

Terminal Evaluation Report

FINAL

2020

Conserving Habitats for Globally Important Flora and Fauna in Production Landscapes in Thailand

UNDP Project ID: 4839

GEF Project ID: 5512

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Project Title:	Conserving Habitats for Globally Important Flora and Fauna in Production Landscapes in Thailand
UNDP Project ID#:	4839
GEF project ID#:	5512
Evaluation timeframe:	September 2019 to January 2020
Date of evaluation report:	January 2020
Country:	Thailand
Region:	Asia-Pacific
GEF Operational Focal Area/Strategic Program:	BD-2
GEF Agency:	United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
Executing Entity / Implementing Partner:	Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP)
Responsible Parties:	Zoological Parks Organization (ZPO), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
Evaluation team members:	Adrian Stokes Walaitat Worakul

Acknowledgements

The evaluation team would like to acknowledge the support provided by the UNDP Thailand Country Office and IUCN in coordinating the mission and itinerary for the evaluation. All participants in interviews were willing and keen to assist with the evaluation. We would particularly like to thank the communities in Ranong, Phang Nga, Samut Sakhon and Buriram for giving generously of their time and sharing with us their deep knowledge and wisdom of the species and ecosystems in their care.

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Executive Summary

Table 1: Project Summary Table

Project Title:	Conserving Habitats for Globally Important Flora and Fauna in Production Landscapes in Thailand
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Project Description

‘Conserving Habitats for Globally Important Flora and Fauna in Production Landscapes in Thailand’ (PIMS 4839) is a four-year project implemented through the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP), Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), supported by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). It started in September 2015 and finished in September 2019. A midterm review was undertaken for the project and finalized in March 2019.

The objective of the project was ‘to mainstream globally important biodiversity species conservation into production sectors through improved management of critical habitats’. It is working to integrate endangered species (ES) and critical habitat conservation into new and existing legislation and to provide clear examples of how ES and critical habitat conservation can be operationalized for target species.

To achieve this objective, the project had two components, each with an associated Outcome.

Outcome 1 focused on strengthening the policy and institutional frameworks in place at the national level to manage and support the conservation of ES and critical habitats. This includes addressing gaps in existing legislation, developing frameworks to guide implementation of legislation, building capacity within key ministries and agencies to enhance cross-sector learning and coordination, and monitoring critical habitats and ES to better inform decision makers.

Outcome 2 demonstrated critical habitat management for three ES in three distinct geographical locations. These species are the Eastern Sarus Crane (*Grus antigone sharpii*), the Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*) and the Water Onion¹ (*Crinum thaianum*). The project is working to increase

¹ The common name used for *Crinum thaianum* in the project document is Water Lily. During project inception it was agreed to use instead the common name Water Onion. Note that many local people still refer to the species as Water Lily.

national, provincial and local capacities to protect these species and to identify and support sustainable financing pathways for their conservation within production landscapes.

Evaluation Ratings

Evaluation ratings are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Evaluation rating table

Criteria	Rating	Comments
Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)		
M&E Design	Satisfactory	The M&E plan was well prepared and had an appropriate budget.
M&E Implementation	Moderately Satisfactory	The project followed the M&E plan reasonably well. A non-mandatory midterm review was conducted, and some changes made; this was quite late in the project therefore was limited in the extent to which it could influence the project.
M&E Overall	Satisfactory	There were several moderate shortcomings in M&E implementation and adaptive management.
UNDP and Implementing Partner (IP) Implementation / Execution		
Quality of UNDP Execution	Satisfactory	UNDP provided consistent support throughout the project and had a results-based focus. It was responsive to significant implementation problems and implemented appropriate adaptive management responses. Risk management was appropriate throughout the project. Some challenges were reported by other partners in working with UNDP administrative rules and procedures.
Quality of IP Execution	Satisfactory	ONEP allocated considerable financial resources to the project. The change in priority early in the project, whereby a ES and Critical Habitat Bill was no longer a priority, meant that ONEP ownership of some components of Outcome 1 was not strong. During project delays in the second and third years, the evaluation team considers that ONEP did little to proactively push the project forward; however, since commencement of a Responsible Party in April 2018, ONEP focused on results and timelines and provided an appropriate environment in which the project management unit was based.
Overall Results		
Project Objective	Moderately Satisfactory	Substantial progress was made towards the Objective, despite there being some challenges with unrealistic indicators and targets.
Relevance	Relevant	At the time of development, the project was very relevant to local and national priorities and to ONEP organizational priorities.

Criteria	Rating	Comments
		<p>It was very consistent with GEF BD-2 ‘Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in production landscapes, seascapes, and sectors’. The project specifically sought to establish a legislative and planning framework to facilitate this in Thailand and to mainstream outcomes for three pilot species in three different production landscapes.</p> <p>The project was designed to contribute to achieving the following Country Programme Outcome as defined in the Country Programme Document (CPD) for Thailand 2012-2016: ‘Thailand is better prepared to address climate change and environmental security issues through the enhancement of national capacity and policy readiness’.</p> <p>Development of the proposed ES legislation was considered a priority by ONEP at the time of project development, because they endorsed the project and their participation in it. However, such legislation was no longer an agency priority early in implementation and this component of the project made little progress, and its relevance to national priorities declined.</p> <p>Since the project commenced, ONEP started development of a Biodiversity Conservation Act. This may include ES provisions, therefore there is opportunity for the legislative component of the project to have renewed relevance by providing advice and recommendations on legislative options.</p>
Effectiveness	Moderately Satisfactory	Overall effectiveness was rated as Moderately Satisfactory, given the individual ratings of Moderately Satisfactory for the Objective, Moderately Satisfactory for Outcome 1, and Satisfactory for Outcome 2.
Efficiency	Moderately Unsatisfactory	<p>There was low efficiency for Outcome 1, because the outputs for GEF funds spent were substantially less than envisaged at project endorsement.</p> <p>The actions under Outcome 2 were more cost-effective. The project leveraged existing groups, knowledge, activities and initiatives to pursue opportunities and efficiently progress the project’s aims.</p>
Sustainability		
Sustainability – Overall	Likely	Measures have been taken in all categories to address the likelihood of project results continuing after project completion.
Sustainability – Financial risks	Likely	Steps have been taken to secure resources to ensure that the results in the locations of the target species are financially sustainable, including through provincial planning processes.

Criteria	Rating	Comments
Sustainability – Socio-economic risks	Likely	Community interest and support for the three species is high. Local structures in each target location are in place to oversee conservation, raise awareness and link to sustainable livelihood activities.
Sustainability – Institutional Framework and Governance risks	Likely	<p>The project has worked closely with provincial planning processes and structures to embed species conservation locally.</p> <p>Five land use plans were developed through engagement with representatives from concerned agencies. Hence, the plans that will be included in city plans should be consistent with the priorities of individual agencies and the communities living in the habitat areas.</p>
Sustainability – Environmental risks	Likely	<p>The Water Onion is dependent on high-quality water in the canals in which it occurs. Upstream land management activities that affect water quality, such as fertilizer and pesticide run-off or siltation, can be a risk to the species. The evaluation team heard during the field visits to Ranong and Phang Nga that this was not currently a major issue.</p> <p>The Eastern Sarus Crane relies on ongoing sympathetic management of the wetlands and farming areas near Buriram in which it occurs. There is existing coordination between parties, especially the Zoological Parks Association (ZPO), the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP), village heads and community members, which is highly effective.</p> <p>Climate change was a recurring theme in discussions during the mission, especially in relation to dry conditions affecting Eastern Sarus Crane breeding.</p>

Criteria	Rating	Comments
Impact	Significant	<p>Improvements in ecological status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The status of the Eastern Sarus Crane in Thailand has changed from Extinct in the Wild to Critically Endangered. • The Water Onion is blooming across a larger area than before the project. <p>Reductions in ecological stress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crane-friendly rice-growing practices and farmer behaviors are embedded in the farming community at Buriram. • Local laws enacted in the community mean that very little wild Water Onion is now collected. • A proposed solar farm that would have destroyed Spoon-billed Sandpiper habitat at Khok Kham is not proceeding. • ONEP is proposing to list new migratory bird flyway sites under the East Asian–Australasian Flyway, in Buriram. • ZPO is now working more closely with the Buriram community and effectively applying a result-based planning and management approach.

Summary of Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons

Conclusions

This project has led to valuable advancements in the understanding of planning and implementation for the protection of ES in Thailand, especially in production landscapes.

The most notable achievements have been under Outcome 2, demonstrating critical habitat management for three ES. The project has worked with communities that have existing local knowledge of and aspirations for three pilot ES, and catalyzed a strategic approach to provincial planning, balancing production with conservation, and alternative livelihoods. The Eastern Sarus Crane (ESC) program in Buriram is an exceptional example of this, where people involved in crane conservation have teamed with organic rice farmers to create a mature market product—Sarus Rice—and establish an environment in which cranes are valued and protected; meanwhile, land use planning has influenced the provincial planning process to ensure that zoning is appropriate for the species’ conservation. A learning center provides a high-quality experience for tourists and other visitors. The continuous involvement of ZPO in the project in Buriram has been of great benefit and the results are embedded in the community and likely to be sustainable.

Similar work has been achieved for the Spoon-billed Sandpiper (SBS) and Water Onion. Committed local communities have been engaged and capacitated, measures for protection and livelihoods that benefit the target species have been identified, and land use planning undertaken to inform provincial plans in Ranong, Phang Nga and Samut Sakorn. Because the involvement of the project was not continuous at these sites (due to delays in project implementation), the results here are less mature and will need more nurturing after project completion than in Buriram.

Reflecting these high-quality results, the achievement of Outcome 2 of the project has been rated as Satisfactory.

The project's aims in Outcome 1 around strengthening Thailand's legislative and planning framework for ES conservation have been less successful. The original aim for an ES and Critical Habitat Bill to be approved by Cabinet was not achieved, because shortly after project commencement this was not a priority for ONEP; instead, a legislative review and recommendations were developed. An opportunity now exists for these findings and recommendations to influence development of a Draft Biodiversity Act. The project document also envisaged a land use planning framework being adopted, which would provide guidelines and a systematized approach to integrating ES conservation into planning processes in Thailand; the framework was to be piloted in the three main project pilot sites. Although this framework was not developed, high-quality land use planning was undertaken to inform provincial planning in five provinces, and these may provide a model for future planning.

A GIS-based management and monitoring system was developed with information on ten species (include the three target species), connected to ONEP's main biodiversity database. Detailed information was collated for each species on its biology, conservation status, population trends, habitats, existing conservation measures and recommended future actions. Although conservation and recovery plans were not developed for these species, it is anticipated that the information gathered will provide the basis for development of such plans. Finally, the project met targets for improving the internal capacity of ONEP in several indicators relevant to the project's aims.

Reflecting these results, the achievement of Outcome 1 of the project has been rated as Moderately Satisfactory.

Of the project's two Objective indicators, one was partially achieved and one was not achieved. However, the analysis of the results framework showed that the indicator that was not achieved ('No overall decline in species status of species currently listed on the National Red list for Thailand') did not meet SMART criteria and was unrealistic for the project.

Considering the difficult nature of both indicators, the evaluation team considered that moderate progress had been made towards the Objective and assigned a rating of Moderately Satisfactory.

There were limitations in the extent to which gender considerations were mainstreamed into the project's implementation and monitoring and evaluation. Despite a strong framework for this being established in the project document, there was no gender analysis undertaken during inception or implementation and no systematic process to include gender-specific indicators within all monitoring and evaluation activities (although some sex-disaggregated information on participation in activities was collected). In spite of these deficiencies, the evaluation team found that the level of women's participation in the planning and implementation of project activities was relatively high, especially in communities where pilot activities were occurring. This appeared to have occurred naturally rather than via a planned process. The project did not use a gender specialist during the inception or implementation stages; the use of such a specialist would have ensured that gender mainstreaming was explicitly built into project implementation.

Recommendations

The recommendations are provided in Table 3.

Table 3: Recommendations (*BCST: Bird Conservation Society of Thailand; PONRE: Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment)

No.	Recommendation	Responsibility*
1	<p>Technical and other support should continue to be provided to the communities with endangered species learning centers in Samut Sakhon, Ranong and Phang Nga</p> <p>The learning centers established during the project provide important opportunities to raise awareness about the target species and biodiversity conservation and are an important component of the approach to ensuring sustainability of project outcomes. The evaluation team was impressed with the enthusiasm of the local people about the learning centers and their potential to attract tourism to their communities.</p> <p>The evaluation team heard concerns expressed by community members in Samut Sakhon, Ranong and Phang Nga about the sustainability of the learning centers after completion of the project, particularly because the centers have been only recently opened. Support that is needed includes help with the means to cover routine expenses (especially with power and water costs), technical (ensuring that community members have up-to-date and accurate understanding of the subject matter) and logistical (scheduling and managing visitors and activities).</p> <p>The Eastern Sarus Crane learning center at Buriram already has significant ongoing support, including from ZPO, Mahidol University and local businesses, therefore this recommendation does not apply to this learning center.</p>	ONEP, BCST
2	<p>Communication channels that have been established between the three species components of the project should be maintained for learning and mutual support</p> <p>An important component of this project is the opportunities that have been created for project participants to share experiences and learn from others on approaches to ES conservation. Participants have communicated actively through established channels, especially via a group on the social media platform LINE. Given that the three species conservation projects will continue beyond project completion, it is important that this sharing and learning environment is maintained.</p>	ONEP, BCST
3	<p>The provincial committees in each province that have been guiding this project should continue and be strengthened beyond the project, to ensure integration of the species' requirements into provincial plans</p> <p>The project has been successful in raising awareness of the three target species in the respective provinces and working to build their conservation requirements into provincial plans. A key part of this has been the establishment of provincial committees to provide coordination and facilitate high-level provincial support. These provincial committees or similar mechanisms must continue beyond the project to ensure that the species continue to be incorporated into the relevant plans.</p> <p>This is not only important for the conservation of the target species, it is also very important for the overall strategy of the project, which is to influence provincial and local planning processes to encourage ES and critical habitat conservation.</p>	ONEP, PONRE

No.	Recommendation	Responsibility*
4	<p>ONEP and PONRE should provide awareness raising and training in the provinces to facilitate consideration of endangered species in provincial planning, using the learnings of this project</p> <p>The evaluation team observed that there was a high level of interest in the three species in the agencies involved in provincial and local planning. It is important to realize that this awareness and interest was largely due to awareness raising and training providing by the project. Further, technical knowledge of endangered species and critical habitat and how to plan for their conservation and protection is low in most provinces. For these reasons, it cannot be assumed that there will be widespread uptake of ES conservation planning in Thailand’s provinces as a result of this project. This is especially true because the project did not establish a legislative mechanism whereby provincial and local planning must consider listed ES and critical habitats, as originally proposed in the project document.</p> <p>A program of provincial awareness raising and training on ES and provincial planning would provide an opportunity to communicate relevant lessons of this project across Thailand and increase the technical capacity in the provinces.</p>	ONEP, PONRE
5	<p>The policy recommendations that have been developed by the Chief Technical Advisor should be presented to the wetlands management subcommittee</p> <p>A Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) has been engaged by UNDP to ensure ongoing adaptive management and technical development across the project and to ensure that project experiences are fed into any relevant legislation and planning framework development. To address these aims, the CTA has prepared a paper containing policy recommendations. Importantly, the work of the CTA has incorporated the experiences, findings and recommendations of partners from this project, especially IUCN and TEI. To maximise leverage from the project’s results, the CTA paper should be presented to the wetlands management subcommittee.</p>	ONEP, UNDP
6	<p>The recommendations and knowledge from this project should be considered when developing the Draft Biodiversity Act</p> <p>The project did not develop an ES and Critical Habitat Bill for approval by Cabinet as originally proposed, because shortly after project commencement this was no longer an ONEP priority. However, an opportunity has since arisen to improve legislative protection of ES and critical habitats through the development of a Draft Biodiversity Act by ONEP. The policy recommendations of this project should be used to influence this legislative process, including through the submission of the CTA report to the wetlands management subcommittee.</p>	ONEP
7	<p>Ensure that the ‘legal framework and policy recommendations’ consider whether listing ES and critical habitats should become a legislative ‘trigger’ to influence other statutory processes, such as planning at provincial and local levels and environmental impact assessment (EIA) mechanisms, as described in the project document</p> <p>The project document envisaged comprehensive ES legislation in which listed ES and critical habitat would be a trigger for other statutory planning and assessment processes, including provincial management structures, the development planning</p>	ONEP, UNDP

No.	Recommendation	Responsibility*
	<p>process, and EIA mechanisms. Provisions such as these can provide important mechanisms to ensure that nationally listed ES and critical habitats are considered in all provincial planning and impact assessment.</p> <p>The legislative review document prepared by the project does not address these matters. Given the extent of the original legislative model detailed in the project document, the evaluation team recommends that a more thorough review be conducted, including consideration of whether listing ES and critical habitats should become a national legislative trigger to influence other statutory processes.</p> <p>Primary responsibility lies with ONEP; UNDP is also included because they have directly engaged a CTA to ensure that project experiences are fed into the legislation and framework development.</p>	
8	<p>Establish a standard approach to endangered species conservation and recovery planning</p> <p>Strategic species conservation and recovery plans are an important component of international best-practice threatened species conservation. They ensure that ES conservation actions are planned and undertaken according to clearly defined species recovery goals and targets, and that regular monitoring assesses progress towards targets and effectiveness of management actions. Under Outcome 2 of this project, conservation and recovery plans were to be prepared for the ten target species; these plans were not prepared, although important data were collected that would underpin such plans for each species.</p> <p>Project Output 1.4 included an action to ‘develop a systematized approach to conservation and recovery plan development’, which would establish a standardized format and approach to developing conservation and recovery plans in Thailand. This action was not completed. Such a standard approach would facilitate best-practice ES planning and conservation and would streamline ES planning by establishing standard expectations of content and process. It could also be an opportunity to provide some standardized recommendations on integrating ES conservation with land use planning and provincial planning. The policy recommendations on land use and endangered species planning developed by TEI and BCST as part of this project will be valuable when developing this standard approach to recovery planning. There are examples available of best-practice species conservation planning, including the IUCN’s Guidelines for Species Conservation Planning.</p>	ONEP
9	<p>The community-based tourism management plan by Silpakorn University should be presented to the Provincial Advisory Committees and relevant sectoral agencies, such as the Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports and the Community Development Office, for consideration regarding support to the communities involved in the project</p> <p>All of the communities visited as part of the evaluation mission discussed ecotourism, based around the target endangered species and associated conservation messages and experiences, as an economic and livelihood opportunity. From a conservation perspective, this may provide a sustainable livelihood that is sympathetic to the conservation of the species. The evaluation team observed large differences in the extent of preparedness for this and in the</p>	ONEP, Silpakorn University

No.	Recommendation	Responsibility*
	approaches being proposed. In some locations, there were still fundamental questions to be addressed of what the tourism product and market would be. The communities involved in the project would benefit from ongoing support and guidance from agencies in many aspects of developing ecotourism, and the community-based tourism management plan that was being developed by Silpakorn University will be a valuable resource.	

Good Practice

Effective planning for endangered species conservation must work with provincial and local planning

Effective engagement with local planning authorities is very important to species conservation. Even in projects with motivated and highly skilled on-ground personnel, results can be compromised and not sustained if local authorities are not aware and if local planning does not protect habitat and manage threats. This is often neglected in ES projects. In this project, the land use planning and provincial engagement was of a high quality. Also, the level of understanding of ES conservation among local authorities is highly variable, and this project was very effective at using different methodologies to work with local authorities in different areas.

The Eastern Sarus Crane project provides an excellent example of effective result-based management

ZPO described how the ESC project in Buriram has benefited from the use by ZPO and other partners of a result-based management approach. Having a log frame with clear targets and goals for the species, planning work according to these targets, monitoring against those and following up on actions and targets, provided a framework for delivering outstanding results that has seen the ESC change in status in Thailand from Extinct in the Wild to Critically Endangered.

Lessons Learned

Results framework changes should be made following a clear process that is understood by all relevant parties

There was confusion regarding changes to some indicators and targets in the results framework, with the result that there was a lack of clarity towards project closure about what targets should be reported against. The evaluation team found a low level of understanding among project parties of the process involved in proposing and approving results framework changes. Consequently, in the final project implementation report in 2019 and in the 'Project Review Report' prepared to inform the terminal evaluation, some reporting was provided against new or changed indicators that had not been formally approved.

Clear communication to relevant project parties regarding the processes and criteria for making changes to the results framework would avoid such issues arising. Also, a mechanism to provide the current results framework in a consistent and easily understood format would assist.

Specialist input should be obtained to ensure that gender mainstreaming occurs throughout the project cycle

Despite a strong framework for gender mainstreaming in the project document, this project was not systematic in this regard. If a gender analysis is not done early then project activities, including monitoring and evaluation, are likely to proceed without specific attention to gender issues. Gender mainstreaming requires both attitudinal changes and the application of specific tools and skills. Involvement of a gender

mainstreaming specialist to provide early guidance and technical advice would assist in embedding gender throughout the project cycle.

Effective integration of biodiversity conservation with production and sustainable livelihoods requires working strategically with local communities

The examples from this project, especially the ESC in Buriram, demonstrate that achieving effective integration of biodiversity conservation with production and sustainable livelihoods requires:

- building on existing local capacity, interests and aspirations
- bringing in targeted external expertise (e.g. product development, marketing and sales, conservation planning and practice) at the right times
- coordination.

Legislative development activities in projects should be flexible and responsive to changing government priorities

The aim of this project, to influence legislative and policy change through pilot projects, empowerment of local communities and partnering with national agencies, is appropriate and consistent with the aims of the GEF. In this project, the project document was very detailed and prescriptive about the legislation and land use planning framework that was to be developed, and specifically committed to a bill being approved by Cabinet. This created immediate implementation challenges when ONEP determined early that such a bill was no longer a priority. Further, the project assessed the likelihood of approval of the ES legislation being delayed as 'Low', which was an unrealistic assessment. Care should be taken in project development that legislative development components are flexible and realistic.

Long-term involvement delivers robust results

ZPO were involved in this project during development and from inception to completion. The work on ESC in Buriram province shows the benefits of such long-term involvement: strong community support, innovative rice product development with local farmers, coordination across agencies and groups, and financial commitment from local businesses. This means that the results are deep-rooted and likely to be sustainable, and all ESC targets were met.

Another benefit of this long-term involvement in a community-based project lies in the culture of ZPO. The evaluation team heard that the organization has learned the importance of working with local communities: 'We used to work with animals, now we work with people'.

Engagement of a Responsible Party for project delivery can result in efficient achievement of results

When this project commenced, a project manager was engaged by and reported to UNDP. This project manager departed a short time into the project and there were then long delays in trying to fill this role, during which time little progress occurred in the project. UNDP and ONEP decided to instead engage an organization as a Responsible Party (RP) to deliver large components of the project. IUCN were engaged as RP, and they appointed project staff who sat in ONEP and reported to IUCN. The result was that, after the second and third years seeing little progress, the project made very good progress in its final year and went from being off track in 2018 to being on track in 2019 and achieving significant results by project completion.

There were pros and cons to this arrangement.

The main pro is that engagement of the RP led to a sharp focus on timely delivery of project outputs. The RP engaged (IUCN) has solid knowledge about global and national ES and extensive experience in implementing ES and critical habitat conservation projects. They provided experienced staff who focused on project delivery under significant time pressure. IUCN is also well connected with other conservation organizations and technical institutes, which brought diversity and depth of knowledge to the project. They

also had well-developed management and financial control systems that were assessed by independent auditors as posing low risk to the project.

There were some cons to the RP arrangement. In particular, a PM engaged through UNDP will have a good understanding of UNDP and GEF requirements and processes (such as financial, procurement, reporting and making changes to projects) and can work within these to efficiently implement a project; in contrast, an RP usually has its own organizational requirements and processes that may not align with those of UNDP, and this can create inefficiencies and/or delays in some processes and project activities. Also, when a project manager is engaged by UNDP, they have a broader role as a UNDP team member, which brings added value to the team and to the individual; this added value is not achieved with an RP.

On balance, the evaluation team considers that the approach of engaging an RP was beneficial for delivery of this project under significant pressure.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

BCST	Bird Conservation Society of Thailand
BEDO	Based Economy Development Office
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CPD	Country Programme Document
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DASTA	Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration
DNP	Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation
DPC	Direct project cost
EIA	Environmental impact assessment
ES	Endangered species
ESC	Eastern Sarus Crane
GAP	Good Agricultural Practice
HS	Highly Satisfactory
HU	Highly Unsatisfactory
IP	Implementing Partner
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
ML	Moderately Likely
MONRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MS	Moderately Satisfactory
MTR	Midterm review
MU	Moderately Unsatisfactory
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NEB	National Environmental Board
NESDP	National Economic and Social Development Plan
NHA	Non-hunting area
NIM	National Implementation Modality
ONP	Operational Focal Point
ONEP	Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning
PA	Protected area
PB	Project Board
PIF	Project identification form
PIR	Project Implementation Reports
PMU	Project management unit
PONRE	Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment
RP	Responsible Party
RTA	Regional Technical Advisor
SBS	Spoon-billed Sandpiper
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound
TCP	Town and Country Planning
TE	Terminal evaluation
TEI	Thailand Environment Institute
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
ZPO	Zoological Parks Organization

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Evaluation

In accordance with the Terms of Reference (ToR) for this terminal evaluation (TE), the objectives of the evaluation are to assess the achievement of project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

Further, in accordance with *UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects*, the evaluation has the following complementary purposes:

- To promote accountability and transparency, and to assess and disclose the extent of project accomplishments
- To synthesize lessons that can help to improve the selection, design and implementation of future GEF-financed UNDP activities
- To provide feedback on issues that are recurrent across the UNDP portfolio and need attention, and on improvements regarding previously identified issues
- To contribute to the overall assessment of results in achieving GEF strategic objectives aimed at global environmental benefit
- To gauge the extent of project convergence with other UN and UNDP priorities, including harmonization with other UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP).

1.2 Scope and Methodology

The scope of the evaluation was to assess any evidence available since project development that will assist in addressing the evaluation's objectives.

The evaluation was undertaken between September 2019 and January 2020. A two-person team implemented the evaluation, comprising a national consultant and an international consultant / team leader.

The evaluation followed the document *UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects* ('UNDP-GEF TE Guidance' hereafter).

The evaluation was based on a detailed review of data and information and extensive stakeholder consultation, to develop evidence-based conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned. Where possible, evidence was cross-checked against more than one information source to verify findings.

The following activities were included in the evaluation:

- An evaluation mission to Thailand, including Bangkok and project sites, between 23 September and 3 October 2019; this included face-to-face consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, using 'semi-structured interviews' in a conversational format. The itinerary and interviewees for the mission are provided in Annex 1 and a summary of the field visits is provided in Annex 2.
- A desktop review of all relevant documents covering project design, implementation progress, and monitoring and review; the list of documents and information is provided in Annex 3.
- An evaluation criteria matrix that details the evaluation questions to be answered and from where this information will come; this is shown in Annex 4.
- Assessment of the extent to which gender considerations were mainstreamed into the project's design, monitoring, implementation and impact (more detail below).
- Assignment of an achievement rating for the project's objective and two outcomes, and assessment of achievement of the end-of-project targets, using the project's results framework.

- Assessment, and assignment of a rating when required, of the project against the following categories: effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability, impact, monitoring and evaluation, and execution by the implementing and executing agencies; ratings were assigned according to the scales prescribed in the UNDP-GEF Guidance document (see Table 4).
- Assessment of provided GEF Tracking Tools.
- Presentation of preliminary findings by the TE team in two end-of-mission sessions on 3 October 2019, the first to ONEP and ZPO staff and the second to UNDP staff.

To assess the extent to which gender considerations were mainstreamed by the project, the evaluation used the document review, stakeholder interviews and personal observations during the mission to analyse a range of matters, including:

- Were relevant gender issues addressed in the project document?
- Was a gender analysis undertaken and were gender-specific activities, targets and monitoring established?
- Were sex-disaggregated data collected relating to project activities and outcomes?
- Was there an appropriate gender balance in participation in project activities?
- Were gender specialists involved in project inception and implementation stages?

Table 4: Ratings scales (source: UNDP-GEF TE Guidance document p 34)

Ratings Scales			
Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, I&E Execution	Sustainability Ratings	Relevance Ratings	Impact Ratings
6: Highly Satisfactory (HS): The project had no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency 5: Satisfactory (S): There were only minor shortcomings 4: Moderately Satisfactory (MS): there were moderate shortcomings 3: Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): the project had significant shortcomings 2: Unsatisfactory (U): there were major shortcomings in the achievement of project objectives in terms of relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency 1: Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The project had severe shortcomings	4. Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability 3. Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks 2. Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks 1. Unlikely (U): severe risks	2. Relevant (R) 1. Not relevant (NR)	3. Significant (S) 2. Minimal (M) 1. Negligible (N)
Additional ratings where relevant Not Applicable (N/A) Unable to Assess (U/A)			

1.3 Structure of the Evaluation Report

This report structure follows the content guidelines provided in the UNDP-GEF TE Guidance document (pp 36–37).

Background information is first provided on the TE process (this chapter) and the project (Chapter 2). Chapter 3 then presents detailed findings in the categories assessed, under the following sub-headings:

- Project design/formulation
- Project implementation
- Project results.

Finally, Chapter 4 provides specific conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned.

Annexes provide additional information to supplement the contents of the main body of the report.

2 Project Description and Development Context

2.1 Project Start and Duration

'Conserving Habitats for Globally Important Flora and Fauna in Production Landscapes in Thailand' (PIMS 4839) is a four-year project implemented through ONEP, supported by UNDP. It started in September 2015 and finished in September 2019. A midterm review was undertaken for the project and finalized in March 2019.

2.2 Problems that the Project Sought to Address

Thailand has undergone rapid development over the last three decades, lifting many of its people from poverty. This has involved rapid industrialization, urbanization, and intensification of agricultural production and fishing. This has been built from Thailand's extensive supply of natural resources and has resulted in land degradation, loss of natural habitats, and increased water and air pollution.

These processes have presented a number of threats to the maintenance of Thailand's rich biodiversity and the survival of endangered species. The project document describes two particular threats:

- Habitat loss and degradation
- Over-exploitation of natural resources.

At the time of development of this project, Thailand had over 575 globally threatened species on the IUCN's Red List and 1,058 nationally threatened species on Thailand's Country Red List.

This project aimed to contribute to the conservation of these species through improvements in the management of critical habitats for endangered species² (ES). The project chose three ES as pilots for the approach adopted: the Spoon-billed Sandpiper (SBS), Eastern Sarus Crane (ESC), and Water Onion.

The project design identified that the long-term solution was to reform the manner in which agricultural, forestry, aquaculture and other production activities are planned and regulated across different land units and tenure categories at the landscape scale in order to avoid, reduce and mitigate the pressures leading to ES biodiversity loss. This would be brought about through the 'mainstreaming' of biodiversity into existing land use planning and management approaches as well as commercial decision making and enterprise.

The project design identified the following two main barriers to achieving this long-term solution.

Barrier 1: Inadequate planning and enforcement to mainstream ES conservation in the wider landscape

The existing focus of conservation policy and financing had been on establishment and management of protected areas, which meant that conservation of ES outside of protected areas (PAs) and in the production landscapes had been *ad hoc* and unsystematic. The project identified deficiencies for ES and critical habitats in Thailand's legislative framework, planning systems and institutional arrangements.

Barrier 2: Inadequate existing experience in integrating land use planning and ES compatible land management

The project document identified that provincial, district and sub-district public authorities had been guided by the 'quick-gain philosophy' with respect to agriculture and aquaculture practices, given the background of high poverty levels in production landscapes. Although there were options available for long-term sustainable use of natural resources that conserve biodiversity and ecosystem services, the conservation efficacy and benefits of these had not been tested. The project document identified specific gaps and

² 'Threatened' is a frequently used generic term that includes all species classified as Extinct, Extinct in the Wild, Critically Endangered, Endangered, and Vulnerable. In this project, 'Endangered' is also used in this generic way and includes all species listed as threatened.

barriers related to this, particularly a lack of know-how and limited examples within the country of applying land use planning and regulatory frameworks to manage development across different sectors to secure positive biodiversity outcomes, and a lack of operational 'on-the-ground' examples of technical interventions that promote biodiversity and ES conservation in production landscapes outside PAs.

The project also identified threats and barriers specific to the three target species.

Spoon-billed Sandpiper

The Critically Endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper is a small migratory wader that breeds in north-eastern Russia and winters in South Asia and South-East Asia; small numbers are recorded every year in the inner Gulf of Thailand. The main factor driving the species' decline is habitat loss in its breeding, passage and wintering grounds, compounded by disturbance, hunting and the effects of climate change. Fledging success and juvenile recruitment are also very low, leading to fears that the population is ageing rapidly.

In Thailand, unsympathetic management of mud flat areas is the major generic threat to the SBS. Specific threats are the ongoing conversion of traditional salt pans to deeper sided aquaculture ponds, changes in the management regimes of salt pans and complete conversion of land use related to industrialization.

Eastern Sarus Crane

The Critically Endangered Eastern Sarus Crane is the South-East Asian subspecies of Sarus Crane (*Grus antigone*). The other two subspecies are located in South Asia and Australia. Threats to all three subspecies include loss and degradation of wetlands as a result of drainage and conversion to agriculture; ingestion of pesticides; hunting of adults, eggs and chicks; and destruction to prevent damage to crops.

The ESC was previously considered extinct in the wild in Thailand; however, Korat Zoo and the ZPO have developed a successful breeding and reintroduction programme and have reintroduced the species into their natural environment at three wetland complexes in Buriram province. At the time of development of this project, this population had not yet started to breed in the wild. The Buriram population of ESC faces similar threats to global populations, including habitat destruction, degradation and disturbance (including from reservoir management, wetland use for agriculture, and invasive species); excessive pesticide use; and hunting or accidental injury.

Water Onion

The Endangered Water Onion is endemic to Thailand and has a very restricted range in southern Thailand. It is an important species in its aquatic habitats, providing habitat and food for many species of aquatic fauna. Previously found on the coastal plain of southern Thailand, it is now known only from a small number of rivers and streams in Ranong and Phang Nga provinces. Local population extinctions have been recorded.

Key threats include: 1. Habitat loss from dredging and removal of sediment to manage flood risk, extraction of sand from riverbeds, and deforestation within the watershed leading to changes in hydrology, sediment loads and nutrient levels. Some of these changes are likely to be exacerbated by climate change, especially changes in rainfall patterns. 2. Unsustainable use through collection from the wild for international trade for aquaria and fishponds.

2.3 Immediate and Development Objectives of the Project

The objective of the project is to mainstream globally important biodiversity species conservation into production sectors through improved management of critical habitats.

To this end, the project aimed to integrate ES and critical habitat conservation into new and existing legislation as well as working to provide clear examples of how ES and critical habitat conservation can be operationalized for target species.

The project aimed to work across three pilot sites and at the national level to help catalyze a paradigm shift within the production sector to focus more on environmental standards within production techniques.

The project projected immediate global environmental benefit through improved land use planning and management approaches that take into account the importance of ES and critical habitats and the development of conservation and recovery plans to support the future of these species.

2.4 Baseline Indicators Established

Table 5 shows the baseline indicators established in the project document (this shows the original indicators and baselines; note that some minor changes were made to these during project implementation).

Table 5: Baseline indicators established in the project document

Indicator	Baseline
Hectares of production landscapes legislated as ES critical habitats and protection enforced to assure the long-term survival of ES in Thailand	There are currently no areas of production landscape that are formally protected due to their importance to an ES.
Status of species on the National Red list	Thailand currently has 1,058 species identified as threatened within the country's National Red list of which 6 are extinct.
Approval of ES and Critical Habitat Bill and landuse planning framework by key decision makers	No Act currently exists focused on the conservation of endangered species.
Reduction in threats to ES and critical habitats from landuse change through adoption of landuse zoning for ES and critical habitat conservation within Provincial Plans based on landuse planning framework	Currently no provincial plans have ES focused landuse zoning.
Management and monitoring system for endangered species operational indicated by number of species for which conservation and recovery plans are in place, critical habitats are defined, management plans in place utilising GIS decision support tool and monitoring is in action	Basic data system in place but not operational and with limited data management capacity.
Improvements in capacity development indicator score for ONEP for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator 2: Existence of operational co-management mechanisms • Indicator 3: Existence of cooperation with stakeholder groups • Indicator 11: Adequacy of the environmental information available for decision-making mainstreaming 	Current capacity assessment score card notes ONEP scores as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator 2: Score 1. • Indicator 3: Score 1. • Indicator 11: Score 1.
Number of hectares of production landscape where land owners/users have been capacitated in producing environmentally friendly products	No areas within the target locations currently use biodiversity friendly production techniques.

Indicator	Baseline
Stability or increase in numbers of populations of the following species at target sites: – Spoon-billed Sandpiper – Water Onion – Eastern Sarus Crane	Spoon-billed Sandpiper – 4 at pilot location in Khok Kham Water Onion – 0.5ha (blooming area) Eastern Sarus Crane – 25 in ‘wild population’. No wild breeding occurred.
Identified threats to targeted species reduced: - Spoon-billed Sandpiper – critical habitat converted for intensive agriculture and urban/industrial development - Eastern Sarus Crane – deaths due to excessive pesticide or hunting - Water Onion – Number of ‘wild’ collected plant specimens exported out of Thailand	Area of possible SBS habitat that has been converted to uses incompatible for SBS use Eastern Sarus Crane – 25 in ‘wild population’ (36 released 4 deceased 7 missing) 669,563 Water Onions exported through Suvarnabhumi Airport during 2006-2009 (number of ‘wild’ collected specimens not known)

2.5 Main Stakeholders

The project document contains a comprehensive stakeholder assessment, with stakeholders and their roles identified for each outcome and output. Table 6 summarizes this assessment.

Table 6: Stakeholders and their roles identified in the project document

Stakeholder	Roles
ONEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing Partner • Draft and proceed the ES bill for Cabinet approval • Review and develop land use planning framework • Form ES policy task groups and coordinate across agencies • Coordinate development of an ES management and monitoring system • Develop extension support to communities
PONRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead coordination of cross-sectoral agencies between provincial and local administration in implementing protected area measures • Develop provincial environmental plans that address the three ES and critical habitats • Assist with identification of economic opportunity assessments • Assist with development of extension support to communities
ZPO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible Party • ESC conservation activities • Technical support to ONEP in development of ES management and monitoring system
Local governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of municipal- and tambon-level regulations on land use
Chiefs of local government administrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt ES-mainstreamed provincial land use plans and local regulations, with enforcement assurance

Stakeholder	Roles
DNP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species-specific project support • Provide archives of ES and critical habitats' data and monitoring system • Non-hunting areas management, including buffer zones
Provincial Department of Town and Country Planning (TCP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical advice to provincial subcommittee on land use plan and zoning
Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream ES zone into local land use planning • Strengthen capacity of local governments in implementing EPA measures
IUCN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible Party for latter 18 months of project • Also liaison with local government, community and ecotourism stakeholders
Rice Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice on organic rice certification
Department of Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice on Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) certification
Based Economy Development Office (BEDO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice on bio certification
Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance business and traders' preference for ES-friendly goods and services
Thailand Tourism Authority (TAT) / Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (DASTA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information on ecotourism best practices and market demand
Local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of biology, conservation and management of three target species

2.6 Expected Results

The objective of the project is 'to mainstream globally important biodiversity species conservation into production sectors through improved management of critical habitats'.

To achieve this objective, the project has two components, each with an associated outcome.

Outcome 1 focused on strengthening the policy and institutional frameworks in place at the national level to manage and support the conservation of ES and critical habitats. This included addressing gaps in existing legislation, developing frameworks to guide implementation of legislation, building capacity within key ministries and agencies to enhance cross-sector learning and coordination, and monitoring critical habitats and ES to better inform decision makers. Outcome 1 included four outputs and had four associated indicators.

Outcome 2 demonstrated critical habitat management for three ES (Eastern Sarus Crane, Spoon-billed Sandpiper, Water Onion) in three distinct geographical locations. The project worked to increase national, provincial and local capacities to protect these species and to identify and support sustainable financing pathways for their conservation within production landscapes. Outcome 2 included three outputs and had three associated indicators.

3 Findings

3.1 Project Design / Formulation

3.1.1 Analysis of Project Design and Results Framework

The overall design of the project was clear. The general strategy was to mainstream species conservation into production sectors through improved management of critical habitats, by strengthening the national policy and institutional frameworks and demonstrating critical habitat management using three species. The rationale for this approach, as outlined in the project document, was logical.

The project aimed to establish new ES and critical habitat legislation, and for an ES and Critical Habitat Bill to be approved by Cabinet by project end. Output 1.1 in the project document described the preferred provisions of this bill in some detail. It proposed ES legislation that is integrated with other planning and regulatory processes, particularly ‘providing a clear mandate to prioritize ES and critical habitat conservation within integrated planning processes at provincial and local levels’. The framework described is consistent with good practices in jurisdictions in other countries.

The project also aimed to establish a land use planning framework that integrated conservation into land use planning decisions and that was linked with the proposed bill. This was also logically justified and comprehensive.

However, there were deficiencies in the practicality and feasibility of some project components in Outcome 1. In particular, developing the legislation described in the project document and having this approved by Cabinet within four years was not realistic. The evaluation team also felt that the project document was excessively prescriptive in the descriptions of the legislation and land use planning framework to be developed. Such processes should be open at their commencement, given that they are subject to extensive political, institutional, consultative and expert input.

Outcome 2 was well designed and largely feasible. It built on existing community knowledge and commitment and on agency capabilities. The focus on land use planning for conservation of the target species was important for mainstreaming into provincial and local processes.

Table 7 presents a critical analysis of the project’s results framework, assessing how SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) the indicators and end-of-project targets are. Some changes were made to the results framework after the midterm review (MTR), and these are indicated in Table 7.

In addition to the SMART analysis, the evaluation team identified some gaps in the results framework, in which important project components were not captured and therefore have low prominence in project delivery and reporting. Specifically, there are no indicators relating to outputs 1.2 (Land Use Framework in place that integrates conservation into land use planning and allocation decisions) or 1.3 (ONEP-led cross-sectoral ES coordination mechanism in place at national and provincial levels), despite these being important components of the ‘enabling framework and capacity’ of Outcome 1.

The project was specifically designed to capture broader development impacts, by ensuring full alignment with Thailand’s 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan (NESDP)³. This built on Thailand’s existing concepts of the sufficiency economy and focused on the need to restructure the economy towards inclusive growth and to move towards sustainable management of natural resources. The project aimed to support the NESDP’s gender objectives through supporting increases in income opportunities for women and the role of women in management positions at the local level.

³ At the time of this evaluation, Thailand’s 12th NESDP had been developed and was being implemented.

Table 7: SMART analysis: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound

✓ Meets criterion ✗ Does not meet criterion ? Some ambiguity or clarification needed

Objective

Description of indicator	End-of-project target level	SMART analysis				
		S	M	A	R	T
1. Hectares of production landscapes legislated as ES critical habitats and protection enforced to assure the long-term survival of ES in Thailand	At least 33,893 ha legislated as ES Critical Habitats and managed in a manner that assures the long-term survival of target ES-based on: 600 ha of salt pans in Khok Kham Sub-district 4,800 ha – which includes 1 km buffer around the 3 non-hunting areas in Buriram Province 28,493 ha which is the entire Nakha Sub-district	✓	?	✗	✓	✓
2. Status of species on the National Red list	No overall decline in species status of species currently listed on the National Red list for Thailand (i.e. movement from one category to another)	✓	?	✗	✓	✓

Indicator 1 and its target are mostly measurable, however it is not clear how ‘protection enforced’ should be interpreted or measured. Indicator 1 is not achievable if interpreted literally: it was not realistic for the project in four years to develop an ES and Critical Habitat Bill, have the bill endorsed by Cabinet and then have the target areas legislated as critical habitat under this bill. Despite this, flexibility in interpretation of the term ‘legislated as ES critical habitats’ means that some progress has legitimately been made.

There is ambiguity about the wording of Indicator 2 and its target and how it should be measured. In particular, ‘No overall decline in species status ... (i.e. movement from one category to another)’ is unclear: does it refer to a summary metric of the relative upwards (i.e. more threatened) or downwards (i.e. less threatened) movements between categories, with the target being for more species moving downwards than upwards? This indicator is also considered not achievable, for two reasons: 1. The project document reported that 1,058 species are on the Thailand Red List, and it is not within the capacity of the project and its partners to influence the status of all of these species. 2. The Thailand Red List is only updated every four years and is a complex process that is largely out of the project’s control, therefore as a project indicator it is not sensitive to measuring the project’s achievements.

Outcome 1

¹Sub-target added after MTR

²Additional capacity development indicator added after MTR

Description of indicator	End-of-project target level	SMART analysis				
		S	M	A	R	T
1. Approval of ES and Critical Habitat Bill and landuse planning framework by key decision makers	Bill approved by Cabinet. Sub-target ¹ : Legal framework and policy recommendations developed for ES and critical habitats and proposed to wetlands management subcommittee under the National Environmental Board.	✓	✓	?	✓	✓
2. Reduction in threats to ES and critical habitats from landuse change through adoption of landuse zoning for ES and critical habitat conservation within Provincial Plans based on landuse planning framework	5 draft provincial plans clearly integrate the designation of critical habitat areas and increase environmental safeguards for development within these areas. Sub-target ¹ : Land use zoning for ES and critical habitats in 5 provinces completed and submitted to the Town Country Planning and Development for inclusion in the provincial plans.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Management and monitoring system for endangered species operational indicated by number of species for which conservation and recovery plans are in place, critical habitats are defined, management plans in place utilising GIS decision support tool and monitoring is in action	Target of 10 species. (Target includes 3 pilot species and 7 additional species).	?	✓	✓	✓	✓

<p>4. Improvements in capacity development indicator score for ONEP for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator 2: Existence of operational co-management mechanisms • Indicator 3: Existence of cooperation with stakeholder groups • Indicator 11: Adequacy of the environmental information available for decision-making mainstreaming • Indicator 5²: Access and sharing environmental information by stakeholders 	<p>Capacity scores increase to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator 2: Score 3 • Indicator 3: Score 3 • Indicator 11: Score 3 • Indicator 5²: Score 3 	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
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The achievability at project commencement of the original target for Indicator 1 (to have an ES and Critical Habitat Bill approved by Cabinet) was doubtful, given the inevitable challenges of legislation development and the associated consultation requirements. The new sub-target (adopted after the MTR) is achievable.

The wording of Indicator 3 and its target is confusing and does not clearly describe a specific future condition. The evaluation team interprets it to mean that an ES management and monitoring system that uses a GIS decision support tool will be operational, and that this system will contain conservation and recovery plans, critical habitat information and monitoring data for species; the target is for information on ten species to be in the system. Although the simple target of ten species is measurable, this does not capture the complexity of the indicator itself. Notwithstanding these issues, Indicator 3 and its target are considered achievable and relevant.

Outcome 2

Description of indicator	End-of-project target level	SMART analysis				
		S	M	A	R	T
<p>1. Number of hectares of production landscape where land owners/users have been capacitated in producing environmentally friendly products</p>	<p>600 ha of salt pans in Khok Kham Sub-district have been capacitated in sustainable SBS-friendly salt production Communities engaged in salt production.</p> <p>400 ha of rice fields in within 1 km of reservoirs in Buriram Province have been capacitated in organic and Eastern Sarus Crane-friendly rice.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

<p>2. Stability or increase in numbers of populations of the following species at target sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Spoon-billed Sandpiper – Water Onion – Eastern Sarus Crane 	<p>Spoon-Billed Sandpiper – no reduction in species number</p> <p>Water Onion – 10% increase in blooming areas – 0.55ha</p> <p>ESC > 40 in ‘wild’ population and ‘wild’ breeding taking place.</p>	?	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>3. Identified threats to targeted species reduced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spoon-billed Sandpiper – critical habitat converted for intensive agriculture and urban/industrial development - Eastern Sarus Crane – deaths due to excessive pesticide or hunting - Water Onion – Number of ‘wild’ collected plant specimens to exported out of Thailand 	<p>No increase in area of critical SBS habitat converted to uses incompatible to the long-term survival of SBS in the Khok Kham location.</p> <p>ESC increase in survival rate of reintroduced population. Current survival rate 60% over a four year period.</p> <p>At end-of-project, no export recorded of ‘wild’ collected Water Onion at the Suvarnabhumi Airport.</p>	?	?	✓	✓	✓

There is a minor inconsistency in Indicator 2, in which the indicator refers to ‘numbers of populations’ but the target for the Water Onion is the area (hectares) of blooming Water Onion; however, there is no lack of clarity about the intent.

Indicator 3 is not specific for SBS, because there is no baseline for the area of ‘critical habitat converted for intensive agriculture and urban/industrial development’; the project document (p 62 footnote 61) states that this baseline will be set ‘once biodiversity inventories are completed by year 2’, but the evaluation team is not aware of this having been done. For this reason, the measurement of this target for SBS is somewhat ambiguous (although the project team has reported qualitatively that ‘there is no increase in areas of critical SBS habitat converted to use incompatible to the long-term survival of SBS’).

Indicator 3 and its targets for ESC meet all SMART criteria. Regarding Water Onion, it was not clear from the project document that wild collection was the major threat or that actions were specifically targeted at reducing wild collection; further, collection of the species from the wild is not illegal. For these reasons, a more relevant target may have related to other threat(s), such as dredging and land management practices that affect hydrology and water quality. The targets for Water Onion meet the other criteria.

3.1.2 Assumptions and Risks

The project strategy is based on the assumption that ‘by mainstreaming ES and critical habitat conservation into planning and monitoring of land use and that by providing clear examples of how biodiversity and economic productivity can be combined within approaches to land management, more stakeholders will take up such approaches’ (project document p 46). It is also based on assumptions that increased capacity

in ONEP will lead to mainstreaming of biodiversity and that communities that are informed and capacitated will adopt practices to conserve biodiversity.

The project document considers the risk that these assumptions will fail to be low.

The project design also considered less fundamental risks and provided mitigation measures for these. The project document discusses assumptions and risks in two sections: in relation to the project strategy (p 46) and to the project results framework (p 59).

Table 8 provides an assessment by the evaluation team of these risks and assumptions at project closure.

Table 8: Analysis of the risk assessment in the project document

Risk description	Risk rating (likelihood)	Evaluation comments
Project Strategy		
The political situation in Thailand becomes unstable preventing the development of any new policies or legislation and their mainstreaming	Moderate (Low)	National elections were held during the course of implementation, although this did not have direct impact on development of such policies and legislation.
Weak coordination and cooperation between different government agencies will be difficult at the sites	Moderate (Moderate)	This risk was well managed, and local-level coordination was good.
Delayed approval of ES legislation	Moderate (Low)	<p>Mitigation measures in the project document included using a highly consultative approach; establishing a cross-sectoral institutional mechanism; the project being led by the agency responsible for developing such legislation; making a case for the economic benefits of ES conservation; and UNDP maintaining a watching brief.</p> <p>The mitigation measures were of limited success, and the ES legislation was not developed as ONEP decided early in the project not to develop ES legislation.</p> <p>The evaluation team considers that this risk was under-rated during project development; it is normal for there to be a high level of uncertainty around the development of major environmental legislation.</p> <p>ONEP are now developing a Biodiversity Conservation Act, although the evaluation team understands that this was not a result of the project's activities or risk mitigation measures.</p>
Weak coordination within and between local and national government and other stakeholder institutions responsible for land management; limited capacity (especially at lower levels) to interact with land users on land/water management	Moderate (Moderate)	<p>This risk was mitigated well at the local level through the establishment of coordination mechanisms, leading to good project outcomes.</p> <p>The evaluation team saw little evidence of improved coordination at the national level, therefore this risk is ongoing.</p>

ES-friendly land management does not lead to sufficient economic gains for households at the project sites	Moderate (Low)	The project mitigated this risk well by focusing on practices that communities have identified as socio-economically sustainable and directing resources to improve this and capacitate the communities.
Migratory species are impacted by threats external to Thailand.	Low (Moderate)	The evaluation team considers that this risk was under-rated, because the likelihood of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper being impacted by threats external to Thailand should be considered 'certain'. Nevertheless, the response measures have been appropriate: focus efforts to make the domestic environment as favorable and resilient as possible, while participating in international networks for SBS conservation and migratory bird flyway protection.
Changes in climate adversely impact target species	Low (Moderate)	Mitigation measures have been appropriate. In particular, stakeholders in Buriram have high awareness of the impacts of dry conditions on ESC and are working collaboratively on water management issues. This risk is ongoing.
Results Framework		
Risk to Objective indicators: Migratory species status is impacted by population levels outside of Thailand	-	As above.
The political situation in Thailand prevents effective national level discussion on a new bill or acceptance of a land use planning framework	-	As above.
That the economic situation within Thailand worsens limiting opportunities to obtain price premiums for environmentally friendly products and reducing tourism levels.	-	Although the national economic situation has not directly affected the project's results, the evaluation team heard during the mission that fluctuations in markets for individual commodities and products had impacts on the relative viability of some ES-friendly practices (e.g. organic rice and ESC conservation, and salt prices and protection of salt pans for SBS). This risk is ongoing.

3.1.3 Lessons from Other Relevant Projects

The project document refers to learning from and linking with three other relevant UNDP-GEF projects.

'Integrated Community-based Forest and Catchment Management through an Ecosystem Service Approach': important links were identified with Outcome 2 of this project regarding encouraging local management and benefits from natural resources management.

'Catalyzing Sustainability of Thailand's Protected Area Systems': this was focused on protected area management; therefore, the projects were expected to complement each other.

'Sustainable Management of Biodiversity in Thailand's Production Landscapes': this project was strengthening national and local capacity for mainstreaming biodiversity into the management of

ecologically important production landscapes by transforming the supply and market chain of biodiversity-based products. The project document noted that the proposed new project will focus on land use planning and the implementation of restrictions (communities compensated in the event that subsistence livelihoods are negatively influenced), thereby adding an important component to the range of mainstreaming tools available in Thailand.

The project document did not specifically contain lessons from these projects; rather, it proposed mechanisms for collaboration between projects. This comprised a Technical Working Group of experts on biodiversity conservation, including representatives from the above projects, and regular meetings between the projects to 'leverage synergies'. The evaluation team is not aware of this Technical Working Group being established or such regular meetings being held.

It is likely that some valuable lessons from these other projects could have been incorporated into this project. For example, Output 2.2 of this project (Long-term financial sustainability strategy for three ES sites developed) could have included strategies tested under those projects, such as the payment for ecosystem services modalities developed under the project 'Community-based Forest and Catchment Management through an Ecosystem Service Approach' or the community-based social enterprises modalities under the project 'Sustainable Management of Biodiversity in Thailand's Production Landscapes'. Also, Output 2.1 (Management and zoning plans implemented) could have learned lessons from the project 'Catalyzing Sustainability of Thailand's Protected Area Systems'.

3.1.4 Planned Stakeholder Participation

The stakeholder involvement plan in the project document was detailed, involving a wide range of organizations, including government agencies and their respective regional and provincial offices; local governments; private sector groups; community-based organizations; and universities and other research institutions. The plan was largely focused on agencies, groups and institutions and was comprehensive in that aspect. However, local community groups, villages and individuals received little attention in the plan, which meant that the important roles of these stakeholders received less focus.

The stakeholder involvement plan stated that 'the project will ensure that key stakeholders are involved early and throughout project execution'. Numerous stakeholders were associated with the project from the earliest stages, as evidenced in the project identification form (PIF), project document and inception workshop report. These have formed the core of implementation partners and their interest has been confirmed and maintained throughout project formulation and implementation.

3.1.5 Replication Approach

The approach to replicability described in the project document was logical and captured the assumptions and overall strategy of the project; however, it lacks specific detail on how the replicability will be achieved.

The replication approach relied on (project document p 58):

- The three selected pilot ES providing a diverse set of lessons and practical experience
- The knowledge management system ensuring effective collation and dissemination of experiences and information
- The national legislation and planning framework providing an enabling environment for replication of initiatives throughout Thailand.

Clearly, this replication approach is vulnerable to any weaknesses and lack of success in project implementation.

The three species (which were selected during project development) provided some diversity of lessons and experiences; however, because two were bird species and all three occurred in wetland habitats, there were some limitations to this as a replication mechanism.

The knowledge management system was developed, containing information on ten target species (although with some shortcomings, as discussed in Section 3.3.1). As part of this, a database and GIS tool are linked to the ONEP biodiversity database, and ONEP will assume ownership of the database. This approach maximizes the likelihood that the knowledge management system will be used to share information and enable replication of the approaches used for the assessment of the ten species.

The largest weakness in delivery in regard to replication is the failure to deliver a national legislation and planning framework. This means that there is not a strong mechanism for replicating the provincial planning, land use planning and ES conservation planning that has been undertaken in the pilot provinces in the other provinces in Thailand. Nevertheless, some of the mechanisms used for the three species in the project may be appropriate for use for other species in other locations; for example, the issuance of a Provincial Order to protect Water Onion and its habitats in Ranong province could be replicated in other provinces to incorporate ES and critical habitat conservation into their provincial strategies and plans.

An additional useful tool for replication would have been for the project to develop a practical set of lessons and case studies that could be disseminated widely and supported by a training and capacity-building program. This could be supported by a policy or mechanism through which knowledge and experiences could be effectively shared.

3.1.6 UNDP Comparative Advantage

The UNDP comparative advantage in the implementation of the project lies in its long-standing experience addressing climate change, environmental sustainability and development in Thailand through the enhancement of national capacity and policy readiness. This includes a series of UNDP-supported, GEF-funded projects working to inform national policies and to improve mechanisms to address issues in project pilot sites. In addition to the projects listed in Section 3.1.3, UNDP supported several other related GEF-funded projects, including 'Maximizing carbon sink capacity and conserving biodiversity through sustainable conservation, restoration, and management of peat-swamp ecosystems' and 'Sustainable management models for local government organizations to enhance biodiversity protection and utilization in selected eco-regions of Thailand'.

The UNDP competitive advantage also includes experience in providing management support, technical support and administration support to such complex projects.

3.1.7 Linkages Between Project and Other Interventions

In all of the project sites, the project built on existing interventions by government departments, local communities, and universities and other research institutions. The project has developed its activities by building on and linking with these existing capacities. For the Water Onion, the project built on the local community's original aspirations to combine Water Onion conservation activities with community-based tourism. For SBS, the project aimed to capacitate existing production and nature conservation groups to produce salt-based products and spa services as alternative income generation activities. For ESC, the project aimed to work with existing organic rice farmers to organize groups, create branding and packaging for a higher-end market, and develop new rice-based products.

There was no linkage identified between the proposed ES and Critical Habitat Bill and the Draft Biodiversity Act; this is because the biodiversity legislation was not a government priority at the time of project development.

3.1.8 Management Arrangements

The project is delivered through UNDP's National Implementation Modality (NIM), with ONEP as the IP and UNDP as the GEF Agency. ZPO has been a RP throughout the project, and IUCN was engaged as an RP for the latter 18 months.

ONEP and ZPO were closely involved in the project formulation phase and their roles and responsibilities were clearly defined in the project document. Co-financing from these agencies was committed early. These included in-kind contributions such as office space, facilities and staff, and budget for traveling and M&E visits to project sites to enable them to perform their roles effectively.

A Project Board (PB) was established for the project. The PB approved the project's workplans, budget plan, progress reports and any proposed amendments to the project's results framework, and gave necessary support to project implementation as required.

For the final period of the project after commencement of IUCN as RP, the project management unit (PMU) was located within the ONEP office, comprising a project manager and an administrative and finance officer, both of whom were employed by IUCN. While formally reporting to IUCN, the PMU worked under the immediate supervision of the Project Director (ONEP's Director of Biodiversity Division) and ONEP's project team.

This arrangement differs slightly from the model proposed in the project document, and implemented for the first year, in which the PMU was located in ONEP but was led by a project manager recruited by and reporting directly to UNDP. This adaptive management response is considered to have been successful, because the IUCN project manager worked closely with both IUCN management and ONEP project staff to rapidly bring much of the project back on track and deliver or partially deliver most outcomes.

3.2 Project Implementation

3.2.1 Adaptive Management

Project activities started soon after formal commencement; however, the project manager departed after the first year and the project then experienced a one-year delay while trying to recruit a replacement project manager that satisfied ONEP's requirements. After this, ONEP and UNDP agreed to contract an institution as RP to manage the project, rather than engage an individual manager; at ONEP's request, UNDP undertook to implement this procurement. This proved to be a good adaptive management approach because the organization (IUCN) has solid knowledge about global and national ES and extensive experience in implementing ES and critical habitat conservation projects. As a result, the project made good progress in its final year and the rating of overall project achievement improved from 'Moderately Unsatisfactory' at the MTR to 'Moderately Satisfactory' in this evaluation.

Some changes were made to the results framework at two stages: after inception (when minor changes were made to clarify some terminology and baselines) and after the MTR (which is described in Section 3.2.5) shortly before project completion (when two sub-targets were added and other minor changes were made to indicators under Outcome 1). The evaluation team noted some deficiencies in making some of these adaptive management changes to the results framework and consider that a clear process for this should be established and shared; this is discussed in Section 3.2.3 (Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management).

3.2.2 Partnership Arrangements

The project document sets out clear stakeholder roles in project implementation. The partners involved for the project, at both national and local levels, were appropriate from the perspective of their mandates

and their relevance to the subject matter. As IP, ONEP had a lead role in all project outputs, while ZPO had a joint lead role for Output 2.2 (Long-term financial sustainability strategy for three ES habitats sites developed). ZPO has shown an ability to mobilize and engage partners from the private sector to support and sustain project activities after the project ends.

Most of the identified supporting agencies have been actively engaged in project implementation through various activities, including as members of the PB or Provincial Advisory Committees, and as partners in project implementation. Numerous government agencies have been involved in project implementation at pilot sites, including sub-district municipalities; Department of Rice; Department of Land Development; Department of Agricultural Extension; DNP (through non-hunting areas); and TCP. Planned stakeholders that had no or limited participation in project implementation are BEDO, the Chamber of Commerce, TAT, and DASTA. Other stakeholders who have had an active role in technical aspects of project implementation include IUCN, TEI, BCST, and Mahidol University.

3.2.3 Feedback from M&E Activities Used for Adaptive Management

The most important sources of feedback to inform adaptive management were the annual Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) and the MTR (see Section 3.2.5). The inception workshop and quarterly reports were also important sources of feedback.

The evaluation team found some deficiencies in following through with M&E information to make formal changes to the results framework. Similar deficiencies were noted by the MTR. Two specific examples are described below.

First, the PB noted in June 2016 that the target to have an ES bill approved by Cabinet by project end was unlikely to be achieved, but steps were not taken then to change the target in the results framework to something less ambitious. This was also noted in the 2018 PIR, with statements that ‘the Project Board agreed to consider a reduction of ambitions to reach a bill approval in the Mid Term Review’ and ‘the PMU will come up with the key recommendations to draft the bill’. The MTR considered these facts and recommended a change to a less ambitious target; the PB subsequently endorsed another, even less ambitious target. However, this proposed change was not provided to the Regional Technical Advisor (RTA) for consideration until the 2019 PIR, by which time it was very late in the project (shortly before commencement of this TE) and the substantial change in deliverable could be considered downgrading and was not endorsed. Consequently, the original target of a bill approved by Cabinet still stands, with an additional achievable sub-target added.

Second, the baseline number of SBS at Khok Kham was listed in the project document as four, and it was flagged during the inception workshop that this was incorrect and that the baseline should be two. The MTR also recommended that the baseline be changed from four to two. Data provided by BCST during this TE support this assertion (see detail in Section 3.3.1). However, this change was not included in the results framework changes (as endorsed by the PB) provided to the RTA for endorsement, and the baseline remained four at project completion.

In both of these examples, a clear process for results framework changes that is understood by all relevant parties would have assisted.

3.2.4 Project Finance

The total committed budget in the project document was USD 12,896,137, of which the GEF component was USD 1,758,904 and co-financing contributions were USD 11,137,233. A summary of the budget is provided in Table 9.

Table 9: Summary of budgeted project funds (USD)

Funding source	Type	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Committed
GEF	Cash	270,877	503,341	481,341	503,345	1,758,904
UNDP	Cash	5,000	20,000	10,000	5,000	40,000
ONEP	In-kind	1,749,308	1,749,308	1,749,308	1,749,308	6,997,233
ZPO	In-kind	1,000,000	1,200,000	1,000,000	800,000	4,000,000
Thailand Wetland Foundation	In-kind	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	100,000
TOTAL		3,050,185	3,497,649	3,265,650	3,082,653	12,896,137

Expenditure

At 6 January 2020, total expenditure in the Combined Delivery Reports was USD 1,641,375, which is 93.3% of the GEF funds allocated. The evaluation team was advised that an additional USD 98,357 had been spent and was awaiting financial clearance at the time of this report being finalized, which means that total estimated expenditure is USD 1,739,732, or 98.9% of GEF funds. This is commendable, given the delivery challenges that the project faced. The remaining funds (USD 19,172) will be returned by ZPO. The budgeted and actual expenditure by year is presented in Table 10, showing expenditure greatly lower than budgeted in years 2 and 3 (2017 and 2018) and greatly higher than budgeted in year 4 (2019).

Table 10: GEF allocation budgeted and actual annual expenditure (USD)

Year	Budgeted expenditure	Actual expenditure	Actual as % of budgeted
2015		16,209	-
2016	270,877	331,586	122.4
2017	503,341	236,805	47.0
2018	481,341	246,150	51.1
2019	503,345	810,626	180.6
2019 pending clearance		98,357	
TOTAL ESTIMATED	1,758,904	1,739,732	98.9

Data provided to the evaluation team show that expenditure under Outcomes 1 and 2 closely matched the budgeted expenditure (97.9% and 102.9% respectively), and expenditure on project management was 74.6% of budgeted expenditure (Table 11).

Table 11: GEF allocation budgeted and actual expenditure (USD)

Year	Budgeted expenditure	Actual expenditure	%
Outcome 1	499,004	488,363	97.9
Outcome 2	1,100,000	1,132,034	102.9
Project Management	159,900	119,335	74.6
TOTAL	1,758,904	1,739,732	98.9

The project demonstrated due diligence and established strong financial controls in the management of funds. Although formal audits were not undertaken, periodic spot checks and an internal control audit were conducted by independent accounting firms during the implementation of the project. The evaluation team viewed two spot checks on ZPO (March 2017 and December 2018) and one on IUCN (December 2018). No significant issues were identified in these spot checks. The evaluation team also viewed an internal control audit of IUCN from August 2019, which made 11 findings with associated recommendations or suggestions.

A micro assessment was undertaken in 2018 by an independent accounting firm during the procurement of IUCN as RP, to assess IUCN's control framework. The micro assessment determined that IUCN's management and administrative structure was clearly defined, that there were no significant control gaps, and that there was a low level of risk.

A change to fund allocation was made in 2018, when the direct project cost (DPC) component of the budget (from the project management line) was increased from USD 7,592 to USD 71,200. The DPC represents reimbursement to UNDP for the provision of project support services. The evaluation team viewed documentation justifying and approving this change through appropriate channels. The change was appropriate and relevant, because UNDP took on significant additional responsibilities, especially in the recruitment of the RP at ONEP's request.

Co-financing

The evaluation team received data showing the actual co-financing contributed by UNDP, ONEP, ZPO, TEI and BCST. This is summarized in Table 12, which also shows the committed sums in the project budget. The total actual co-financing was USD 10,952,246, which is 98.3% of the committed total.

Table 12: Project committed and actual co-financing (USD)

Source	Committed	Actual
UNDP	40,000	40,810 ¹
ONEP	6,997,233	6,997,233
ZPO	4,000,000	3,757,470
Thailand Wetland Foundation	100,000	- ²
TEI	-	11,400
BCST	-	145,333
TOTAL	11,137,233	10,952,246

¹Actual UNDP contribution was in-kind whereas committed contribution was cash (Tables 9 and 13)

²No data received on Thailand Wetland Foundation contribution

In the original budget, there was co-financing of USD 100,000 from the Thailand Wetland Foundation; the evaluation team did not see evidence of a contribution from this group. Also, there was no co-financing budgeted from TEI or BCST, but they contributed USD 11,400 and USD 143,171 respectively.

Table 13 provides a breakdown of the confirmed sources of co-financing by name and type. In this table, the column 'Type of Co-financing' refers to whether the funding was a grant, loan, equity investment, public investment, guarantee, in-kind, or other; and the column 'Investment Mobilized' refers to whether the funding is investment mobilized (i.e. excluding recurrent expenditures) or recurrent expenditures (i.e. routine budgetary expenditures that fund the year-to-year core operations of the entity).

The evaluation team was provided with a detailed breakdown of each of these contributions as evidence of the co-financing. This was in the form of the completed form 'Co-Financing Template for GEF Trust Fund Projects' for all contributors except ONEP, the highest contributor, for whom more detailed information was provided in an MS Excel spreadsheet.

Table 13: Confirmed sources of co-financing for the project by name and by type (USD)

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount (USD)
GEF Agency	UNDP	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	40,810
Recipient Country Government	Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	4,051,918
Recipient Country Government	Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP)	Other	Investment Mobilized	2,945,314
Recipient Country Government	Zoological Park Organization of Thailand (ZPO)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1,624,200
Recipient Country Government	Zoological Park Organization of Thailand (ZPO)	Other	Investment Mobilized	2,133,270
Civil Society Organization	Bird Conservation Society of Thailand (BCST)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	127,200
Civil Society Organization	Bird Conservation Society of Thailand (BCST)	Other	Investment Mobilized	18,133
Civil Society Organization	Thailand Wetland Foundation	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	11,400
Total Co-financing				10,952,246

The co-financing contribution from UNDP of USD 40,810 comprised professional and technical services; office space; and office equipment, materials and supplies. The UNDP co-financing committed in the project document was cash; however, this was not realized and the contribution was instead in-kind. Nevertheless, this slightly exceeded the committed sum and was an important contribution to achievement of the project's results, given the role that UNDP staff played in maintaining momentum for the project (Section 3.2.6).

A summary of ONEP's expenditure items is provided in Table 14. USD 4,051,918 was in the form of in-kind costs for staff, office equipment and utilities, publications and media and travel. This is a substantial level of funding that is in accord with that committed at project development, although the evaluation team had little visibility of how this funding actually contributed to the project, especially during the period when

there were limited project activities occurring. The projects totaling USD 2,945,314 that are listed in Table 14 as ‘investment mobilized’ represent a valuable contribution to this project’s ultimate objective.

Table 14: Summary of expenditure items for co-financing from ONEP (USD)

Expenditure Item		Amount (USD)
Government staff costs	Recurrent expenditures	1,029,220
Office equipment	Recurrent expenditures	362,833
Utility bills	Recurrent expenditures	610,582
Cost of maintenance for office equipment and rental for project staff	Recurrent expenditures	333,333
Production costs of publications and media	Recurrent expenditures	469,500
Travel for government staff	Recurrent expenditures	1,246,450
Project on Implementation of Convention on Biodiversity	Investment mobilized	606,333
Project on Enhancing effectiveness of Wetland Management	Investment mobilized	746,536
Project on Development of Tools and Mechanisms on Biodiversity Management and Thailand Biodiversity Information Facility	Investment mobilized	932,667
Project on Thai National Heritage in Ranong and Krabi Province and Project on Water Onion protection measurements	Investment mobilized	494,548
Project on Water Lily Monitoring and Rehabilitation, Budget under Thailand Environment Fund	Investment mobilized	165,231
Total		6,997,233

The co-financing contribution from ZPO of USD 3,757,470 comprised professional and technical services; personnel costs; office and equipment costs; software, new technologies and databases; communication and outreach products; use of facilities; utilities; and travel costs. These represent an important contribution to the achievement and sustainability of the project’s objective, particularly because ZPO was involved continuously through the project.

ZPO has also reinforced the sustainability of project outcomes by mobilizing additional budget from the private sector to construct a learning center for the Eastern Sarus Crane. A sugar factory in Buriram has funded a building that is equipped with audio-visual equipment and static displays, indoor and outdoor spaces for learning activities, and a bird-watching tower. ZPO has also allocated budget for one year after the project ends, to continue activities that support and leverage ‘Sarus Rice’ products, markets and farmer networks.

3.2.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation overall rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

- ✓ M&E plan in project document was satisfactory
- ✓ PIRs were completed candidly and reflected real improvement in results in final year
- ✓ Inclusive and participatory approaches to monitoring used
- ✗ No gender considerations in M&E
- ✗ Deficiencies in follow-up of results framework changes
- ✗ No baseline set for the area of SBS habitat at Khok Kham

Monitoring and Evaluation design rating: Satisfactory

The section 'Monitoring Framework and Evaluation' in the project document establishes standard M&E activities and makes allowances for these in the M&E budget. This budget is USD 75,000, approximately 4% of the GEF grant (USD 1,758,904). It should be noted that this M&E budget excludes project team staff time and the significant allocation of resources (financial and other) on monitoring at the sites of species conservation activities. There is no allocation in the project document budget to 'Setting of baselines and end-of-project targets together with means of verifying the results' or 'Measurement of means of verification'; these were to be finalized in the inception phase and annual work plans. Of the M&E budget, USD 56,000 (75%) is allocated to the midterm review and TE and USD 10,000 (13%) to the inception workshop. Given that the project document envisaged making specific budget allocations early in implementation for monitoring progress towards targets, the evaluation team considers the M&E plan to be well prepared and have an appropriate budget.

The project document states that 'the project monitoring and evaluation process will mainstream gender issues by ensuring that gender considerations are included within all monitoring, review and evaluation activities' (p 53), which is satisfactory.

A theory of change approach was not used for project development or M&E.

Monitoring and Evaluation implementation rating: Moderately Satisfactory

The project inception workshop was held on 1 December 2015 and a report was prepared after this workshop. The M&E plan in the project document stated that, at this workshop, a detailed overview of reporting and M&E requirements would be provided and that the M&E work plan and budget would be agreed and scheduled; these items are not covered in detail in the agenda and report from the inception workshop.

Quarterly progress reports are the most frequent mechanism for reporting on project progress. The evaluation team viewed quarterly reports by ZPO from Quarter 3 2017 to Quarter 2 2019, and by IUCN from Quarter 1 of 2018 to Quarter 2 of 2019. These reports typically provide a lot of detail on project activities and less detail on progress towards project outcomes and targets.

Three PIRs were prepared, in 2017 (after the first full year of implementation), 2018 and 2019. These focused on progress towards results. Reporting in these was generally realistic: in 2017 and 2018, progress towards the objective and both outcomes were rated as 'off track' and the UNDP CO and RTA both rated progress towards development objectives as 'Moderately Unsatisfactory'; in 2019, progress towards the objective and both outcomes were rated as 'on track' and the UNDP CO and RTA both rated progress towards development objectives as 'moderately satisfactory'. This was a fair reflection of the significant

change in progress during the final reporting period and accords generally with the evaluation team's assessment.

Periodic visits to project sites were conducted, in accordance with the M&E plan; the evaluation team viewed reports for three such visits (in December 2017, November 2018, and August 2019).

The tracking tools were completed appropriately at midterm and completion; the final completed tracking tool was provided to the evaluation team prior to the evaluation mission.

In accordance with the M&E plan, independent auditing companies were engaged to complete spot checks and micro assessment reports on the responsible parties (ZPO and IUCN). The evaluation team viewed three spot check reports, one micro assessment report, and one internal control audit report (see also Section 3.2.4).

Reporting on attendance at project activities often included a breakdown of attendance by gender. Otherwise, the evaluation team is not aware of any specific measures to mainstream gender impacts in the project's M&E system as stated in the project document.

A midterm review (MTR) was conducted for the project, as specified in the project document, between November 2018 and March 2019. This was undertaken despite it not being a GEF requirement due the small size of the project. The MTR occurred quite late in the project cycle, due to the delays in implementation and to give the new RP (IUCN) time to gather their own momentum in 2018. The evaluation team agrees with these considerations in the timing of the MTR; however, there was limited time remaining after MTR completion to make meaningful adjustments to project direction and the results framework.

The MTR found that progress towards the objective and both outcomes was Moderately Unsatisfactory, and gave 17 recommendations for the project. A management response to the MTR was issued on 10 June 2019. Of the 17 recommendations, the management response fully agreed with 10, partially agreed with 3, and disagreed with 4. However, because of the short period between the MTR and project closure, only some of the 'agreed' recommendations were implemented or partially implemented. These were Recommendation 1 (some changes to results framework); Recommendation 3 (creating a real-time communication tool and event calendar); Recommendation 5 (regular recording of co-financing by project partners); Recommendation 6 (completion of tracking tool and Capacity Scorecard Assessment in early 2019); and Recommendation 7 (development of land use plans in Samut Sakhon).

Monitoring of the environmental and social risks that were identified through the UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure was undertaken through the 2018 and 2019 PIRs. The key mitigation measure to these risks was a fully participatory approach to land use zoning, regulation development and species conservation activities, to ensure that all stakeholders were able to present their views and no groups are marginalized or have their livelihoods unduly impacted. This participatory approach was strong in this project; therefore, the evaluation team considers that these risks were managed and monitored adequately.

The project team used inclusive and participatory approaches to monitoring, especially those monitoring elements that involved local communities in collecting information on the three target ES. Also, a real-time communication and participatory monitoring channel was established through the LINE social media platform. This group has more than 35 members who were engaged in day-to-day implementation of project activities, including members of communities managing the target ES, provincial committees, IUCN, ONEP, TEI, BCST, UNDP, and technical consultants. This channel proved an effective way to share information on project activities and results, and issues related to implementation. This LINE group will continue after the project ends.

The Project Board was not involved in day-to-day M&E activities, although it did consider the MTR and endorsed changes to the results framework after the inception workshop and the MTR. The evaluation

team is not aware of the Operational Focal Point (OFP) having been informed of M&E activities; the OFP did not contribute to PIR reporting.

The rating for M&E implementation is Moderately Satisfactory, because there were several moderate shortcomings noted (especially the absence of gender considerations in M&E, the lack of M&E discussion at the inception workshop, the deficiencies in follow-up of results framework changes, and the failure to set a baseline for the area of SBS habitat at Khok Kham).

3.2.6 UNDP and Implementing Partner Implementation / Execution

Evidence

- ✓ UNDP responded to a significant implementation problem with an effective solution
- ✓ UNDP and ONEP had results-focused approach
- ✓ Substantial co-financing realized from ONEP
- ✗ Little sign of ONEP as IP proactively progressing project during extensive delay
- ✗ Change in priority for ONEP where ES Bill not developed had negative impact on deliverables
- ✗ Some inefficiencies for other parties working with UNDP administrative and financial systems

UNDP Execution rating: Satisfactory

There was consistent support to the IP and project team by UNDP throughout project implementation. The project faced a challenge when the project manager departed after the first year, and UNDP was responsive to this significant implementation problem. In consultation with ONEP, UNDP identified an appropriate solution involving recruitment of an RP to manage the project. Although there was a long delay that had an impact on project performance, the evaluation team understands that UNDP went to great lengths to fill the role efficiently.

UNDP sat on the PB and played an active role in meetings. Regular meetings between UNDP, ONEP and the RP (IUCN) were held to discuss management issues, including adaptive management measures. A UNDP programme assistant was in charge of day-to-day coordination with ONEP and RP on administrative matters.

UNDP Country Office (CO) provided substantial support to the project, especially in procurement, recruitment of service and goods providers, and organizing meetings and workshops. The costs incurred by UNDP CO in providing these support services were recovered from the project management line of the project budget.

The RTA played a strong technical support role, including providing clarification on technical concepts in the project document when required, advice on matters relating to the achievement of project outcomes, and guidance on adaptive management approaches and procedures.

The evaluation team heard from ONEP and IUCN during interviews that UNDP was responsive and that the quality and timeliness of UNDP's technical support to the project team was satisfactory. However, challenges were reported resulting from poor alignment between government and UNDP administrative rules and procedures, and a lack of clarity around some UNDP procedures, which caused inefficiencies and delayed approval of some activities that needed joint decision and action.

UNDP had a results-based focus on project implementation, which was perceived as useful by the IP and other stakeholders interviewed. Reporting by the CO and RTA was candid and realistic, especially in the annual PIRs, as described under Section 3.2.5.

UNDP managed risks appropriately during the project. Risk management was addressed in all three PIRs. The absence of a project manager was identified as a critical risk in the 2017 PIR, and an effective response was subsequently identified and implemented as described above. Another example of responsive risk management is that the CO arranged a meeting with the RP (IUCN) immediately after receiving an internal control audit report (as outlined in Section 3.2.4 Finance), to discuss findings and recommendations to manage risks related to financial management.

IP Execution rating: Satisfactory

The focus of ONEP on results and timelines was variable during the project. In particular, there was little progress in the project during the project delays before the commencement of IUCN as RP (with the exception of the ESC components). The evaluation team considers that, during this period, ONEP did little as IP to proactively push the project forward while UNDP was implementing the recruitment and procurement processes. Since the commencement of IUCN as RP in April 2018, ONEP has been focused on results and timelines and has provided an appropriate environment in which the IUCN project manager is based. IUCN has been successful in implementing a comprehensive plan to compensate the time loss and to meet project benchmarks in the remaining period. The overall result has been more timely and result-focused implementation and monitoring.

Management and inputs by ONEP, including the reported budget, were adequate. According to the information provided to the evaluation team, the substantial co-financing committed during project development was realized during implementation; this is described in detail in Section 3.2.4. The Director of Biodiversity Division in ONEP was assigned as Project Director and two additional staff worked as the project team.

The evaluation team had limited insight into the quality of risk management by ONEP. One positive example noted relates to the risks around the sustainability of project results in the pilot provinces, particularly the management of community-based ES learning centers and economic activities. The project has established a mechanism to run these through a community committee and ONEP has earmarked budget to continue technical support to these committees through PONRE and periodic visits to the pilot sites

The project was designed in consultation with ONEP. The change in priority by ONEP, whereby development of an ES bill was no longer a priority shortly after commencement, had a major negative impact on the deliverables for the project. Instead of a comprehensive ES legislative program and consideration of a bill by Cabinet, the deliverable for this component of the project became a general review with recommendations. This weakened the overall strategy and mandate of the project. Otherwise, ONEP demonstrated ownership over the project and has established a plan to integrate the project's results and recommendations into government policy through existing government channels (e.g. wetlands management subcommittee and National Environmental Board (NEB)).

3.3 Project Results

3.3.1 Overall Results (Attainment of Objective)

Below is the rating for the achievement of the project objective and two outcomes, with an accompanying evaluation of the achievement against each associated target in the results framework.

Project Objective: To mainstream globally important biodiversity species conservation into production sectors through improved management of critical habitats
Objective Achievement Rating: MODERATELY SATISFACTORY

Of the project’s two Objective indicators, one was partially achieved and one was not achieved. However, the SMART analysis showed that the indicator that was not achieved (‘No overall decline in species status of species currently listed on the National Red list for Thailand’) did not meet SMART criteria and was unrealistic for the project, and the indicator that was partially achieved was largely unachievable.

Considering the difficult nature of both indicators, the evaluation team considered that moderate progress had been made towards the Objective and assigned a rating of Moderately Satisfactory.

Objective Indicator 1			
Indicator	Baseline	End-of-project Target	TE Assessment
Hectares of production landscapes legislated as ES critical habitats and protection enforced to assure the long-term survival of ES in Thailand	There are currently no areas of production landscape that are formally protected due to their importance to an endangered species	At least 33,893 ha legislated as ES Critical Habitats and managed in a manner that assures the long-term survival of target ES– based on: 600 ha of salt pans in Khok Kham Sub-district 4,800 ha – which includes 1 km buffer around the 3 non-hunting areas in Buriram Province 28,493 ha which is the entire Nakha Sub-district	Partially achieved

Because the ES and Critical Habitat Bill was not developed, critical habitat has not been formally legislated as stated in the indicator; therefore, the target for this indicator was not achieved.

Nevertheless, a rating of ‘partially achieved’ has been assigned, because other effective statutory and non-statutory measures have been put in place to protect the habitat of the three species.

In particular, the project developed five land use plans that identify the conservation requirements of the three target species and establish measures for their conservation, and the total area covered in these plans is 33,472 ha, which is 98.8% of the end-of-project target. The land use plans have been formally incorporated into two new provincial city plans (Samut Sakorn and Buriram), whereas the other three will be used to inform new provincial city plans in the next planning cycle. This means that the ‘long-term’

protection has not yet been assured in these three provinces (as per the wording of the indicator), although steps are in place.

In Ranong province, a Provincial Order has been issued to protect Water Onion and its habitats, and in Phang Nga province, Water Onion habitats are protected under a MONRE Ministerial Order (2016).

In Khok Kham, SBS habitat is currently protected under several laws/measures, including the National Conserved Forest Act, Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act (as a non-hunting area), and the Cabinet Resolution on 1 August 2000 and 3 November 2009 that identifies the area as a wetland of national importance with 16 protection measures.

Objective Indicator 2			
Indicator	Baseline	End-of-project Target	TE Assessment
Status of species on the National Red list	Thailand currently has 1,058 species identified as threatened within the country's National Red list of which 6 are extinct.	No overall decline in species status of species currently listed on the National Red list for Thailand (i.e. movement from one category to another).	Not achieved

As detailed in the SMART analysis of the results framework, this indicator and target are somewhat ambiguous and unrealistic for a project of this type and duration. A more suitable indicator would have considered the status of the species being addressed by the project.

ZPO has been reporting on the status of the ten target species covered by the project, which is appropriate; an assessment of the status of those species was approaching finalization at the time of the evaluation.

Further, there has been an improvement in the status of the ESC, moving from Extinct in the Wild to Critically Endangered.

Outcome 1: Enabling framework and capacity to manage ES in productive landscapes strengthened
Objective Achievement Rating: MODERATELY SATISFACTORY

The project's aims in Outcome 1 around strengthening Thailand's legislative and planning framework for ES conservation had some success and was rated Moderately Satisfactory. The original aim for an ES and Critical Habitat Bill to be approved by Cabinet was not achieved, because shortly after project commencement this was not a priority for ONEP; instead, a legislative review and recommendations were developed instead. The project document also envisaged a land use planning framework being adopted; this framework was not developed, although high-quality land use planning was undertaken to inform provincial planning in five provinces.

A GIS-based management and monitoring system was developed with information on ten species, connected to ONEP's main biodiversity database. Conservation and recovery plans were not developed for these species, although the information gathered should provide the basis for development of such plans. The project met its targets for improving the internal capacity of ONEP in several indicators relevant to the project's aims.

Outcome 1 Indicator 1			
Indicator	Baseline	End-of-project Target	TE Assessment
Approval of ES and Critical Habitat Bill and landuse planning framework by key decision makers	No Act currently exists focused on the conservation of endangered species	Bill approved by Cabinet. Sub-target (added after MTR): Legal framework and policy recommendations developed for ES and critical habitats and proposed to wetlands management subcommittee under the National Environmental Board.	Partially achieved

The original target for a bill to be approved by Cabinet was not achieved. However, ONEP is currently drafting a Biodiversity Act, which provides opportunities for the recommendations and lessons on ES and critical habitat conservation and protection from this project to be considered in development of legislation.

Approval of a bill by Cabinet was an overly ambitious target for a project of this type and duration, therefore a new sub-target was adopted as part of the 2019 PIR and this sub-target has been achieved, although with some shortfalls. The main shortfall is that the legal framework and policy recommendations were not yet finalized and submitted to the wetlands management subcommittee at the time of the TE.

The evaluation team also considered that the document that was prepared to meet this sub-target had some shortcomings as a clear and robust set of recommendations for ES legislation. The document ('Legislation framework review and international best practice review for the endangered species and its habitat conservation') flags 'problems' with existing legislation at two levels: legal provisions of the laws themselves and enforcement. It identifies several 'gaps' for conserving ES and critical habitats. The report also states that the relevant laws and regulations 'should be revised' to achieve consistency with the 2017 National Constitution and relevant international agreements. The report provides some useful general recommendations, but does not give recommendations that are specific to individual pieces of legislation. It reviews international examples of ES projects and provides some interesting findings, but does not review international examples of ES legislation, therefore it provides no such learnings to inform the legislative development process.

The project document envisaged comprehensive ES legislation in which listed ES and critical habitat would be a trigger for other statutory planning and assessment processes, including:

- Stipulating processes for listing ES and designating critical habitat
- Integrating ES conservation into provincial management structures
- Integrating ES conservation into the development planning process
- Stipulating requirements regarding environmental impact assessment (EIA).

Provisions such as these are common in legislation in other jurisdictions, and can provide important mechanisms to ensure that nationally listed ES and critical habitats are considered in all provincial and local planning and impact assessment.

The legislative review document does not address these matters. Given the extent of the original legislative proposal detailed in the project document, the evaluation team recommends that a more thorough review be conducted, including consideration of whether listing ES and critical habitats should become a national

legislative trigger to influence other statutory processes, such as planning at provincial and local levels and EIA mechanisms.

Outcome 1 Indicator 2			
Indicator	Baseline	End-of-project Target	TE Assessment
Reduction in threats to ES and critical habitats from landuse change through adoption of landuse zoning for ES and critical habitat conservation within Provincial Plans based on landuse planning framework	Currently no provincial plans have ES focused landuse zoning	5 draft provincial plans clearly integrate the designation of critical habitat areas and increase environmental safeguards for development within these areas. Sub-target (added after MTR): Land use zoning for ES and critical habitats in 5 provinces completed and submitted to the Town Country Planning and Development for inclusion in the provincial plans.	Partially achieved

Three provincial plans (for Ranong, Samut Sakorn and Buriram) have integrated the designation of critical habitat areas and conservation plans with an indicative budget allocated. Therefore, the main target has been partially achieved.

Work has also been underway to progress towards including ES conservation content in two other provincial plans. In Phetchaburi province, which contains SBS habitat, a land use plan was developed by the project, which can be used as a basis for designing conservation activities in designated areas in the next fiscal year. In Phang Nga, the whole province, including the Water Onion habitats, is environmentally protected under the MONRE Ministerial Announcement (2016).

The sub-target has been achieved. Five land use plans have been submitted to the provincial offices of Public Works and TCP. Two of these (Buriram and Samut Sakorn) are now included in the new provincial city plan. The others will be used in the next cycles of city planning, which will happen within one year.

Outcome 1 Indicator 3			
Indicator	Baseline	End-of-project Target	TE Assessment
Management and monitoring system for endangered species operational indicated by number of species for which conservation and recovery plans are in place, critical habitats are defined, management plans in place utilising GIS decision support tool and monitoring is in action	Basic data system in place but not operational and with limited data management capacity	Target of 10 species. (Target includes 3 pilot species and 7 additional species).	Partially achieved

The ES management and monitoring system is operational and contains information on the ten target species. The database and GIS tool are linked to the ONEP biodiversity database and ONEP will assume ownership of the database when it is completed, which is appropriate.

This is rated as ‘partially achieved’ because conservation and recovery plans have not been developed.

For the three pilot species, conservation and recovery plans have not been developed, although their conservation needs are included in the land use plans developed by the project. The evaluation team understands from interviews that the project has connected with international teams/networks responsible for both ESC and SBS conservation recovery planning.

For the seven additional species, information has been collected, including on threats and status; however, conservation and recovery plans have not been prepared.

Outcome 1 Indicator 4			
Indicator	Baseline	End-of-project Target	TE Assessment
<p>Improvements in capacity development indicator score for ONEP for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator 2: Existence of operational co-management mechanisms • Indicator 3: Existence of cooperation with stakeholder groups • Indicator 11: Adequacy of the environmental information available for decision-making mainstreaming (Added after MTR) • Indicator 5: Access and sharing environmental information by stakeholders 	<p>Current capacity assessment score card notes ONEP scores as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator 2: Score 1. • Indicator 3: Score 1. • Indicator 11: Score 1. • Indicator 5: Score 1. 	<p>Capacity scores increase to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicator 2: Score 3. • Indicator 3: Score 3. • Indicator 11: Score 3. • Indicator 5: Score 3. 	Achieved

As reported in the 2019 PIR and confirmed during interviews, the target to increase the ONEP capacity development indicator scores to 3 was met for all indicators.

This includes an additional indicator (Indicator 5) that was added after the MTR. This indicator is ‘Access and sharing environmental information by stakeholders’; the score of 3 is described as ‘Comprehensive environmental information is available and shared through and adequate information management structure’, and is partially due to training on GIS provided by the project.

Outcome 2: Critical Habitat management demonstrated for three Endangered Species

Objective Achievement Rating: SATISFACTORY

There were significant achievements under Outcome 2, which was rated Satisfactory. The project worked with communities that have existing local knowledge of three pilot ES, and catalyzed a strategic approach to provincial planning, balancing production with conservation, and alternative livelihoods. Learning centers now provide high-quality experiences for tourists and other visitors. For the ESC in Buriram, the continuous involvement of ZPO in the project has been of great benefit and the results are deeply embedded in the community and likely to be sustainable; all ESC targets were achieved.

Outcome 2 Indicator 1			
Indicator	Baseline	End-of-project Target	TE Assessment
Number of hectares of production landscape where land owners/users have been capacitated in producing environmentally friendly products	No areas within the target locations currently use biodiversity friendly production techniques	600 ha of salt pans in Khok Kham Sub-district have been capacitated in sustainable SBS-friendly salt production Communities engaged in salt production 400 ha of rice fields in within 1 km of reservoirs in Buriram Province have been capacitated in organic and Eastern Sarus Crane-friendly rice	Partially achieved

For the SBS target, salt pan owners in the Khok Kham sub-district have been supported to develop alternative and environmentally friendly livelihoods and products, such as ‘OTOP Navatwithi’ salt-based spa and products. The project further enhanced capacity by enabling local people to undertake a study visit to Taiwan to see salt pan management and related livelihood activities. The project also provided training to livelihood groups on group management and book-keeping.

Despite these effective actions, the quantitative target of ‘600 ha of salt pans ... capacitated’ cannot be said to be achieved, because the area covered by these capacity-building measures is 179 ha. There was discussion during the project implementation regarding whether 600 ha was an appropriate baseline; however, this was not changed and 600 ha remains the baseline area.

For the ESC target, the project helped to capacitate farmers on more than 869 ha in the buffer zones of the reservoirs in Buriram, therefore the target was achieved. Activities focused on strengthening the capacity of organic rice farmers by linking them with broader markets, improving packaging, and expanding networks for possible new rice-based products (e.g. organic rice seeds, and value-added food products).

Outcome 2 Indicator 2			
Indicator	Baseline	End-of-project Target	TE Assessment
Stability or increase in numbers of populations of the following species at target sites: – Spoon-billed Sandpiper – Water Onion – Eastern Sarus Crane	Spoon-billed Sandpiper – 4 at pilot location in Khok Kham Water Onion – 0.5ha (blooming area) Eastern Sarus Crane – 25 in ‘wild population’ No wild breeding occurred	Spoon-Billed Sandpiper – no reduction in species number Water Onion – 10% increase in blooming areas – 0.55ha ESC > 40 in ‘wild’ population and ‘wild’ breeding taking place	Partially achieved

SBS: The number of SBS observed at Khok Kham during the entire over-wintering period (typically from October to March) is recorded every year. BCST provided these data to the evaluation team, and the numbers per year since 2012 were:

2012-13: 2
2013-14: 2
2014-15: 2
2015-16: 3
2016-17: 1
2017-18: 2
2018-19: 3

Three SBS were recorded in 2018-19, which is the equal-highest count since before the project commenced; therefore, the aim to have ‘stability or increase in numbers’ of SBS was clearly achieved. Unfortunately, the baseline number of SBS in the results framework is 4. Despite this having been raised as a likely error at the inception workshop in 2015 and the MTR recommending that the target be changed to 2, the results framework was not formally amended to make this correction; consequently, the number of SBS at project closure is less than 4 and the target is not formally achieved.

Water Onion: The 2019 PIR states that in July 2019 ‘around 1 ha of Water Onion has been indicated during its growth cycle before blooming’ and that members of the target communities advised that this ‘would survive to its blooming in October 2019’. Backing this up, the evaluation team observed extensive Water Onion blooming when visiting the project site in Kuraburi sub-district, Phang Nga, on 24 September 2019. Given that the target was for 0.55 ha of blooming area, the target can be considered achieved.

ESC: The PIR reported that, as of June 2019, there were 77 ‘wild’ ESC surviving, of which 11 were from ‘wild’ breeding. The target was achieved.

Outcome 2 Indicator 3			
Indicator	Baseline	End-of-project Target	TE Assessment
<p>Identified threats to targeted species reduced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spoon-billed Sandpiper – critical habitat converted for intensive agriculture and urban/industrial development - Eastern Sarus Crane – deaths due to excessive pesticide or hunting - Water Onion – Number of ‘wild’ collected plant specimens to exported out of Thailand 	<p>Area of possible SBS habitat that has been converted to uses incompatible for SBS use</p> <p>Eastern Sarus Crane – 25 in ‘wild population’ (36 released 4 deceased 7 missing)</p> <p>669,563 Water Onions exported through Suvarnabhumi Airport during 2006 -2009 (number of ‘wild’ collected specimens not known)</p>	<p>No increase in area of critical SBS habitat converted to uses incompatible to the long-term survival of SBS in the Khok Kham location</p> <p>ESC increase in survival rate of reintroduced population. Current survival rate 60% over a four year period.</p> <p>At end-of-project, no export recorded of ‘wild’ collected Water Onion at the Suvarnabhumi Airport</p>	<p>Partially achieved</p>

SBS: Several effective measures have been taken to reduce the threats to SBS and prevent the conversion of habitat to incompatible uses. The SBS habitat in Khok Kham sub-district has been identified as an important site for migratory birds and ONEP is proposing to list it as a site under the East Asian–Australasian Flyway Partnership. SBS habitat is protected from threats from agriculture and housing by the current city plan and the land use plan developed by the project, which means that the entire 179 ha of salt pans will be officially zoned as core and buffer zones, ensuring that these lands will not be converted to uses that are incompatible to the long-term survival of SBS. The Khok Kham Nature Conservation Club is also proactive in preventing conversion of the salt pans to activities that threaten SBS.

Despite these effective actions, the quantitative target of ‘no increase in area converted to uses incompatible’ cannot be said to be achieved, because the baseline area of habitat was not set, as described in Section 3.1.1; this was intended to be set during implementation, but was not. Thus, although the project reporting (2019 PIR) states that none of the 179 ha of habitat that currently exists has been converted, there is no approved baseline against which to assess this.

ESC: As reported in the 2019 PIR, the survival rate of released ESC since the project commenced (2015) is 85%, which is a large increase from the baseline (60%) and the target is achieved. The project has effectively addressed threats from excessive pesticides, and hunting is less likely, as the ESC live and breed in organic rice farms in the buffer zone of a non-hunting area.

Water Onion: Data on Water Onion exported from Suvarnabhumi Airport between 2015 and 2019 was provided in October 2019 to IUCN by the Plant Quarantine Department at Suvarnabhumi Airport. This is shown graphically in Figure 1. A clear decline is apparent in the number of Water Onions exported and their value, while there is an increase in the number of ‘pieces’ exported. This suggests that the threat from collection was effectively addressed by local community laws that prohibit collection, although the target of ‘no export’ was not achieved.

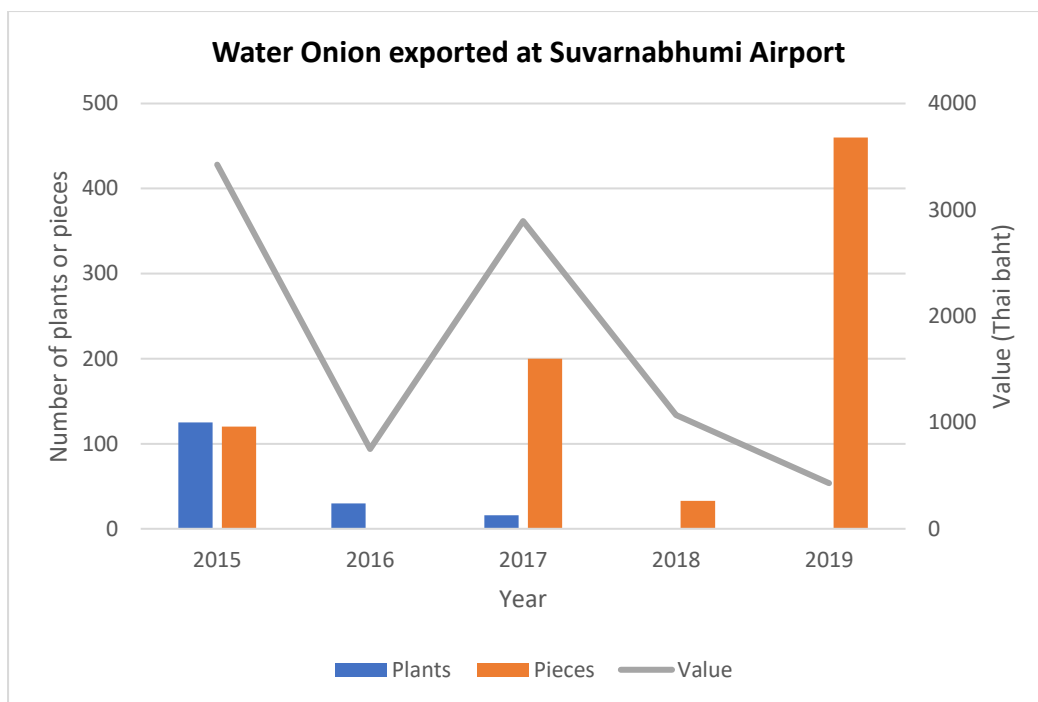


Figure 1: Water Onion exported at Suvarnabhumi Airport (data source: Plant Quarantine Department at Suvarnabhumi Airport)

3.3.2 Relevance

Relevance rating: Relevant

At the time of development, the project was very relevant to local and national priorities and to ONEP organizational priorities.

GEF programming

The project was highly consistent with GEF BD-2 ‘Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in production landscapes, seascapes, and sectors.’ The project sought to establish a legislative and planning framework to facilitate this in Thailand and to mainstream outcomes for three pilot species in three different production landscapes. The project also advanced the strategic targets of the UNCBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020, in particular: 7. By 2020, areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity; and 12. By 2020, the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those in decline, has been improved and sustained.

UNDP programming

The project contributed to the following Country Programme Outcome in the Country Programme Document (CPD) for Thailand 2012-2016: ‘Thailand is better prepared to address climate change and environmental security issues through the enhancement of national capacity and policy readiness’.

The following Country Programme Outcome Indicators were relevant:

Indicator 1: Number of national and local (networking) platforms supported and/or strengthened.

Baseline: As of 2011, there are few (networking) platforms fully operated by the Thai Government and participated by communities and stakeholders.

Target: At least 3 national and local platforms developed with UNDP support by 2016.

Indicator 2: Number of climate-related policies and model actions established applied and/or replicated by national and local partners; as well as exchanged in south-south cooperation forums.

Baseline: As of 2011, no strong climate-related national policies and model actions established, applied and/or replicated by national and local partners.

Target: At least 3 climate-related policies and model actions established, applied and/or replicated by 2016 with support by UNDP. At least 3 south-south exchange forums conducted addressing the three outputs and other key issues (e.g. mitigation, adaptation, environmental security, climate fiscal framework, etc.).

Primary applicable Key Environment and Sustainable Development Key Result Area - UNDP Strategic Plan (2014–2018): Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development.

Sustainable Development Goals

The project was developed and approved prior to the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. Nevertheless, the project's strategy and outcomes are relevant to the pursuit of several SDGs and related targets in Thailand, and the evaluation team heard several discussions of this among project partners. The following SDGs are of particular relevance:

- 1 No Poverty
- 5 Gender Equality
- 12 Responsible Production and Consumption
- 14 Life Below Water
- 15 Life on Land
- 17 Partnerships for the Goals

National priorities/strategies

The project aligned with Thailand's 'National Policies, Measures and Plans on the Conservation and Sustainable Utilisation of Biodiversity 2008–2012', which was the country's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). In particular, the project aligned with key strategies, including:

- Build capacity of the people and local administrative organizations on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity over at least 40% of the country's total area
- Build capacity and expertise of institutions and their staff on the biodiversity conservation
- Strengthen capacity in conservation, restoration and protection of natural habitats, within and outside the protected areas.

The NBSAP also noted the need to 'provide protection for endangered, rare and endemic species'.

The project also helped to support the implementation of Thailand's Action Plan (2009–2014) on wetland conservation.

Development of the proposed ES legislation was considered a priority by ONEP at the time of project development, because they endorsed the project and their participation in it. However, such legislation was no longer an agency priority early in implementation and this component of the project made little progress, and its relevance to national priorities declined.

Since the project commenced, ONEP started development of a Biodiversity Conservation Act. This may include ES provisions, therefore there is opportunity for the legislative component of the project to have renewed relevance by providing advice and recommendations on legislative options.

ZPO had clearly articulated its priorities during project formulation, which meant that project outcomes and activities aligned with their expectations, resulting in a high level of relevance and achievement.

3.3.3 Effectiveness and Efficiency

Effectiveness rating: Moderately Satisfactory

The evaluation team considers that overall effectiveness has been Moderately Satisfactory, given the individual ratings of Moderately Satisfactory for the Objective, Moderately Satisfactory for Outcome 1, and Satisfactory for Outcome 2.

Efficiency rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory

Evidence

- ✓ Effectively leveraged existing groups, knowledge, activities and funding for ES pilot projects
- ✓ Efficiency was high during the last year when IUCN was fully operating on the project
- ✗ Large reduction in output in Outcome 1 with ES Bill and land use planning framework not done
- ✗ Long period of low activity during second and third years

The project had a large reduction in output because the ES and Critical Habitat Bill was not developed. The 'legal framework and policy recommendations', which replaced the bill as a deliverable when it was clear that the bill was not realistic, is not a deep analysis of legislative options and recommendations and the evaluation team considers that it has shortcomings with respect to the original intent of the project document.

Also, although very good work was undertaken for the land use planning for the three species under Outcome 2, the evaluation team is not aware of a 'framework' as described in Output 1.3 being developed. Consequently, the national legislative and planning framework proposed under Outcome 1 is not strong.

For these reasons, significantly reduced project results have been delivered for the GEF resources allocated and the evaluation team has assigned an overall efficiency rating of Moderately Unsatisfactory.

The actions under Outcome 2 were more cost-effective. The project leveraged existing groups, knowledge, activities and initiatives to pursue opportunities and efficiently progress the project's aims.

The project suffered a long pause during the second and third years. After the new RP was recruited to perform the project manager role, the project regained momentum and good results were achieved. By the end of the project, mechanisms were in place to ensure sustainability of project benefits at community and provincial levels. Efficiency was high during the latter 12 months of the project.

3.3.4 Country Ownership

The level of country ownership is considered moderate, due to the active involvement of national partners, especially ONEP and ZPO, in the process of concept identification and project development. The project objective is in line with national plans focusing on the need to restructure the economy towards inclusive growth (including a move towards environmentally friendly production) and with sectoral plans such as those for sustainable tourism, agriculture, and natural resources and environmental management.

A CTA has been engaged to compile project results and provide recommendations. This is being done by a senior consultant with extensive experience in biodiversity policy formulation with ONEP. The CTA's recommendations have been drawn from the project's experiences and should be submitted to the wetlands management subcommittee under the NEB for adoption or further decision. This will maximize leverage from the project's results and should ensure that the country ownership is sustained.

The evaluation team was provided with two draft reports by the CTA after the first draft of this TE report was submitted (the first draft report was recommendations on how to integrate project's

outcomes/findings into existing policies after the project ends, and the second was comments on the policy recommendations proposed by the project). These documents have specifically considered the work prepared by IUCN, TEI and BCST.

3.3.5 Mainstreaming

The project document provided a good framework and indicative activities for mainstreaming gender throughout the project, including during the inception, implementation and M&E phases (p 52). Gender-specific activities were identified for each outcome indicator. To ensure gender mainstreaming, a gender analysis was proposed as part of the inception phase and a session of the inception workshop was to focus on gender issues.

The evaluation team found that some attention had been given to gender equality in participation in project activities, both in decision-making and operational roles, and that some sex-disaggregated data had been collected regarding this. The average overall ratio of women to men in this data was 51:49. This particularly related to activities under outcome 2. The numbers of women sitting on committees for the community-based learning centers was relatively high. During field visits, the evaluation team observed that women also had leading roles in some activities, such as preparing meals and drinks for visitors, training participants in using the learning center as a venue, and guiding visitors around species conservation sites (particularly for the Water Onion). In Buriram, girls are actively engaged as ‘junior guides’ for the school-based Sarus Crane learning center. However, there was no further sex-disaggregated data available about the participants’ roles.

Despite these positive observations during the evaluation, there was little evidence of systematic planning for the participation of and generation of benefits for women from the project. A gender analysis was not conducted and there was no session on gender issues at the inception workshop. Also, except for the limited amount of sex-disaggregated data on participation in project activities, little was systematically done towards implementing the gender-specific activities described in the project document or ensuring that gender considerations were mainstreamed into the project’s M&E (see Section 3.2.5).

The five land use plans and draft provincial plans developed during the project provide very good examples of mainstreaming ES conservation into provincial planning processes. However, the limited progress on ES legislation and a land use planning framework mean that progress towards mainstreaming ES conservation into the national framework has been limited.

3.3.6 Sustainability

Overall Sustainability rating: Likely

Evidence

- ✓ Steps taken to secure resources to sustain results for three target species
- ✓ High levels of community support for conservation of the three species
- ✓ Project worked well with provinces to influence provincial plans
- ✗ Concerns about sustainability of learning centers
- ✗ Some tensions within Khok Kham community about salt pan conservation vs other land uses
- ✗ Climate change a recurring theme, especially the impacts of dry conditions on ESC breeding

Financial risks to sustainability

Financial risks: Likely

Steps have been taken to secure resources to ensure that the results in the locations of the target species are financially sustainable.

In Ranong and Samut Sakorn, budgets to continue ES and critical habitat conservation are included in 2020 provincial plans. At the time of this evaluation, the budget is awaiting approval from Cabinet. There is a small risk that the budget might be reduced.

In Phang Nga, a budget for continuation of Water Onion conservation will be allocated from PONRE's regular budget. Additional budget may be allocated from the Tambon Administrative Organizations in areas where Water Onion are located.

During the field visits, concerns were expressed by community members about the sustainability of the learning centers after the project, including financial sustainability. The evaluation team recommends that this be addressed after the project is completed.

In Buriram, ZPO has secured 4 million Thai baht to support the continuation of project activities for another year, especially for managing and improving the ESC learning center. There is also budget from various other sources (e.g. from the private sector and donations) to support ESC activities. Hence, financial risk for the ESC is low.

Socio-economic risks to sustainability

Socio-economic risks: Likely

Socio-economic risks to sustainability are relatively low in Ranong and Phang Nga as the communities are now aware that Water Onion is an endemic plant that is critically endangered and that it is important to conserve its habitat. The communities are equipped with knowledge to conserve the plants and to link conservation to sustainable livelihood activities. An ecotourism management plan for engaged communities in Ranong and Phang Nga is being developed by Silpakorn University.

In Khok Kham, the women's group and the nature conservation group benefited from conservation and sustainable livelihood activities. However, there is a risk that these benefits may not continue in the long-term, as there are conflicting views in the community regarding the advantages of salt-farm conservation and benefit sharing from conservation activities. Reconciliation on this issue could be pursued with the help of an external mediator. IUCN and BCST are aware of this ongoing issue and intend to continue to work in the Khok Kham sub-district after the project ends.

In Buriram, the socio-economic risks to sustainability are low. Rice farmers see the benefits from conservation of ESC, and use 'Sarus Rice' as the brand of their organic rice to add value to their product. ESC conservation receives attention and support from a wide range of stakeholders, including public and private organizations, schools, and policy makers at local and provincial levels. Support includes donations for running the learning center, integration of knowledge on ESC into school curricula, and adopting ESC as a mascot for national youth games hosted by Buriram province.

Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability

Institutional Framework and Governance risks: Likely

Five land use plans were developed through engagement with representatives from concerned agencies. Hence, the plans that will be included in city plans should be consistent with the priorities of individual agencies and the communities living in the habitat areas.

During the project period, provincial governors in pilot provinces have provided support to the project in many ways, such as issuing Provincial Orders on ES and habitat protection, including ES conservation in provincial and city plans, and chairing or appointing provincial committees to oversee and monitor ES conservation. However, there is a risk that this level of support may not continue in all provinces if the provincial governor changes. For example, the governor of Phang Nga recently changed, which means that PONRE will have to inform the new governor of the project benefits and aim for sufficient support to continue to be provided to maintain the project benefits.

In each project site, a committee has been established to manage the ES learning center. Members of the committee include representatives of communities in habitat areas, key line agencies, private sector groups and non-government organizations. They will be the key mechanism to run the learning centers and to manage other related activities for conservation and community livelihoods.

Environmental risks to sustainability

Environmental risks: Likely

The Water Onion is dependent on high-quality water in the canals in which it occurs. Upstream land management activities that affect water quality, such as fertilizer and pesticide run-off or siltation, can be a risk to the species. The evaluation team heard during the field visits to Ranong and Phang Nga that this was not currently a major issue. The evaluation team asked some interviewees at both sites whether environmental weeds were a threat to the Water Onion, and were told that weeds were not an issue.

The ESC relies on ongoing sympathetic management of the wetlands and farming areas near Buriram in which it occurs. There is existing coordination between parties, especially ZPO, DNP, village heads and community members, which is highly effective. The three non-hunting areas are managed with ESC conservation as an objective and DNP staff are involved in monitoring ESCs. There are already effective measures in place to regulate activities and manage water quality in the three reservoirs. For these reasons the evaluation team feels that these environmental risks will be managed well after project completion.

At the time of the field visit to Buriram (27 September 2019), rainfall for that wet season had been well below average and water levels in the wetlands were very low. Consequently, there had been very little ESC breeding recorded that year. Although variation between years in rainfall, water levels and ESC breeding is normal, concerns were expressed by stakeholders involved in the project about the projected drying trend from climate change.

For SBS, habitat in the Khok Kham sub-district are environmentally protected under various laws.

3.3.7 Impact

Impact rating: Significant

The evaluation team identified the following improvements in ecological status:

- The status of the Eastern Sarus Crane on Thailand's Red List has changed from Extinct in the Wild to Critically Endangered, due to the successful reintroduction program at Buriram.
- The Water Onion is blooming across a larger area than before the project.

The evaluation team identified the following reductions in ecological stress:

- Crane-friendly rice-growing practices and farmer behaviors are embedded in the farming community at Buriram. For example, farmers who find an ESC nest notify the village headman and receive 3000 baht compensation for protecting the nest. Such activities have had a direct positive impact on survival and breeding success of the ESC.
- Local laws enacted in the community mean that very little wild Water Onion is now collected.

- A proposed solar farm that would have destroyed SBS habitat at Khok Kham is not proceeding. This relieves an immediate major threat to the species. The project has been able to raise awareness of the SBS and the importance of the salt pan habitats.
- ONEP is proposing to list new migratory bird flyway sites under the East Asian–Australasian Flyway, in Buriram.
- Through the project, ZPO is working more closely with the Buriram community and adopting result-based planning and management approach, resulting in more effective reduction in stress on the ESC.

4 Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons

4.1 Conclusions

This project has led to valuable advancements in the understanding of planning and implementation for the protection of endangered species in Thailand, especially in production landscapes.

The most notable achievements have been under Outcome 2, demonstrating critical habitat management for three ES. The project has worked with communities that have existing local knowledge of and aspirations for three pilot ES, and catalyzed a strategic approach to provincial planning, balancing production with conservation, and alternative livelihoods. The Eastern Sarus Crane program in Buriram is an exceptional example of this, where people involved in crane conservation have teamed with organic rice farmers to create a mature market product—Sarus Rice—and establish an environment in which cranes are valued and protected; meanwhile, land use planning has influenced the provincial planning process to ensure that zoning is appropriate for the species' conservation. A learning center provides a high-quality experience for tourists and other visitors. The continuous involvement of ZPO in the project in Buriram has been of great benefit and the results are embedded in the community and likely to be sustainable.

Similar work has been achieved for the SBS and Water Onion. Committed local communities have been engaged and capacitated, measures for protection and livelihoods that benefit the target species have been identified, and land use planning undertaken to inform provincial plans in Ranong, Phang Nga and Samut Sakorn. Because the involvement of the project was not continuous at these sites (due to delays in project implementation), the results here are less mature and will need more nurturing after project completion than in Buriram.

Reflecting these high-quality results, the achievement of Outcome 2 of the project has been rated as **Satisfactory**.

The project's aims in Outcome 1 around strengthening Thailand's legislative and planning framework for ES conservation has been less successful. The original aim for an ES and Critical Habitat Bill to be approved by Cabinet was not achieved, because shortly after project commencement this was not a priority for ONEP; instead, a legislative review and recommendations were developed. An opportunity now exists for these findings and recommendations to influence development of a Draft Biodiversity Act. The project document also envisaged a land use planning framework being adopted, which would provide guidelines and a systematized approach to integrating ES conservation into planning processes in Thailand; the framework was to be piloted in the three main project pilot sites. Although this framework was not developed, high-quality land use planning was undertaken to inform provincial planning in five provinces, and these may provide a model for future planning.

A GIS-based management and monitoring system was developed with information on ten species (include the three target species), connected to ONEP's main biodiversity database. Detailed information was collated for each species on its biology, conservation status, population trends, habitats, existing conservation measures and recommended future actions. Although conservation and recovery plans were not developed for these species, it is anticipated that the information gathered will provide the basis for development of such plans. Finally, the project met targets for improving the internal capacity of ONEP in several indicators relevant to the project's aims.

Reflecting these results, the achievement of Outcome 1 of the project has been rated as **Moderately Satisfactory**.

Of the project's two Objective indicators, one was partially achieved and one was not achieved. However, the SMART analysis showed that the indicator that was not achieved ('No overall decline in species status

of species currently listed on the National Red list for Thailand') did not meet SMART criteria and was unrealistic for the project.

Considering the difficult nature of both indicators, the evaluation team considered that moderate progress had been made towards the Objective and assigned a rating of **Moderately Satisfactory**.

There were limitations in the extent to which gender considerations were mainstreamed into the project's implementation and monitoring and evaluation. Despite a strong framework for this being established in the project document, there was no gender analysis undertaken during inception or implementation and no systematic process to include gender-specific indicators within all monitoring and evaluation activities (although some sex-disaggregated information on participation in activities was collected). In spite of these deficiencies, the evaluation team found that the level of women's participation in the planning and implementation of project activities was relatively high, especially in communities where pilot activities were occurring. This appeared to have occurred naturally rather than via a planned process. The project did not use a gender specialist during the inception or implementation stages; the use of such a specialist would have ensured that gender mainstreaming was explicitly built into project implementation.

4.2 Recommendations

This section presents recommendations for the project, with an explanation of each that outlines the evaluation team's relevant conclusions and rationale for the recommendation.

Recommendation 1. Technical and other support should continue to be provided to the communities with endangered species learning centers in Samut Sakhon, Ranong and Phang Nga

The ES learning centers established during the project provide important opportunities to raise awareness about the target species and biodiversity conservation and are an important component of the approach to ensuring sustainability of project outcomes. The evaluation team was impressed with the enthusiasm of the local people about the learning centers and their potential to attract tourism to their communities.

The evaluation team heard concerns expressed by community members at Samut Sakhon, Ranong and Phang Nga about the sustainability of the learning centers after completion of the project, particularly because the centers have been only recently opened. Support that is needed includes help with the means to cover routine expenses (especially with power and water costs), technical (ensuring that community members have up-to-date and accurate understanding of the subject matter) and logistical (scheduling and managing visitors and activities).

The ESC learning center at Buriram already has significant ongoing support, including from ZPO, Mahidol University and local businesses, therefore this recommendation does not apply to this learning center.

Recommendation 2. Communication channels that have been established between the three species components of the project should be maintained for learning and mutual support

An important component of this project is the opportunities that have been created for project participants to share experiences and learn from others on approaches to ES conservation. Participants have communicated actively through established channels, especially via a group on the social media platform LINE. Given that the three species conservation projects will continue beyond project completion, it is important that this sharing and learning environment is maintained.

Recommendation 3. The provincial committees in each province that have been guiding this project should continue and be strengthened beyond the project, to ensure integration of the species' requirements into provincial plans

The project has been successful in raising awareness of the three target species in the respective provinces and working to build their conservation requirements into provincial plans. A key part of this has been the establishment of provincial committees to provide coordination and facilitate high-level provincial support.

These provincial committees or similar mechanisms must continue beyond the project to ensure that the species continue to be incorporated into the relevant plans.

This is not only important for the conservation of the target species, it is also very important for the overall strategy of the project, which is to influence provincial and local planning processes to encourage ES and critical habitat conservation.

Recommendation 4. ONEP and PONRE should provide awareness raising and training in the provinces to facilitate consideration of endangered species in provincial planning, using the learnings of this project

The evaluation team observed that there was a high level of interest in the three species in the agencies involved in provincial and local planning. It is important to realize that this awareness and interest was largely due to awareness raising and training provided by the project. Further, technical knowledge of endangered species and critical habitat and how to plan for their conservation and protection is low in most provinces. For these reasons, it cannot be assumed that there will be widespread uptake of ES conservation planning in Thailand's provinces as a result of this project. This is especially true because the project did not establish a legislative mechanism whereby provincial and local planning must consider listed ES and critical habitats, as originally proposed in the project document.

A program of provincial awareness raising and training on ES and provincial planning would provide an opportunity to communicate relevant lessons of this project across Thailand and increase the technical capacity in the provinces.

Recommendation 5. The policy recommendations that have been developed by the Chief Technical Advisor should be presented to the wetlands management subcommittee

A Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) has been engaged by UNDP to ensure ongoing adaptive management and technical development across the project and to ensure that project experiences are fed into any relevant legislation and planning framework development. To address these aims, the CTA has prepared a paper containing policy recommendations. Importantly, the work of the CTA has incorporated the experiences, findings and recommendations of partners from this project, especially IUCN and TEI. To maximise leverage from the project's results, the CTA paper should be presented to the wetlands management subcommittee.

Recommendation 6. The recommendations and knowledge from this project should be considered when developing the Draft Biodiversity Act

The project did not develop an ES and Critical Habitat Bill for approval by Cabinet as originally proposed, because shortly after project commencement this was no longer an ONEP priority. However, an opportunity has since arisen to improve legislative protection of ES and critical habitats through the development of a Draft Biodiversity Act by ONEP. The policy recommendations of this project should be used to influence this legislative process, including through submission of the CTA paper to the wetlands management subcommittee.

Recommendation 7. Ensure that the 'legal framework and policy recommendations' consider whether listing ES and critical habitats should become a legislative 'trigger' to influence other statutory processes, such as planning at provincial and local levels and EIA mechanisms, as described in the project document

The project document envisaged comprehensive ES legislation in which listed ES and critical habitat would be a trigger for other statutory planning and assessment processes, including provincial management structures, the development planning process, and environmental impact assessment (EIA). Provisions such as these can provide important mechanisms to ensure that nationally listed ES and critical habitats are considered in all provincial planning and impact assessment.

The legislative review document prepared by the project does not address these matters. Given the extent of the original legislative model detailed in the project document, the evaluation team recommends that a more thorough review be conducted, including consideration of whether listing ES and critical habitats should become a national legislative trigger to influence other statutory processes.

Recommendation 8. Establish a standard approach to endangered species conservation and recovery planning

Strategic species conservation and recovery plans are an important component of international best-practice threatened species conservation. They ensure that ES conservation actions are planned and undertaken according to clearly defined species recovery goals and targets, and that regular monitoring assesses progress towards targets and effectiveness of management actions. Under Outcome 2 of this project, conservation and recovery plans were to be prepared for the ten target species; these plans were not prepared, although important data were collected that would underpin such plans for each species.

Project Output 1.4 included an action to ‘develop a systematized approach to conservation and recovery plan development’, which would establish a standardized format and approach to developing conservation and recovery plans in Thailand. This action was not completed. Such a standard approach would facilitate best-practice ES planning and conservation and would streamline ES planning by establishing standard expectations of content and process. It could also be an opportunity to provide some standardized recommendations on integrating ES conservation with land use planning and provincial planning. The policy recommendations on land use and endangered species planning developed by TEI and BCST as part of this project will be valuable when developing this standard approach to recovery planning. There are examples available of best-practice species conservation planning, including the IUCN’s *Guidelines for Species Conservation Planning*⁴.

Recommendation 9. The community-based tourism management plan by Silpakorn University should be presented to the Provincial Advisory Committees and relevant sectoral agencies, such as the Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports and the Community Development Office, for consideration regarding support to the communities involved in the project

All of the communities visited as part of the evaluation mission discussed ecotourism, based around the target endangered species and associated conservation messages and experiences, as an economic and livelihood opportunity. From a conservation perspective, this may provide a sustainable livelihood that is sympathetic to the conservation of the species. The evaluation team observed large differences in the extent of preparedness for this and in the approaches being proposed. In some locations, there were still fundamental questions to be addressed of what the tourism product and market would be. The communities involved in the project would benefit from ongoing support and guidance from agencies in many aspects of developing ecotourism, and the community-based tourism management plan that was being developed by Silpakorn University will be a valuable resource.

4.3 Good Practice and Lessons Learned

4.3.1 Good Practice

Effective planning for endangered species conservation must work with provincial and local planning

Effective engagement with local planning authorities is very important to species conservation. Even in projects with motivated and highly skilled on-ground personnel, results can be compromised and not sustained if local authorities are not aware and if local planning does not protect habitat and manage

⁴ IUCN – SSC Species Conservation Planning Sub-Committee. (2017). *Guidelines for Species Conservation Planning*. Version 1.0. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. <https://doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.CH.2017.18.en>

threats. This is often neglected in ES projects. In this project, the land use planning and provincial engagement was of high quality. Also, the level of understanding of ES conservation among local authorities is highly variable, and this project was very effective at using different methodologies to work with local authorities in different areas.

The Eastern Sarus Crane project provides an excellent example of effective result-based management

ZPO described how the ESC project in Buriram has benefited from the use by ZPO and other partners of a result-based management approach. Having a log frame with clear targets and goals for the species, planning work according to these targets, monitoring against those and following up on actions and targets, provided a framework for delivering outstanding results which has seen the ESC change in status from Extinct in the Wild to Critically Endangered.

4.3.2 Lessons Learned

Results framework changes should be made following a clear process that is understood by all relevant parties

There was confusion regarding changes to some indicators and targets in the results framework, with the result that there was a lack of clarity towards project closure about what targets should be reported against. The evaluation team found a low level of understanding among project parties of the process involved in proposing and approving results framework changes. Consequently, in the final project implementation report in 2019 and in the 'Project Review Report' prepared to inform the terminal evaluation, some reporting was provided against new or changed indicators that had not been formally approved.

Clear communication to relevant project parties regarding the processes and criteria for making changes to the results framework would avoid such issues arising. Also, a mechanism to provide the current results framework in a consistent and easily understood format would assist.

Specialist input should be obtained to ensure that gender mainstreaming occurs throughout the project cycle

Despite a strong framework for gender mainstreaming in the project document, this project was not systematic in this regard. If a gender analysis is not done early then project activities, including monitoring and evaluation, are likely to proceed without specific attention to gender issues. Gender mainstreaming requires both attitudinal changes and the application of specific tools and skills. Involvement of a gender mainstreaming specialist to provide early guidance and technical advice would assist in embedding gender throughout the project cycle.

Effective integration of biodiversity conservation with production and sustainable livelihoods requires working strategically with local communities

The examples from this project, especially the ESC in Buriram, demonstrate that achieving effective integration of biodiversity conservation with production and sustainable livelihoods requires:

- building on existing local capacity, interests and aspirations
- bringing in targeted external expertise (e.g. product development, marketing and sales, conservation planning and practice) at the right times
- coordination.

Legislative development activities in projects should be flexible and responsive to changing government priorities

The aim of this project, to influence legislative and policy change through pilot projects, empowerment of local communities and partnering with national agencies, is appropriate and consistent with the aims of

the GEF. In this project, the project document was very detailed and prescriptive about the legislation and land use planning framework that was to be developed, and specifically committed to a bill being approved by Cabinet. This created immediate implementation challenges when ONEP determined early that such a bill was no longer a priority. Further, the project assessed the likelihood of approval of the ES legislation being delayed as 'Low', which is an unrealistic assessment. Care should be taken in project development that legislative development components are flexible and realistic.

Long-term involvement delivers robust results

ZPO were involved in this project during development and from inception to completion. The work on ESC in Buriram province shows the benefits of such long-term involvement: strong community support, innovative rice product development with local farmers, coordination across agencies and groups, and financial commitment from local businesses. This means that the results are deep-rooted and likely to be sustainable, and all ESC targets were met.

Another benefit of this long-term involvement in a community-based project lies in the culture of ZPO. The evaluation team heard that the organization has learned the importance of working with local communities: 'We used to work with animals, now we work with people'.

Engagement of a Responsible Party for project delivery can result in efficient achievement of results

When this project commenced, a project manager was engaged by and reported to UNDP. This project manager departed a short time into the project and there were then long delays in trying to fill this role, during which time little progress occurred in the project. UNDP and ONEP decided to instead engage an organization as a Responsible Party (RP) to deliver large components of the project. IUCN were engaged as RP, and they appointed project staff who sat in ONEP and reported to IUCN. The result was that the project made good progress in its final year and went from being off track in 2018 to being on track in 2019 and achieving significant results by project completion.

There were pros and cons to this arrangement.

The main pro is that engagement of the RP led to a sharp focus on timely delivery of project outputs. The RP engaged (IUCN) has solid knowledge about global and national ES and extensive experience in implementing ES and critical habitat conservation projects. They provided experienced staff who focused on project delivery under great time pressure. IUCN is also well connected with other conservation organizations and technical institutes, which brought diversity and depth of knowledge to the project. They also had well-developed management and financial control systems that were assessed by independent auditors as posing low risk to the project.

There were some cons to the RP arrangement. In particular, a PM engaged through UNDP will have a good understanding of UNDP and GEF requirements and processes (such as financial, procurement, reporting and making changes to projects) and can work within these to efficiently implement a project; in contrast, an RP usually has its own organizational requirements and processes that may not align with those of UNDP, and this can create inefficiencies and/or delays in some processes and project activities. Also, when a project manager is engaged by UNDP, they have a broader role as a UNDP team member, which brings added value to the team and to the individual; this added value is not achieved with an RP.

On balance, the evaluation team considers that the approach of engaging an RP was beneficial for delivery of this project under significant pressure.

Annexes

Annex 1. Mission itinerary and list of persons interviewed

Annex 2. Summary of field visits

Annex 3. List of documents reviewed

Annex 4. Evaluation Question Matrix

Annex 5. Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form

Annex 6. Terminal Evaluation Terms of Reference (ToR)

Annex 7. Signed Terminal Evaluation Final Report Clearance Form

Annexed in a separate file: Audit trail from received comments on draft TE report

Annexed in a separate file: Terminal GEF tracking tool

Annex 1: Mission itinerary and list of persons interviewed

Morning	Afternoon
Monday, 23 September 2019	
<p>Briefing Meeting with UNDP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Napaporn Yuberk • Ms Natsuda Suwatthanabunpot <p>(Note: Ms Lisa Farroway, RTA, was interviewed via telephone call prior to the mission)</p>	<p>Briefing Meeting with ONEP and ZPO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Sukanya Wisan • Dr Piyakarn Thiathisap • Ms Nuchjaree Puechkhon <p>Depart Bangkok for Ranong.</p>
Tuesday, 24 September 2019	
<p>Consultation Meeting with Ranong PONRE.</p> <p>Consultation meeting with community leaders and representatives from ecotourism group at Baan Rai Nai, Nakha sub-district, Suksamran District, Ranong Province:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Terdtham Ramkaew • Mr Winai Thongprom • Mr Wanmai Suknui • Mr Amarin Prasomphol • Ms Jureeporn Hongparatch • Mrs Lamyong Khanabkaew • Mrs Roongnapa Khongwan • Ms Bupha Kaewchuai • Mrs Somchit Thongprom • Mr Danai Yadee <p>Visit Water Lily site in Ban Rai Nai local canal.</p>	<p>Consultation meeting with representatives of Water Onion Conservation group and Learning Center Management committee and officials from three national parks and one non-hunting area at Ban Bang Soi, Klong Ta Leurn, Kuraburi sub-district, Kuraburi district, Phang Nga Province:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Luean Meesaeng • Mr Supot Suksai • Ms Suthisa Meesaeng • Ms Paweena Pradit • Mrs Wanchanok Pradit • Ms Thaniya Thongkaew • Mr Anek Minyu • Mr Wittaya Meesaeng • Mr Wasan Singhabutr • Mr Pairoj Yikaew • Mr Chalerm Soisaeng • Mr Jiranuwat Khiewwrai • Mr Samroen Khanpetch • Mr Amnuai Nakruang • Mrs Kanrat Nakruang <p>Visit Water Lily site in local canal.</p>
Wednesday, 25 September 2019	
<p>Meeting with Phang Nga PONRE:</p>	<p>Travel to Phuket International Airport and depart from Phuket to Bangkok.</p>
Thursday, 26 September 2019	
<p>Participate in the project's closing workshop at Century Park Hotel in Bangkok (whole day)</p> <p>Meeting with Samut Sakorn community member and member of Khok Kham Nature Conservation Club:</p>	
Friday, 27 September 2019	
<p>Depart Bangkok for Buriram.</p> <p>Meeting at Eastern Sarus Crane learning center in Huay Chorakae Mak Non-Hunting Area. Discussion</p>	<p>Visit Sawaiso Organic Rice Community Enterprise. Discussion and meeting with the head and members of the enterprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Charoen Klarum

<p>with government staff, community representatives and ZPO project team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Kesorn Suttakarn • Mr Winai Taprakhon • Mr Ratthamnanon Sarnrum • Mr Nimit Sritampawa • Mr Tassana Chonpimai • Mr Teerasak Chaipalad • Mr Duaen Saengprakhon • Mrs Sunanta Wichawaree • Ms Wechaka Khonrum • Mrs Suthathip Uaesamarn • Mrs Samnieng Koonthaisong • Mrs Patchara Singthong • Mrs Kesorn Boonaree • Dr Piyakarn Thiathisup • Ms Nuchjaree Puechkhoon • Mr Alongkot Kitkhana 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Thongpoon Ounchit <p>Depart Buriram for Bangkok.</p>
Saturday, 28 September 2019	
<p>Depart Bangkok for Samut Sakorn.</p> <p>Meeting with Khok Kham Nature Conservation Club, Women's Group, and community leader:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Sakchai Netlomwong • Mr Suchart Daengphayon • Mrs Duangchan Kladkleep • Mr Boonlert Klinsuban 	<p>Return to Bangkok.</p>
Monday, 30 September 2019	
<p>Meeting with IUCN, BCST, TEI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Supranee Kumpongsau • Ms On-iriya Fugthaworn • Ms Siriporn Sriaram • Ms Nancy Gibson • Ms Thattaya Bidayabha • Ms Phuangpaka Khaokratoke 	
Tuesday, 1 October 2019	
<p>Meeting with ZPO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Sumate Kamolnorrath • Mr Yongthai Uttara • Ms Nutchjaree Puechkhoon 	<p>Consolidation of findings by evaluation team.</p>
Tuesday, 2 October 2019	
Preparation for debriefing.	
Wednesday, 3 October 2019	

<p>Debriefing with ONEP, IUCN, TEI and ZPO at ONEP office:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms Sukanya Wisan• Ms Wilailak Suraphruk• Ms On-iriya Fugthaworn• Ms Phuangphaka Khaokratoke• Mr Alongkorn Wongman• Ms Yenta Nungvaewdaeng• Ms Natsuda Suwatthanabunpot	<p>Debriefing with UNDP at UNDP office:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr Renaud Meyer, Resident Representative• Mr Saengroj Srisawaskraisorn• Ms Yenta Nungvaewdaeng• Ms Natsuda Suwatthanabunpot
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Annex 2: Summary of field visits

Water Onion: Ranong and Phang Nga (23–25 September 2019)

In Ranong, the evaluation team met with the Director of PONRE and was briefed on project activities in the province, including the issuance of a Provincial Order on Water Onion Habitat Zoning and Conservation Measures, the establishment of a Project Provincial Advisory Committee and the Water Onion learning center, and the inclusion of a Water Onion conservation budget in the 2020 Provincial Plan. Issues around the sustainability of project benefits and initiatives were discussed.

The evaluation team then visited Ban Rai Nai, a village in Suksamran district that has been included in the Provincial Order as Water Onion habitat and conservation areas. The team met with representatives from the village committee and village ecotourism group and an officer from the district Tourism and Sports Office. The meeting took place at the learning center that was recently established by the project, using an existing public building in Ban Rai Nai village. The discussion with community groups covered how they perceived the benefits of the project and how they plan to sustain the benefits by combining conservation with sustainable livelihoods opportunities.

In Phang Nga, the evaluation team visited a Water Onion conservation site on private land. The owner of the land has been voluntarily conserving Water Onion in a small canal running through his rubber plantation for more than 20 years. The site is famous and attracts many visitors during blooming season. The project helped to set up a learning center on this site. A committee, comprising an equal number of women and men, has been formed to manage the center and develop a system to link it with ecotourism.

The team also met with the Director and a senior staff of Phang Nga PONRE, who informed the team of key activities under the project. There are various mechanisms and measures in place to secure long-term conservation of the Water Onion and its habitat areas. These include a MONRE Ministerial Order (2016), which announced the whole province as an 'Environmental Protected Area', including areas where Water Onion are found. Under this order, a Provincial Environmental Committee is set up to oversee and ensure that environmental issues in the province are adequately addressed, including Water Onion conservation. There is a high level of awareness among local people and government officials that Water Onion is an endemic plant found only in Phang Nga and Ranong.

Eastern Sarus Crane: Buriram (27 September 2019)

The evaluation team visited the Sarus Crane learning center, located near Huay Chorakae Mak Non-Hunting Area in Buriram. The center was built with funding that was mobilized from the private sector in the province (Buriram Sugar Factory). It was well equipped with audio-visual devices for presentations, indoor and outdoor exhibitions, a bird-watching tower, and a small outlet for community products.

A meeting was held with representatives from involved government offices (ZPO, DNP, Land Development, Agricultural Extension, PONRE, and teachers from schools participating in project activities), representatives from local communities, and rice farmers who help to protect ESC nests. The group discussion covered many areas, including monitoring of the ESC population by non-hunting area (NHA) staff and local communities; the roles of agencies to support ESC and habitat conservation; land use planning and the inclusion of the land use plan in the new city plan; ESC school-based training and curricula; and combining ESC conservation with organic rice products.

In a visit to an organic farmer group in Sawai So village, the discussion with the group leader focused on how the project helps to strengthen management and marketing capacities of existing organic rice farmer groups, identifying potential for new rice-based products, and networking of farmer groups across the sub-district.

Spoon-billed Sandpiper: Samut Sakorn (28 September 2019)

The evaluation team met with representatives from the Khok Kham Nature Conservation Club, women's group, the TAO, and the Village Head from Khok Kham sub-district. The discussion covered many subjects, including the historical background of the groups and how the project helped to upgrade existing capacities of the groups. The Khok Kham Nature Conservation Club was set up over 20 years ago by a group of villagers in Khok Kham, with a bird-watching center established on private land owned by the chairman of the club. It is run voluntarily by its founding members. Key activities are raising awareness to reduce hunting of wild birds; exhibiting information on migratory birds, including SBS; providing free facilities for bird watchers; and campaigning on conservation activities. It has been working closely with BCST. The project helped upgrade its center to be an SBS learning center, with full equipment and furniture to facilitate effective learning of bird watchers or drop-by visitors. From a prior interview with the Club's Secretary in Bangkok, the evaluation team was informed that a plan is being developed for the management of the SBS learning center; this is linked to ecotourism, which has already been promoted by the women's livelihood group.

The women's livelihood group comprised around 21 members, who earn their income primarily from salt production and earn supplementary income from activities related to salt farming and salt-products, such as spa in salt farms; ecotourism; and making products such as soaps, lotions and cosmetics with salt as an ingredient. The project paid for both groups to attend a study visit to Taiwan to observe conservation, salt farming, and alternative salt-based products.

The TAO representative informed the evaluation team that they could support the groups' activities through its Tambon Administrative Plan if requests are submitted and approved by its council.

The meeting also discussed how to ensure that all salt pan farmers benefit from the project's activities in the long term.

In addition to the interview, the evaluation team also visited activities at the Nature Conservation Center and the women's livelihoods group.

Annex 3: List of Documents Reviewed

Documents from UNDP

1. Project Identification Form (PIF)
2. UNDP Initiation Plan
3. Project Document
4. Project Inception Workshop minutes and report
5. Annual Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) for 2017, 2018 and 2019
6. Project Midterm Review report
7. Management Response to the Midterm Review
8. Project Review Report: Project's Achievements (July 2019)
9. Project Results Report
10. Completed GEF Tracking Tools (midterm and completion)
11. Back to the office (monitoring) reports
12. Spot check reports, micro assessment report, internal control audit report
13. Co-financing commitment letters
14. Actual co-financing realized
15. Draft reports from Chief Technical Advisor (recommendations on how to integrate project's outcomes/findings into existing policies after the project ends, and comments on the policy recommendations proposed by the project)

Documents by ONEP

16. Minutes of Project Board meetings and other meetings (e.g. Project Appraisal Committee meetings)
17. Master Plan on Integrated Biodiversity Management (2015-2021)

Documents by IUCN

18. Quarterly reports
19. Information from Plant Quarantine Office at Suvarnabhumi Airport on the number of Water Onions exported through Suvarnabhumi Airport

Documents by ZPO

20. Quarterly reports
21. Public hearings report on DRAFT National Report on Wetland Management
22. Final report: Information on ten species targeted by the project

Documents by TEI

23. Report: Legislation framework review and international best practice review for the endangered species and its habitat conservation
24. Land use plans for five pilot provinces

Documents by BCST

25. BCST Final Technical Report, including policy recommendations

26. Excel file containing records of Spoon-billed Sandpiper in Thailand

Documents by KW Solutions

27. Reports on database of endangered species (includes link to public website with species information: <http://chff.onep.go.th/>)

Documents by Silpakorn University

28. Report: The Evaluation of Community's Potentials and Needs for Sustainable Development

Annex 4: Evaluation Question Matrix

Evaluation questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Relevance: Is the project relevant with respect to the environmental and development priorities at the local, regional and national levels?			
Is the project relevant to CBD and other international conventions?	Consistency with CBD and other relevant conventions (if any)	CBD and other relevant conventions, project document, PIRs, project progress reports	Desktop review, interviews
Is the project relevant to national priorities?	Consistency with relevant national strategies / policies Level of participation of relevant agencies	Relevant national strategies / policies, project document, PIRs, project progress reports	Desktop review, interviews
Is the project relevant to the GEF focal area?	Relationship between project objectives and the GEF focal area	Project document, GEF strategy documents, PIRs	Desktop review, interviews
Is the project addressing the needs of target beneficiaries at the local and regional levels?	Strength of link between expected results from project and the needs of relevant stakeholders Degree of involvement and inclusiveness of stakeholders in project design and implementation	Relevant regional, provincial and local plans; project document, GEF strategy documents, PIRs	Desktop review, interviews
Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?			
Assessment of progress made towards achieving the indicator targets agreed upon in the results framework	Indicators in results framework	PIR, quarterly reports, results framework, project document, stakeholder interviews, tracking tools, MTR	Desktop review, interviews, field visits
How are risk and risk mitigation being managed?	Completeness and quality of risk identification and mitigation during project planning, design and implementation	PIR, quarterly reports, project document, stakeholder interviews, MTR	Desktop review, interviews
What lessons can be drawn regarding effectiveness for other similar projects in the future?	Findings regarding effectiveness	PIRs, quarterly reports, project document, stakeholder interviews	Desktop review, interviews

Evaluation questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in line with international and national norms and standards?			
Was project support provided in an efficient way?	Evaluation findings regarding support, implementation, adaptive management, results-based management, financing and co-financing	Quarterly reports, PIRs, PB minutes, back to office reports, stakeholder interviews	Desktop review, interviews
Did the project deliver satisfactory results for the budget spent?	Achievement of outcomes assessed against cost	PIR, quarterly reports, financing and co-financing, PB minutes, stakeholder interviews, MTR	Desktop review, interviews, field visits
What lessons can be drawn regarding efficiency for other similar projects in the future?	Findings regarding efficiency	PIRs, quarterly reports, project document, stakeholder interviews	Desktop review, interviews
Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?			
Has funding been secured to sustain project results?	Financial risks	Budget allocations, progress reports, PIRs, other relevant planning and budgeting processes, stakeholder interviews	Desktop review, interviews
Have capacities and governance structures been strengthened adequately to sustain project results?	Levels of capacity, governance structures	PIRs, quarterly reports, other relevant planning and budgeting processes, stakeholder interviews, MTR	Desktop review, interviews
Are there continuing socio-economic risks to the sustainability of project results?	Socio-economic risks	PIRs, quarterly reports, other relevant planning and budgeting processes, stakeholder interviews, MTR	Desktop review, interviews, field visits
Are there environmental risks to the sustainability of project results?	Environmental risks	PIRs, quarterly reports, other relevant planning and budgeting processes, stakeholder interviews, MTR	Desktop review, interviews, field visits
What lessons can be drawn regarding sustainability for other similar projects in the future?	Findings regarding sustainability	PIRs, quarterly reports, other relevant planning and budgeting processes, project document, stakeholder interviews, MTR	Desktop review, interviews, field visits

Evaluation questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Impact: Are there indications that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress toward long lasting desired changes?			
Are there verifiable environmental improvements?	Verifiable environmental improvements	Tracking tools, progress reports, PIRs, stakeholder interviews	Desktop review, interviews, field visits
Are there verifiable reductions in stress on environmental systems?	Verifiable reductions in stress on environmental systems	Tracking tools, progress reports, PIRs, stakeholder interviews	Desktop review, interviews, field visits

Annex 5: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form

Evaluators/Consultants:

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

TE Consultant Agreement Form


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

Name of Consultant: Adrian Stokes

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 Adelaide, Australia on 14 September 2019

Signature: 

Evaluators/Consultants:

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

TE Consultant Agreement Form

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

Name of Consultant: Walaitat Worakul

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): -

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

Signed at: Chiang Mai, Thailand: on 14 September 2019

Signature: 

Annex 6: Terminal Evaluation Terms of Reference (ToR)

TERMINAL EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE (INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANT)

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP support GEF financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. These terms of reference (TOR) sets out the expectations for a Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the *medium-sized project titled Conserving Habitats for Globally Important Flora and Fauna in Production Landscapes (PIMS#4839)*

The essentials of the project to be evaluated are as follows:

PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE

Project Title:	Conserving Habitats for Globally Important Flora and Fauna in Production Landscapes			
GEF Project ID:	#5512		<u>at endorsement</u> (Million US\$)	<u>at completion</u> (Million US\$)
UNDP GEF Project ID:	#4839			
UNDP Award ID:	00083158	GEF financing:	1,758,904	1,758,904
UNDP Project ID:	00091787			
Country:	Thailand	IA/EA own:	-	-
Region:	Asia	Government:	10,997,233	10,997,233
Focal Area:	Biodiversity	Other:	140,000	140,000
FA Objectives, (OP/SP):	BD2	Total co-financing:	11,137,233	11,137,233
Executing Agency:	Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP)	Total Project Cost:	12,896,137	12,896,137
Other Partners involved:	Zoological Park Organisation (ZPO as RP)	ProDoc Signature (date project began):		22 September 2015
		(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: 21 September 2019	Actual: 21 September 2019

OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The project was designed to mainstream the conservation of globally important and endangered biodiversity into the management of production landscapes through improved management of critical habitats. At the national level, it will develop a legislative, regulatory and enforcement framework to guide endangered species (ES) and critical habitat conservation and management. This will be supported by capacity building within key ministries and agencies to enhance cross sector coordination in critical habitat management, and to effectively monitor critical habitats and ES to better inform decision makers.

These approaches will be piloted for three species namely the Eastern Sarus Crane (*Grus antigone sharpii*), the Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*) and the Water Lily (*Crinum thaianum*) in three distinct geographical locations. Within each location the project will also build the capacity of local authorities,

communities, private sector groups, and NGOs to develop environmentally friendly goods and services, which can provide a sound economic basis for ongoing critical habitat management and economic development.

The TE will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects.

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the achievement of project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHOD

An overall approach and method⁵ for conducting project terminal evaluations of UNDP supported GEF financed projects has developed over time. The evaluator is expected to frame the evaluation effort using the criteria of **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact**, as defined and explained in the [UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects](#). A set of questions covering each of these criteria have been drafted and are included with this TOR ([Annex C](#)) The evaluator is expected to amend, complete and submit this matrix as part of an evaluation inception report, and shall include it as an annex to the final report.

The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, in particular the GEF operational focal point, UNDP Country Office, project team, UNDP GEF Technical Adviser based in the region and key stakeholders. The evaluator is expected to conduct a field mission in Thailand including the following project sites

- Khok Kham sub-district Samut Sakorn Province;
- Kaper and Suk-Samran Districts in Ranong Province, and the Kuraburi district in Phang Nga Province;
- Buriram Province.

Interviews will be held with the following organizations and individuals at a minimum:

- Project Director (ONEP)
- Project Manager and Project Coordinator
- Field Coordinators
- Representatives from pilot areas
- Project Administrative/Financial Officer
- Members of Project Board
- IUCN (Responsible Party)
- Thailand Environment Institute (TEI)
- Bird Conservation Society of Thailand
- Tambon Administrative Officers
- The provincial branch of DTCP and PONRE
- Department of Local Administration (DLA)
- Other project consultants as appropriate
- UNDP Thailand Country Office in Bangkok

The evaluator will review all relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project reports – including Annual APR/PIR, project budget revisions, midterm review, progress reports, GEF focal area tracking tools, project files, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the evaluator

⁵ For additional information on methods, see the [Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 7, pg. 163

considers useful for this evidence-based assessment. A list of documents that the project team will provide to the evaluator for review is included in [Annex B](#) of this Terms of Reference.

EVALUATION CRITERIA & RATINGS

An assessment of project performance will be carried out, based against expectations set out in the Project Logical Framework/Results Framework ([Annex A](#)), which provides performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification. The evaluation will at a minimum cover the criteria of: **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact**. Ratings must be provided on the following performance criteria. The completed table must be included in the evaluation executive summary. The obligatory rating scales are included in [Annex D](#).

Evaluation Ratings:			
1. Monitoring and Evaluation	rating	2. IA& EA Execution	rating
M&E design at entry		Quality of UNDP Implementation	
M&E Plan Implementation		Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	
Overall quality of M&E		Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	
3. Assessment of Outcomes	rating	4. Sustainability	rating
Relevance		Financial resources:	
Effectiveness		Socio-political:	
Efficiency		Institutional framework and governance:	
Overall Project Outcome Rating		Environmental :	
		Overall likelihood of sustainability:	

PROJECT FINANCE / COFINANCE

The Evaluation will assess the key financial aspects of the project, including the extent of co-financing planned and realized. Project cost and funding data will be required, including annual expenditures. Variances between planned and actual expenditures will need to be assessed and explained. Results from recent financial audits, as available, should be taken into consideration. The evaluator(s) will receive assistance from the Country Office (CO) and Project Team to obtain financial data in order to complete the co-financing table below, which will be included in the terminal evaluation report.

Co-financing (type/source)	UNDP own financing (mill. US\$)		Government (mill. US\$)		Partner Agency (mill. US\$)		Total (mill. US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Actual	Actual
Grants								
Loans/Concessions								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-kind support 								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other 								
Totals								

MAINSTREAMING

UNDP supported GEF financed projects are key components in UNDP country programming, as well as regional and global programmes. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project was successfully mainstreamed with other UNDP priorities, including poverty alleviation, improved governance, the prevention and recovery from natural disasters, and gender.

IMPACT

The evaluators will assess the extent to which the project is achieving impacts or progressing towards the achievement of impacts. Key findings that should be brought out in the evaluations include whether the project has demonstrated: a) verifiable improvements in ecological status, b) verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems, and/or c) demonstrated progress towards these impact achievements.⁶

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS

The evaluation report must include a chapter providing a set of **conclusions, recommendations** and **lessons**. Conclusion should build on findings and be based in evidence. Recommendations should be prioritized, specific, relevant, and targeted, with suggested implementers of the recommendations. Lessons should have wider applicability to other initiatives across the region, the area of intervention, and for the future.

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation resides with the UNDP CO in *Thailand*. The UNDP CO will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the evaluation team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the Evaluators team to set up stakeholder interviews, arrange field visits, coordinate with the Government etc.

EVALUATION TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the evaluation will be 24 days according to the following plan from 1 September -25 December 2019:

Activity	Timing	Completion Date
Preparation	4 days	<i>10 September 2019</i>
Evaluation Mission	7 days	<i>3 October 2019</i>
Draft Evaluation Report	10 days	<i>17 October 2019</i>
Final Report	3 days	<i>20 November 2019</i>

EVALUATION DELIVERABLES

The evaluation team is expected to deliver the following:

Deliverable	Content	Timing	Responsibilities
Inception Report	Evaluator provides clarifications on timing and method	10 September 2019	Evaluator submits to UNDP CO
Presentation	Initial Findings	3 October 2019	To project management, UNDP CO, GEF RTA
Draft Final Report	Full report, (per annexed template) with annexes	17 October 2019	Sent to CO, reviewed by GEF RTA, PCU, ONEP
Final Report*	Revised report	20 November 2019	Sent to CO for uploading to UNDP , GEF RTA.

⁶ A useful tool for gauging progress to impact is the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) method developed by the GEF Evaluation Office: [ROTI Handbook 2009](#)

*When submitting the final evaluation report, the evaluator is required also to provide an 'audit trail', detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final evaluation report.

Institutional Arrangement:

The Consultant will report to the assigned UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor Ecosystems and Biodiversity for Asia and the Pacific and Team Leader of the Inclusive Green Growth and Sustainable Development (IGSD) Unit of UNDP Thailand Country Office.

Duration of the Assignment

The total duration of the contract will be approximately 24 working days from plan from 1 September -25 December 2019:

Duty Station: home-based with one mission to Bangkok and the project sites in Buriram, Ranong, Phang Nga and Samut Sakhon, Thailand. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

TIMEFRAME	ACTIVITY
25 July -7 August 2019	Advertisement
7 August 2019	Application Close
8-31 August 2019	Select TE Team/contract issuance process
1 September 2019	Contract begins Prep the TE Team (handover of Project Documents)
10 September 2019 (4 working days)	Project Document Review Document Review, preparing TE inception Report
20 September 2019	Finalization and Validation of the TE Inception Report and re-submit to UNDP.
22 September 2019	TE Mission: Arrival in Bangkok of International Evaluation Team Lead
23-27 September 2019 (5 working days)	Inception meeting at UNDP Country Office Meeting with Project Director, ONEP and PMU team. TE mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews and field visits.
1-2 October 2019 (1 working day)	Preparation of presentations for wrap-up meeting.
3 October 2019 (1 working day)	Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of TE mission
4-16 October 2019 (10 working days)	Preparing draft TE report
17 October 2019 (0 working days for consultant)	Circulation of draft report with draft management response template for comments and completion
18- October to 19 November 2019 (3 working days)	Incorporating audit trail from feedbacks on draft report/Finalization of TE report including Management Responses
20 November 2019	Submission of final TE report

Competencies:

Corporate Competencies:

- Demonstrates integrity by modeling the UN’s values and ethical standards;
- 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 favouritism.

Technical Competencies:

- Analytic Capacity and demonstrated ability to process, analyse and synthesize complex, technical information.
- Proven ability to support the development of high quality knowledge and training materials, and to train technical teams;
- Prove experience in the developing country context and working in different cultural settings.

Communication:

- Communicate effectively in writing to a varied and board audience in a simple and concise manner

Professionalism:

- Capable of working in a high pressure environment with sharp and frequent deadlines, managing many tasks simultaneously;
- Excellent analytical and organisational skills

Teamwork:

- Project a positive image and is ready to take on a wide range of tasks;
- Focuses on results for the client;
- Welcomes constructive feedback

TEAM COMPOSITION

The evaluation team will be composed of *an International and a national evaluator*. The consultants shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects. Experience with GEF financed projects is an advantage. The international evaluator will be designated as the team leader and will be responsible for finalizing the report. The evaluators selected should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities.

The International Lead Evaluator must present the following qualifications:

- A Master's degree in Natural Sciences, Environmental Management, Environmental Studies, Development studies, Social Sciences and/or other related field.
- Minimum of 8 years accumulated and recognized experience in biodiversity conservation and management, biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilisation areas, and sustainable livelihoods.
- Minimum of 5 years of project evaluation and/or implementation experience in the result-based management framework, adaptive management.
- Very good report writing skills in English.
- Familiarity in similar country or regional situations relevant to that of FF is an advantage.
- Some experience working with the GEF or GEF-evaluations is an advantage;
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and biodiversity, experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Demonstrable analytical skills.

Responsibilities:

- Documentation and review
- Leading the TE team in planning, conducting and reporting on the evaluation
- Deciding on division of labour within the Team and ensuring timeliness of reports
- Use of best practice evaluation methodologies in conducting the evaluation
- Leading the drafting and finalization of the Inception Report for the Terminal Evaluation
- Leading presentation of the draft evaluation findings and recommendations in-country
- Conducting the de-briefing for the UNDP Country Office in Thailand and Core Project Management Team
- Leading the drafting and finalisation of the Terminal Evaluation report

EVALUATOR ETHICS

Evaluation consultants will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct (Annex E) upon acceptance of the assignment. UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the [UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations'](#)

PRICE PROPOSAL AND SCHEDULE OF PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

Consultant must send a financial proposal based on Lump Sum Amount. The total amount quoted shall be all-inclusive and include all costs components required to perform the deliverables identified in the TOR, including professional fee, travel costs, living allowance (if any work is to be done outside the IC's duty station) and any other applicable cost to be incurred by the IC in completing the assignment. The contract price will be fixed output-based price regardless of extension of the herein specified duration. Payments will be done upon completion of the deliverables/outputs and as per below percentages:

%	Milestone
10%	Upon submission of TE inception report
40%	Following submission and approval of the 1ST draft terminal evaluation report
50%	Following submission and approval (UNDP-CO and UNDP RTA) of the final terminal evaluation report

In general, UNDP shall not accept travel costs exceeding those of an economy class ticket. Should the IC wish to travel on a higher class he/she should do so using their own resources

In the event of unforeseeable travel not anticipated in this TOR, payment of travel costs including tickets, lodging and terminal expenses should be agreed upon, between the respective business unit and the Individual Consultant, prior to travel and will be reimbursed. Travel costs shall be reimbursed at actual but not exceeding the quotation from UNDP approved travel agent. The provided living allowance will not be exceeding UNDP DSA rates. Repatriation travel cost from home to duty station in Bangkok and return shall not be covered by UNDP.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Criteria for Evaluation of Proposal: Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted at 70% and the price

proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring. The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score that has also accepted UNDP's General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 70% of the total technical points would be considered for the Financial Evaluation. UNDP applies a fair and transparent selection process that will take into account the competencies/skills of the applicants as well as their financial proposals. Qualified women and members of social minorities are encouraged to apply.

Document to be included when Submitting the Proposals:

Interested individual consultants must submit the following document's information to demonstrate their qualifications; Please group them into one(1) single PDF document as the application only allows to upload maximum on document:

a) **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability and Financial Proposal** using the template provided by UNDP

b) **CV** indicating all past experiences from similar projects, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the Candidate and at least three (3) professional references.

c) **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)

d) **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the Letter of Confirmation of Interest template. If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

Evaluation criteria:

Criteria	Weight	Max. Point
Technical	70%	700
- A Master's degree in Natural Sciences, Environmental Management, Environmental Studies, Development studies, Social Sciences and/or other related fields.	10%	100
- Monitoring and evaluation experience in the project on environmental, nature conservation, land use planning, biodiversity management in Thailand (for national consultant), -no country	30%	300

specific for international consultant		
- Competence in data analytic and visualization techniques	20%	200
- Competency in Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal.	10%	100
Financial	30%	300

TERMINAL EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE (NATIONAL CONSULTANT)

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with UNDP and GEF M&E policies and procedures, all full and medium-sized UNDP support GEF financed projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation upon completion of implementation. These terms of reference (TOR) sets out the expectations for a Terminal Evaluation (TE) of the *medium-sized project titled Conserving Habitats for Globally Important Flora and Fauna in Production Landscapes (PIMS#4839)*

The essentials of the project to be evaluated are as follows:

PROJECT SUMMARY TABLE

Project Title:	Conserving Habitats for Globally Important Flora and Fauna in Production Landscapes			
GEF Project ID:	#5512		<u>at endorsement</u> (Million US\$)	<u>at completion</u> (Million US\$)
UNDP GEF Project ID:	#4839			
UNDP Award ID:	00083158	GEF financing:	1,758,904	1,758,904
UNDP Project ID:	00091787			
Country:	Thailand	IA/EA own:	-	-
Region:	Asia	Government:	10,997,233	10,997,233
Focal Area:	Biodiversity	Other:	140,000	140,000
FA Objectives, (OP/SP):	BD2	Total co-financing:	11,137,233	11,137,233
Executing Agency:	Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP)	Total Project Cost:	12,896,137	12,896,137
Other Partners involved:	Zoological Park Organisation (ZPO as RP)	ProDoc Signature (date project began):		22 September 2015
		(Operational) Closing Date:	Proposed: 21 September 2019	Actual: 21 September 2019

OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The project was designed to mainstream the conservation of globally important and endangered biodiversity into the management of production landscapes through improved management of critical habitats. At the national level, it will develop a legislative, regulatory and enforcement framework to guide endangered species (ES) and critical habitat conservation and management. This will be supported by capacity building within key ministries and agencies to enhance cross sector coordination in critical habitat management, and to effectively monitor critical habitats and ES to better inform decision makers.

These approaches will be piloted for three species namely the Eastern Sarus Crane (*Grus antigone sharpii*), the Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*) and the Water Lily (*Crinum thaianum*) in three distinct geographical locations. Within each location the project will also build the capacity of local authorities, communities, private sector groups, and NGOs to develop environmentally friendly goods and services, which can provide a sound economic basis for ongoing critical habitat management and economic development.

The TE will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects.

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the achievement of project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHOD

An overall approach and method⁷ for conducting project terminal evaluations of UNDP supported GEF financed projects has developed over time. The evaluator is expected to frame the evaluation effort using the criteria of **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact**, as defined and explained in the UNDP Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Projects. A set of questions covering each of these criteria have been drafted and are included with this TOR ([Annex C](#)) The evaluator is expected to amend, complete and submit this matrix as part of an evaluation inception report, and shall include it as an annex to the final report.

The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, in particular the GEF operational focal point, UNDP Country Office, project team, UNDP GEF Technical Adviser based in the region and key stakeholders. The evaluator is expected to conduct a field mission in Thailand including the following project sites

- Khok Kham sub-district Samut Sakorn Province;
- Kaper and Suk-Samran Districts in Ranong Province, and the Kuraburi district in Phang Nga Province;
- Buriram Province.

Interviews will be held with the following organizations and individuals at a minimum:

- Project Director (ONEP)
- Project Manager and Project Coordinator
- Field Coordinators
- Representatives from pilot areas
- Project Administrative/Financial Officer
- Members of Project Board
- IUCN (Responsible Party)
- Thailand Environment Institute (TEI)

⁷ For additional information on methods, see the [Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 7, pg. 163

- Bird Conservation Society of Thailand
- Tambon Administrative Officers
- The provincial branch of DTCP and PONRE
- Department of Local Administration (DLA)
- Other project consultants as appropriate
- UNDP Thailand Country Office in Bangkok

The evaluator will review all relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project reports – including Annual APR/PIR, project budget revisions, midterm review, progress reports, GEF focal area tracking tools, project files, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the evaluator considers useful for this evidence-based assessment. A list of documents that the project team will provide to the evaluator for review is included in [Annex B](#) of this Terms of Reference.

EVALUATION CRITERIA & RATINGS

An assessment of project performance will be carried out, based against expectations set out in the Project Logical Framework/Results Framework ([Annex A](#)), which provides performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification. The evaluation will at a minimum cover the criteria of: **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact**. Ratings must be provided on the following performance criteria. The completed table must be included in the evaluation executive summary. The obligatory rating scales are included in [Annex D](#).

Evaluation Ratings:			
1. Monitoring and Evaluation	rating	2. IA& EA Execution	rating
M&E design at entry		Quality of UNDP Implementation	
M&E Plan Implementation		Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	
Overall quality of M&E		Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	
3. Assessment of Outcomes	rating	4. Sustainability	rating
Relevance		Financial resources:	
Effectiveness		Socio-political:	
Efficiency		Institutional framework and governance:	
Overall Project Outcome Rating		Environmental :	
		Overall likelihood of sustainability:	

PROJECT FINANCE / COFINANCE

Co-financing (type/source)	UNDP own financing (mill. US\$)		Government (mill. US\$)		Partner Agency (mill. US\$)		Total (mill. US\$)	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Actual	Actual
Grants								
Loans/Concessions								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-kind support 								

• Other								
Totals								

The Evaluation will assess the key financial aspects of the project, including the extent of co-financing planned and realized. Project cost and funding data will be required, including annual expenditures. Variances between planned and actual expenditures will need to be assessed and explained. Results from recent financial audits, as available, should be taken into consideration. The evaluator(s) will receive assistance from the Country Office (CO) and Project Team to obtain financial data in order to complete the co-financing table below, which will be included in the terminal evaluation report.

MAINSTREAMING

UNDP supported GEF financed projects are key components in UNDP country programming, as well as regional and global programmes. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project was successfully mainstreamed with other UNDP priorities, including poverty alleviation, improved governance, the prevention and recovery from natural disasters, and gender.

IMPACT

The evaluators will assess the extent to which the project is achieving impacts or progressing towards the achievement of impacts. Key findings that should be brought out in the evaluations include whether the project has demonstrated: a) verifiable improvements in ecological status, b) verifiable reductions in stress on ecological systems, and/or c) demonstrated progress towards these impact achievements.⁸

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS

The evaluation report must include a chapter providing a set of **conclusions, recommendations** and **lessons**. Conclusion should build on findings and be based in evidence. Recommendations should be prioritized, specific, relevant, and targeted, with suggested implementers of the recommendations. Lessons should have wider applicability to other initiatives across the region, the area of intervention, and for the future.

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation resides with the UNDP CO in *Thailand*. The UNDP CO will contract the evaluators and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the evaluation team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the Evaluators team to set up stakeholder interviews, arrange field visits, coordinate with the Government etc.

EVALUATION TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the evaluation will be 24 days according to the following plan from 1 September -25 December 2019:

Activity	Timing	Completion Date
Preparation	4 days	10 September 2019
Evaluation Mission	7 days	3 October 2019
Draft Evaluation Report	10 days	17 October 2019
Final Report	3 days	20 November 2019

⁸ A useful tool for gauging progress to impact is the Review of Outcomes to Impacts (ROtI) method developed by the GEF Evaluation Office: [ROTI Handbook 2009](#)

EVALUATION DELIVERABLES

The evaluation team is expected to deliver the following:

Deliverable	Content	Timing	Responsibilities
Inception Report	Evaluator provides clarifications on timing and method	10 September 2019	Evaluator submits to UNDP CO, GEF RTA
Presentation	Initial Findings	3 October 2019	To project management, UNDP CO, GEF RTA
Draft Final Report	Full report, (per annexed template) with annexes	17 October 2019	Sent to CO, reviewed by GEF RTA, PCU, ONEP
Final Report*	Revised report	20 November 2019	Sent to CO for uploading to UNDP CO, GEF RTA

*When submitting the final evaluation report, the evaluator is required also to provide an 'audit trail', detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final evaluation report.

Institutional Arrangement:

The Consultant will report to the assigned UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor Ecosystems and Biodiversity for Asia and the Pacific and Team Leader of the Inclusive Green Growth and Sustainable Development (IGSD) Unit of UNDP Thailand Country Office.

Duration of the Assignment

The total duration of the contract will be approximately 24 working days from plan from 1 September -25 December 2019:

Duty Station: home-based with one mission to Bangkok and the project sites in Buriram, Ranong, Phang Nga and Samut Sakhon, Thailand. The tentative TE timeframe is as follows:

TIMEFRAME	ACTIVITY
25 July-27 August 2019	Advertisement
7 August 2019	Application Close
8 -31 August 2019	Select TE Team/contract issuance process
1 September 2019	Contract begins Prep the TE Team (handover of Project Documents)
10 September 2019 (4 working days)	Project Document Review Document Review, preparing TE inception Report
20 September 2019	Finalization and Validation of the TE Inception Report and re-submit to UNDP.
22 September 2019	TE Mission: Arrival in Bangkok of International Evaluation Team Lead
23-27 September 2019 (5 working days)	Inception meeting at UNDP Country Office Meeting with Project Director, ONEP and PMU team. TE mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews and field visits.
1-2 October 2019 (1 working day)	Preparation of presentations for wrap-up meeting.
3 October 2019 (1 working day)	Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of TE mission

4-16 October 2019 (10 working days)	Preparing draft TE report
17 October 2019 (0 working days for consultant)	Circulation of draft report with draft management response template for comments and completion
18- October to 19 November 2019 (3 working days)	Incorporating audit trail from feedbacks on draft report/Finalization of TE report including Management Responses
20 November 2019	Submission of final TE report

Competencies:

Corporate Competencies:

- Demonstrates integrity by modeling the UN’s values and ethical standards;
- 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 favouritism.

Technical Competencies:

- Analytic Capacity and demonstrated ability to process, analyse and synthesize complex, technical information.
- Proven ability to support the development of high-quality knowledge and training materials, and to train technical teams;
- Prove experience in the developing country context and working in different cultural settings.

Communication:

- Communicate effectively in writing to a varied and board audience in a simple and concise manner

Professionalism:

- Capable of working in a high-pressure environment with sharp and frequent deadlines, managing many tasks simultaneously;
- Excellent analytical and organisational skills

Teamwork:

- Project a positive image and is ready to take on a wide range of tasks;
- Focuses on results for the client;
- Welcomes constructive feedback

TEAM COMPOSITION

The evaluation team will be composed of *an International and a national evaluator*. The consultants shall have prior experience in evaluating similar projects. Experience with GEF financed projects is an advantage. The evaluators selected should not have participated in the project preparation and/or implementation and should not have conflict of interest with project related activities.

The National Evaluator must present the following qualifications:

- A Master’s degree in Natural Sciences, Environmental Management, Environmental Studies, Development studies, Social Sciences and/or other related fields.

- Minimum of 8 years accumulated and recognized experience in biodiversity conservation and management, biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilisation areas, and sustainable livelihoods.
- Minimum of 5 years of project evaluation and/or implementation experience in the result-based management framework, adaptive management.
- Very good report writing skills in English.
- Familiarity in similar country or regional situations relevant to that of FF is an advantage.
- Some experience working with the GEF or GEF-evaluations is an advantage.
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and biodiversity, experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Demonstrable analytical skills.

Responsibilities:

- Documentation review and data gathering
- Contributing to the development of the review plan and methodology
- Conducting those elements of the evaluation determined jointly with the international consultant and UNDP
- Contributing to presentation of the review findings and recommendations at the wrap-up meeting
- Contributing to the drafting and finalization of the review report

EVALUATOR ETHICS

Evaluation consultants will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct (Annex E) upon acceptance of the assignment. UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the [UNEP 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations'](#)

PRICE PROPOSAL AND SCHEDULE OF PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

Consultant must send a financial proposal based on Lump Sum Amount. The total amount quoted shall be all-inclusive and include all costs components required to perform the deliverables identified in the TOR, including professional fee, travel costs, living allowance (if any work is to be done outside the IC’s duty station) and any other applicable cost to be incurred by the IC in completing the assignment. The contract price will be fixed output-based price regardless of extension of the herein specified duration. Payments will be done upon completion of the deliverables/outputs and as per below percentages:

%	Milestone
10%	Upon submission of TE inception report
40%	Following submission and approval of the 1ST draft terminal evaluation report
50%	Following submission and approval (UNDP-CO and UNDP RTA) of the final terminal evaluation report

In general, UNDP shall not accept travel costs exceeding those of an economy class ticket. Should the IC wish to travel on a higher class he/she should do so using their own resources

In the event of unforeseeable travel not anticipated in this TOR, payment of travel costs including tickets, lodging and terminal expenses should be agreed upon, between the respective business unit

and the Individual Consultant, prior to travel and will be reimbursed. Travel costs shall be reimbursed at actual but not exceeding the quotation from UNDP approved travel agent. The provided living allowance will not be exceeding UNDP Living Allowance rates.

APPLICATION PROCESS

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

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 70% of the total technical points would be considered for the Financial Evaluation. UNDP applies a fair and transparent selection process that will take into account the competencies/skills of the applicants as well as their financial proposals. Qualified women and members of social minorities are encouraged to apply.

Document to be included when Submitting the Proposals:

Interested individual consultants must submit the following document's information to demonstrate their qualifications; Please group them into one(1) single PDF document as the application only allows to upload maximum on document:

a) **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability and Financial Proposal** using the template provided by UNDP

b) **CV** indicating all past experiences from similar projects, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the Candidate and at least three (3) professional references.

c) **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)

d) **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the Letter of Confirmation of Interest template. If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

Evaluation criteria:

Criteria	Weight	Max. Point
Technical	70%	700
- A Master's degree in Natural Sciences, Environmental Management, Environmental Studies, Development studies, Social Sciences and/or other related fields.	10%	100
- Monitoring and evaluation experience in the project on environmental, nature conservation, land use planning, biodiversity management in Thailand (for national consultant), -no country specific for international consultant	30%	300
- Competence in data analytic and visualization techniques	20%	200
- Competency in Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal	10%	100
Financial	30%	300

All application materials should be submitted to UNDP **by 7 August 2019**. The short-listed candidates may be contacted, and the successful candidate will be notified.

Annex 7: Signed Terminal Evaluation Final Report Clearance Form

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

Terminal Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:

Commissioning Unit

Name: Napaporn Yuberk, Programme Analyst

Signature:



_____ Date: 22 January 2020

UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor

Name: Lisa Farroway, Regional Technical Advisor
Ecosystem and Biodiversity, UNDP-GEF

Signature:



_____ Date: 22 January 2020