output 3.3)</p> <p>Assumption: classification and database population are accurate (Linked to Outputs 2.1 and 2.4)</p> <p>Assumption: consistency of sampling approaches and methodologies (Linked to Output 2.1 and 2.4)</p> <p>Risk: lack of long term support for sustainability</p>

<p>5.4 Protocols in place to support data and information exchange, for sound IWRM decision-making at national and transboundary levels.</p> <p>PI/Pre ESI 5.4.1 Number of commonly agreed indicators and parameters</p> <p>PI/Pre ESI 5.4.2 Number of standard operating procedures harmonize between laboratories</p> <p>PI/Pre ESI 5.4.3 Percent of database categories for common indicators actively used and agreed by end of project</p>	<p>GE NEA increased number of monitoring/sampling points and measurement parameters and biomonitoring (limited) done regularly up to 116 sampling points for chemical</p> <p>In Azerbaijan parameters are expected to be updated by early 2016</p> <p>Parameters must be harmonized in line with international best practices, and both countries are willing to move in this direction</p>	<p>5.4.1 Develop sets of agreed indicators for information exchange for water quantity, quality and all project outputs to be shared in an annual “State of the Kura River” Report</p> <p>5.4.2 Review and update current regulations on water quality in line with EU/WFD within 12 months</p> <p>5.4.3 Harmonize the laboratory analysis methodologies and standard operating procedures for sampling and analysis of water quality including quality control and quality assurance within 36 months</p> <p>5.4.4 Develop a harmonized regional database from an agreed set of indicators to show status of water quality status in TB status within 36 months</p> <p>5.4.5 Outline steps for ISO 17025 accreditation for both national laboratories within 24 months</p> <p>5.4.6 Train staff on use of harmonization measurements and indicators within 36 months</p> <p>5.4.7 Detailed final report on harmonization with assessment of work to date and recommendations for next steps by 42 months</p>	<p>Set of agreed indicators, baselines and annually updated for “State of the Kura River Report”</p> <p>Update report</p> <p>Report on strategy to harmonize methodologies and SOPs with QC/QA guidelines</p> <p>Database with mechanism for entry by approved authorities</p> <p>ISO 17025 Recommendations reports for laboratories</p> <p>Training logs, curriculum materials, student reports, certificates of successful completion, reports on impacts of training on organizations</p> <p>Final Report</p>	<p>Assumption: Compatibility of water quality data (Linked to output 2.4)</p> <p>Assumption: willingness of sectors to share data (Linked to Output 1.5)</p> <p>Risk: Do sufficient equipment, staffing, and consumables for laboratory assessments</p> <p>Risk: insufficient political will to support data exchange and harmonization</p>
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Annex 8: Consultant's Agreement Form

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

Evaluators:

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.

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System¹

Name of Consultant: DALIBOR KYSELA

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): N.A.

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

Signed at Vienna on 28 May 2019

Signature: 

¹ www.unevaluation.org/imegecodeofconduct

Annex 9: Audit Trail (submitted as separate attachment)