

GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA
GOVERNMENT OF BOTSWANA
GOVERNMENT OF NAMIBIA
GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF)
UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)
FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO)

TERMINAL EVALUATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF THE OKAVANGO RIVER BASIN PROJECT (RAF/00/G33/A/1G/12)

Philip Tortell and Oliver Chapeyama

Luanda, Windhoek, Gaborone, August 2010

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to acknowledge the tremendous assistance we received from many individuals and organizations in carrying out this evaluation.

Firstly, we wish to thank the various government officials, members of OKACOM and OBSC, as well as OKASec, HOORC, Agostino Neto University and others involved in the implementation of the Project, who met with us, described their relationship with the project and shared their views of the Project and its various activities with us in a transparent manner. The insights you provided were invaluable.

We also wish to extend our thanks to UNDP as the Implementing Agency for the project, the Executing Agency (FAO) and the PMU, who shared their experience of the project with us and provided us with useful documentation. The PMU was also most helpful by instigating appointments in each of the three countries and other logistic arrangements.

To all the above, as well as to those who provided us with written comments on the draft report, we are sincerely grateful.

Thank you

THE EVALUATION TEAM

Philip Tortell

Consultant

Environmental Management Limited

P O Box 27 433, Wellington, NEW ZEALAND

Tel +64-4-384 4133, Fax +64-4-384 4022, Email <tortell@attglobal.net>

Oliver Chapeyama

Consultant

Enviroplan: Environment and Development Consultants

PO Box 320184, Tlokweng, BOTSWANA

Tel +267-3-972 489, Mob +267-72-106 588, Email ochapeyama@yahoo.co.uk, enviroplan@gbs.co.bw

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	2
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	5
1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6
2 INTRODUCTION	12
2.1 Purpose of the evaluation	12
2.2 Key issues to be addressed by the evaluation	12
2.3 Methodology	13
2.3.1 The GEF monitoring and evaluation principles	13
2.3.2 The basis for evaluation	13
2.3.3 The approach adopted	14
2.3.4 Evaluation boundaries	15
2.3.5 Mission activities and assignment timeline	15
2.3.6 Documents reviewed and consulted	15
2.3.7 Consultations	16
2.3.8 The rating system	16
2.4 Structure of the evaluation	17
3 THE PROJECT AND ITS DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT	18
3.1 Project chronology	18
3.2 Problems that the project seeks to address	18
3.3 Development Objective and Outcomes of the project	19
3.4 Main stakeholders	20
3.5 Results expected	20
4 FINDINGS	22
4.1 Project formulation	22
4.1.1 Conceptualization / design	22
4.1.2 Project planning	23
4.1.3 Project ownership	23
4.1.4 Stakeholder participation at the project formulation stage	24
4.1.5 Linkages between the project and other interventions	25
4.2 Project implementation	25
4.2.1 Project governance	25
4.2.1.1 Implementation and institutional framework	25
4.2.1.2 Project steering	26
4.2.1.3 The role of the Governments	27
4.2.1.4 The role of UNDP as the Implementing Agency	27
4.2.1.5 Conclusions on project governance	28
4.2.2 Project management and administration	29
4.2.2.1 The role of FAO as the Executing Agency	29
4.2.2.2 The Project Management Unit	30
4.2.2.3 Conclusions on project management and administration	32
4.2.3 Monitoring and evaluation	32
4.2.3.1 The GEF M&E requirements	32
4.2.3.2 The LogFrame matrix, project monitoring and adaptive management	34
4.2.3.3 The Mid-Term Evaluation	35
4.2.4 Risks and risk management	36
4.2.5 Financial management	37
4.2.5.1 Budget and financial planning	37
4.2.5.2 The disbursement process	39

4.2.5.3	Co-financing	40
4.2.6	Stakeholders, partnerships and information management	42
4.2.6.1	Stakeholder participation during the implementation stage	42
4.2.6.2	Partners and partnership strategy	43
4.2.6.3	Information management	44
4.3	Results and impacts	45
4.3.1	Measuring progress and success	45
4.3.2	Results achieved	45
4.3.2.1	The Project Development Objective	45
4.3.2.2	Outcome 1: Strengthened mechanisms for joint management of the ORB	49
4.3.2.3	Outcome 2: Completed Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis	54
4.3.2.4	Outcome 3: Strategic Action Programme formulated	57
4.3.3	Project impacts	59
4.3.3.1	Impact analysis	59
4.3.3.2	Global environmental impacts	59
4.3.3.3	Regional and national level impacts	60
4.3.4	Overall conclusion on project results and impacts	60
4.4	Relevance, effectiveness and sustainability	61
4.4.1	Relevance of the project to the needs of the ORB	61
4.4.2	Effectiveness of project execution	61
4.4.3	Sustainability Plan /Exit Strategy	62
4.4.3.1	The current situation	62
4.4.3.2	Institutional and financial sustainability	64
4.4.3.3	The OKACOM Secretariat and sustainability	64
4.4.3.4	Options for salvaging the project results	65
5	RATINGS AND CONCLUSIONS	66
5.1	Assessment summary and ratings	66
5.2	Conclusions	67
5.2.1	Overall conclusion	67
5.2.2	Project design and formulation	68
5.2.3	Project governance	68
5.2.4	Project administration and management	69
5.2.5	Financial management	69
5.2.6	Results and impacts achieved	70
5.2.7	Monitoring, evaluation and adaptive management	71
5.2.8	Risk management	71
5.2.9	Government involvement and commitment	71
5.2.10	Stakeholder involvement	71
5.2.11	Sustainability	72
5.3	Lessons emerging	72
6	RECOMMENDATIONS	73
ANNEXES		
1	Independent Evaluation Terms of Reference	
2	Evaluators' credentials	
3	Mission Schedule	
4	Documents reviewed and consulted	
5	Persons met and consulted	
6	Stakeholders participation record	
7	Consolidated responses to the MTE	
8	PMU self-assessment of progress	

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	African Development Bank
CO	Country Office (of UNDP)
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DEX	Direct Execution (of projects, by UNDP)
DSS	Decision Support System
EA	Executing Agency
EPSMO	Environmental Protection & Sustainable Management of the Okavango Basin Project
ERP	Every River has its People Project
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HOORC	Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Centre (Univ of Botswana)
IA	Implementing Agency
IRBM	Integrated River Basin Management Project
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
LogFrame	Logical Framework Matrix
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation (in this report refers to the Interim Evaluation)
NAP	National Action Plan/s
NCU	National Coordination Unit
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NPC	National Project Coordinator
OBSC	Okavango Basin Steering Committee
ODMP	Okavango Delta Management Plan Project
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OKACOM	Permanent Okavango River Basin Commission
OKASec	OKACOM Secretariat
OP	Operational Programme (of the GEF)
ORB	Okavango River Basin
PDF 'B'	Preparatory Development Facility (of the GEF), second Phase
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PM	Project Manager
PMU	Project Management Unit
ProDoc	Project Document
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RTA	Regional Technical Advisor (of UNDP/GEF)
RBOs	River Basin Organization/s
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SAP	Strategic Action Programme
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
TA	Travel Authorization
TDA	Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis
TE	Terminal Evaluation
ToRs	Terms of Reference
TPR	Tri-partite Review
TTT	Transboundary Task Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Evaluation

This is the Independent Terminal Evaluation of the GEF/UNDP/FAO Environmental Protection and Sustainable Management of the Okavango River Basin Project (EPSMO).

Like all GEF Terminal Evaluations, this TE is being carried out:

- To promote accountability and transparency, and to assess and disclose levels of project accomplishments;
- To synthesize lessons that may help improve the selection, design and implementation of future GEF activities;
- To provide feedback on issues that are recurrent across the portfolio and need attention, and on improvements regarding previously identified issues; and,
- To contribute to the GEF Evaluation Office databases for aggregation, analysis and reporting on effectiveness of GEF operations in achieving global environmental benefits and on quality of monitoring and evaluation across the GEF system.

It sets about attempting to provide answers to the following questions:

- Did the project achieve its objectives? (= results)
- Did it do it well? (= implementation process)
- Are the results likely to be sustainable (= impacts and sustainability)

The approach adopted was participatory which, while safeguarding the independence of the Evaluators, included self-assessments by the Project Management Unit. A six-point rating system was applied to elements of the Project, in particular on progress towards the Objective and Outcomes.

The Project

The EPSMO project started in November 2004 following a Preparatory Phase which ran from 1997 to 2000, in response to an approach to GEF by the Governments of Angola, Namibia and Botswana, through their Permanent Okavango River Basin Commission (OKACOM). EPSMO was expected to carry out a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA), and formulate a Strategic Action Programme (SAP), setting the stage for long term investment activities to protect the ecological integrity of the Basin. The project's website can be found at <http://epsmo.iwlearn.org/>

UNDP was the Implementing Agency on behalf of GEF and it, in turn, contracted FAO to serve as the Executing Agency. OKACOM was identified as the project's Coordinating Agency while Angola served as the host country for the PMU.

The **Project Objective** was - *To alleviate imminent and long-term threats to the linked land and water systems of the Okavango River through the joint management of the Okavango River Basin water resources and the protection of its linked aquatic ecosystems, comprising all wetlands, fluvial and lacustrine systems, and their biological diversity.*

It had three targeted Outcomes:

- 1: Strengthened mechanisms for joint management of the ORB put in place and functioning
- 2: Completed transboundary diagnostic analysis
- 3: Strategic Action Programme (SAP) formulated

The project had a total budget of US\$7.467 million, of which the GEF provided US\$5.391 million (US\$5.765 million including the PDF financing). Total co-financing was expected to reach US\$2.076 million (all in kind).

The project commenced in November 2004 but its early days were fraught with problems and in October 2005 the Project Manager resigned and UNDP decided to halt any new project activities pending the outcome of an Interim Evaluation. The Interim Evaluation (referred to as the Mid-Term Evaluation or MTE) took place in the latter half of 2006 and concluded, *inter alia*, that the project could be restarted and had good prospects as long as a portfolio of recommendations was adopted. The project was restarted in 2007 and is due to be closed at the end of August 2010 after an extension of four months.

Key Findings and Conclusions

Project design and formulation

The project was designed in response to a specific regional need and EPSMO was very relevant to the needs of the three riparian countries. The model adopted for the EPSMO project is a tried and tested model which has yielded positive results elsewhere. However, there have been reservations expressed about the one-size-fits-all approach applied by the GEF and the short timescale is considered a design flaw. Project design is considered **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

Project design provided for the development of linkages between the project and on-going initiatives in the basin and the PMU developed an effective working relationship with OKASec but the latter was constrained by its mandate and lack of capacity. As a result, OKASec does not have the capacity to manage work that the PMU has been unable to finalize.

Project governance

The problems that the project faced with governance at the time of the MTE were, in the main, resolved and roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders became better understood. Clarification of the role of the PSC and its close alignment with the TPR have been instrumental in providing more effective project governance which is rated as **Satisfactory (S)**. As implementing agency, UNDP adopted a more proactive role since the MTE, particularly in the Principal Country Office in Angola. However, in spite of an Aide-Mémoire setting out relative roles and responsibilities, and regular email and telephone contact, the relationship between UNDP and FAO remained strained and there was a lack of cooperation between the two agencies.

The Governments have worked through OKACOM for the implementation of this project and this has been effective. However, there is now a need for them to assume a more active role and one involving a broader scope of actors and stakeholders to ensure that the SAP truly reflects the full national interest in each country.

Project administration and management

UNDP, as the agency ultimately accountable for the GEF funds, engaged FAO to serve as the Executing Agency for EPSMO which went through a very "difficult birth" that almost resulted in UNDP terminating it. Many of the difficulties arose as a result of the administrative procedures applied by FAO as the EA. They were also contributed to by the low level of buy-in by the UNDP COs and the fact that UNDP was not assertive enough in its requirements of FAO in the delivery of its contractual obligations. This, in turn, led FAO into assuming a greater level of control than is normally accorded to an EA – in fact FAO often operated as the IA, as well as the EA. The EA claimed that communication between it and IA was reasonable with critical reports such as financial statements and PIRs delivered as required. The IA had a different view. The Evaluation Team

struggled to obtain the usual financial, risk management, monitoring, adaptive management, and sustainability planning information from FAO or the PMU. According to an OKACOM decision, the PMU was based in Luanda and this was an additional cost to the project.

Project management had suffered badly at the time of the MTE, however, the situation improved dramatically with the appointment of a new Project Manager who is credited with putting the project back on track and leading the progress that has been achieved towards the TDA and the SAP. Project administration and management is rated **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

Financial management

UNDP advised the Evaluators that although the situation has improved measurably since the MTE, some of the difficulties created by the different accounting systems and financial reporting approaches used by UNDP and FAO still persisted. FAO advised the Evaluators that there is a communication problem between UNDP Angola and UNDP NY. The Evaluators are confused, but one thing is clear – the financial systems used by the two agencies are not compatible and financial planning and management are seen as **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)**.

We have been alerted to inexplicable delays with the settlement of consultancy fees and disbursement is rated as **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**. And, an illustration of the lack of financial competency is provided by the patchy and inconsistent information available to us on co-financing which has not been solicited, managed and monitored effectively. Co-financing is considered as **Unsatisfactory (U)**.

Results and impacts achieved

The project proceeded without meaningful Indicators of progress towards the Objective and we conclude that while progress has been made towards it, the Objective has not really been achieved and progress is considered as **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**. Representations made to the Evaluators also noted that the wording of the Objective was somewhat extravagant and unrealistic within the circumstances and the available timeframe.

Outcome 1 sought *functioning mechanisms for joint management* and based on our consultations as well as the PIRs and the PMU self-assessment, we have concluded that some mechanisms have been put in place but they are not functioning as effectively as they should. Achievement is rated as **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

Outcome 2 sought the completion of a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis. Technical information has been collected, the DSS has been developed and a great deal of analysis has been carried out. However, there is concern that the TDA which is due to go to the printer will not have the full ownership required to serve as a robust foundation for the SAP and progress has been **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

The SAP targeted as Outcome 3 has not been finalised with only a first draft having been produced and progress is **Unsatisfactory (U)**.

There is very little reference to or recognition of the global dimension of EPSMO. In other words, if the project is successful in achieving its Objective and Outcomes, global benefits will accrue, but they will be almost incidental.

EPSMO has been relevant to the needs of the ORB (**Satisfactory (S)**) and its implementation has been effective in its efforts to create mechanisms for collaboration; it has also been effective in achieving a strong body of knowledge in the form of a TDA (although some aspects are still a matter of contention); but the achievement of an agreed and funded SAP is still elusive. Effectiveness is **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

Monitoring, evaluation and adaptive management

The EPSMO project did carry out some monitoring activities, but these were not according to an effective M&E Plan because none existed. As a result, while the PIR was used effectively by UNDP for monitoring project progress, and while the Work Plan and the Quarterly Progress Reports indicate a degree of planning, there was no evident active monitoring of project performance by the PMU or the EA. Neither is there any evidence of systematic use of the LogFrame, or its monitoring and evaluation leading to adaptive management. M&E design, planning and budget as well as project monitoring are considered to have been **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)**, and likewise the use of the LogFrame and adaptive management.

Risk management

Risk management was not addressed properly in the ProDoc and, it seems, that it was not addressed actively by the PMU or the EA either. The high risk that political agreement on the SAP could turn out to be elusive and could jeopardize the entire project, is still possible and there are no mitigation measures. Risk management has been **Unsatisfactory (U)**.

Government involvement and commitment

The three Governments of Angola, Namibia and Botswana are the project owners through the Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM). Country level involvement in project implementation has been effected almost exclusively by the OKACOM Commissioners and the OBSC members acting upon the mandate given them by their respective Governments. The project has now reached a critical point where the issues it has to deal with go beyond those that were originally targeted. The SAP will require the involvement of more sectors than just water and environment. As a policy document, it will also require accession by authorities higher than OKACOM representatives in each country. As part of the process towards conclusion of the SAP, all sectors that have a stake in the basin need to be involved in the negotiations.

Stakeholder involvement

As observed at the time of the MTE, stakeholder involvement in project implementation has been varied, with OKACOM and technical/research institutions very well involved, but communities less so, mainly because of the nature of the tasks, and in spite of their mobilisation in the early stages of the Okavango basin initiative through the ERP. Institutions such as the UNDP Country Offices in the three riparian countries have also not been as actively involved as they should have been. Stakeholder participation during project formulation as well as during implementation is considered to have been **Satisfactory (S)**.

Sustainability

There is serious concern that the TDA which might be finalized before project closure may not be universally acceptable; and it is most unlikely that the SAP could be finalized by the time of project closure; in other words, the project will not achieve its Objective. The investment of US\$5.3 million by the GEF is in jeopardy. In these circumstances, an Exit Strategy is absolutely essential and the project does not have one and this is **Unsatisfactory (U)**. This is a serious shortcoming on the part of the PMU and the EA compounded by the fact that the EA is proceeding to issue contracts to consultants to finalize a SAP even when it is clear that this process will not be finalized before 31 August at project closure; and that does not take into account the need for the SAP to be negotiated, agreed and endorsed. Institutional and financial sustainability of both the TDA and the SAP are seen as **Moderately Unlikely (MU)**.

Considering that the EPSMO project has been in trouble before and that in spite of all the effort that has been devoted to it, it has still failed to deliver, one option is to let the project run its course, close it on 31 August and record the lessons learnt. However, this would be defeatist and it would mean

that OKACOM and the three Governments who put their faith in GEF, UNDP and FAO, would be let down.

An alternative option, in response to what is, in effect, a crisis situation, is put forward by the Evaluation Team for consideration by the Project TPR at its last meeting in August 2010.

Overall conclusion

EPSMO had a very difficult beginning and it was rescued from failure through the strong commitment of OKACOM and the three riparian Governments. The project has established consultative fora, enhanced the enabling environment at least partly, and raised capacity for SAP implementation. The EA is making frantic efforts to have the TDA finalised before project closure on 31 August but it could turn out to be a weak document. And, although the EA might be able to produce a draft SAP document in the remaining time, it is unlikely that the negotiations that are needed to have this document endorsed by all three countries and financed, will be concluded in the same timeframe. If the SAP is not completed by the project closure, the Project Objective will not have been attained. However, and in recognition of the progress achieved, the overall project rating is seen as **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

Recommendations

(Original numbering as in full report, retained)

Project closure

5.1.1 It is recommended that UNDP close the project operationally as planned on 31 August 2010, and conclude all contracts for project personnel, consultants and the Executing Agency. It should also initiate the financial closure of the project in collaboration with the EA, for the purpose of the GEF funds.

5.1.2 It is recommended that stakeholders, in particular GEF, be advised by UNDP that project closure on 31 August is made on the understanding that the work will continue through a follow-up intervention by UNDP, in recognition of the IA's ultimate responsibility for delivery, in collaboration with the Governments.

5.1.3 It is recommended to GEF that it considers this Terminal Evaluation as remaining "open" until February 2011 when the Team could reconvene and an "update" or "addendum" could be prepared for the stakeholders and the GEF.

Achievement of Project Objective and Outcomes

5.2.1 It is recommended that any follow-up intervention should assist the OBSC to reach consensus on those aspects of the TDA that require further work, and signal that this further work would be carried out as part of the SAP "package". The follow-up should engage an expert, preferably from the region, who commands the respect of OBSC membership, to facilitate the effort.

5.2.2 It is recommended that the completion of a negotiated and agreed SAP, ready for endorsement at the highest levels of each country, in an equivalent of a regional treaty, be the highest priority of the follow-up intervention. UNDP should engage experts, preferably from the region, to work with OBSC and develop the draft SAP further in terms of scope, contents and format, and to assist the three Governments with the negotiation process.

5.2.3 It is also recommended that in an effort to be strategic, the SAP should establish agreed Environmental Quality Objectives for the ORB, agreed Principles to be adhered to by the three Governments, and other “bottom lines” for future protection and management and development of the ORB.

The Follow-up Project

5.3.1 It is recommended that the Follow-up Project be implemented by UNDP in the DEX modality over a period of six months starting on 01 September 2010 and ending at the end of February 2011.

5.3.2 It is recommended that the purpose and scope of the Follow-up Project will be to:

- Gain acceptance of the TDA throughout the ORB and have it officially accepted
- Achieve a negotiated, agreed SAP, acceptable to the three Governments and the broader constituency of ORB stakeholders
- Obtain formal endorsement of the SAP at the highest levels of the three Governments
- Commence the preparation of necessary documentation for GEF support for the implementation of the SAP
- Organize a Donors' Conference and obtain pledges of co-funding support for SAP implementation
- Design and implement an Exit Strategy which identifies and prepares those who are to assume responsibility for the TDA (refining and updating) and the SAP (implementation)

5.3.3 It is recommended that a Coordinator be engaged on contract, by UNDP, to manage the Follow-up Project in close collaboration with the OKACOM Secretariat and with each of the three National Coordinators. The Coordinator should be based in the office of the National Director of Water Resources in the Angolan Ministry of Energy and Water in Luanda, as this arrangement will provide an excellent opportunity for mentoring and support. The Coordinator should report to the UNDP Resident Representative in Angola as chair of the TPR.

5.3.4 It is recommended that, as noted above, the necessary expertise in negotiation skills, SAP development, resource mobilization and GEF documentation drafting should be obtained through consultancies awarded under the Follow-up Project.

5.3.5 It is recommended that funding for the Follow-up Project should be arranged by UNDP and the three Governments.

Sustainability arrangements

5.4.1 It is recommended that through the Follow-up Project, UNDP should seek the collaboration of SIDA to provide an opportunity for OKACOM to review its Secretariat and assess its needs if it is to assume responsibility for the coordination of SAP implementation.

5.4.2 It is recommended that the three Governments acknowledge that although it has been effective to date, OKACOM requires a broader base to assume a more active role and one involving a broader scope of actors and stakeholders to ensure that the SAP truly reflects the full national interest in each country for the ORB.

5.4.3 It is recommended that the EPSMO NCUs be reconstituted as truly Inter-Ministerial Committees at senior level with a function to set policy directions and track progress with the implementation of the agreed Okavango Basin SAP. Membership of the Committees is at the discretion of the Governments and should include (and possibly be chaired by) institutions with an overall national planning overview such as Foreign Affairs, National Planning, Attorney General's Office and Ministry of Finance.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

The Terminal Evaluation is intended to provide a comprehensive overall assessment of the project and serves as an opportunity to critically assess administrative and technical strategies, issues and constraints. The evaluation sets about attempting to provide answers to the following questions:

- Did the project achieve its objectives? (= results)
- Did it do it well? (= implementation process)
- Are the results likely to be sustainable (= impacts and sustainability)

Like all GEF Terminal Evaluations, this TE is being carried out:

- To promote accountability and transparency, and to assess and disclose levels of project accomplishments;
- To synthesize lessons that may help improve the selection, design and implementation of future GEF activities;
- To provide feedback on issues that are recurrent across the portfolio and need attention, and on improvements regarding previously identified issues; and,
- To contribute to the GEF Evaluation Office databases for aggregation, analysis and reporting on effectiveness of GEF operations in achieving global environmental benefits and on quality of monitoring and evaluation across the GEF system.

A more specific list of tasks expected of the TE is in the ToRs in Annex 1.

Ultimately, the Terminal Evaluation report will be assessed using the following criteria¹:

- a. The report presents an assessment of all relevant outcomes and achievement of project objectives in the context of the focal area program indicators if applicable.*
- b. The report was consistent, the evidence presented was complete and convincing, and ratings were well substantiated.*
- c. The report presented a sound assessment of sustainability of outcomes.*
- d. The lessons and recommendations are supported by the evidence presented and are relevant to the portfolio and future projects.*
- e. The report included the actual project costs (totals, per activity and per source) and actual cofinancing used.*
- f. The report included an assessment of the quality of the M&E plan at entry, the M&E system used during implementation, and whether the information generated by the M&E system was used for project management.*

2.2 Key issues to be addressed by the Evaluation

According to GEF guidance², key issues that terminal evaluations must assess, are:

- the achievement of outputs and outcomes, rate targeted objectives and outcomes (the assessment of the outcomes for relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency, is a priority);
- the risks to sustainability of project outcomes;
- whether the project met the minimum requirements for project design of M&E (minimum requirement 1) and the implementation of the project M&E plan (minimum requirement 2).

However, the EPSMO project presented other issues in addition to the above. These arose out of the MTE and the main ones that needed to be addressed by this TE were: governance, management and administration.

¹ GEF Evaluation Office, *Annual Performance Report 2008*. GEF Council Paper GEF/ME/C.35/Inf. 5, May 28, 2009

² *Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluations*. Global Environment Facility, Evaluation Office. Evaluation Document No.3. 2008

2.3 Methodology

2.3.1 The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Principles

In accordance with the monitoring and evaluation policy of the GEF³, this evaluation is guided by, and has applied, the following principles:

Independence The Evaluators are independent and have not been engaged in the Project activities, nor were they responsible in the past for the design, implementation or supervision of the project.

Impartiality The Evaluators endeavoured to provide a comprehensive and balanced presentation of strengths and weaknesses of the project. The evaluation process has been impartial in all stages and taken into account all the views received from stakeholders.

Transparency The Evaluators conveyed in as open a manner as possible the purpose of the evaluation, the criteria applied and the intended use of the findings. This evaluation report aims to provide transparent information on its sources, methodologies and approach.

Disclosure This report serves as a mechanism through which the findings and lessons identified in the evaluation are disseminated to policymakers, operational staff, beneficiaries, the general public and other stakeholders.

Ethical The Evaluators have respected the right of institutions and individuals to provide information in confidence and the sources of specific information and opinions in this report are not disclosed except where necessary and then only after confirmation with the consultee.

Competencies and Capacities The credentials of the Evaluators in terms of their expertise, seniority and experience as required by the terms of reference (see Annex 1) are provided in Annex 2; and methodology for the assessment of results and performance is described below (section 2.3).

Credibility This evaluation has been based on data and observations which are considered reliable and dependable with reference to the quality of instruments and procedures and analysis used to collect and interpret information.

Utility The Evaluators strived to be as well-informed as possible and this ensuing report is considered as relevant, timely and as concise as possible. In an attempt to be of maximum benefit to stakeholders, the report presents in a complete and balanced way the evidence, findings and issues, conclusions and recommendations.

2.3.2 The basis for evaluation

The basis for a terminal evaluation is the ProDoc which is the signed contract for delivery of certain agreed results, products and services. Signatories bind themselves through the ProDoc and are accountable on that basis. As noted by GEF, *“the results framework included in the project appraisal document submitted to the GEF for approval/endorsement by the CEO establishes project outcome expectations. At the time of project completion, these ex-ante expectations generally form a yard stick for assessment of outcome achievements.”*⁴

³ Global Environment Facility (2006) *The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy*.

⁴ GEF Evaluation Office, *Annual Performance Report 2008*. GEF Council Paper GEF/ME/C.35/Inf. 5, May 28, 2009

However, as the GEF guidance continues, “*in some instances during the course of project implementation the implementing agency may make changes to the results framework.*” This is justified, for example, when the time taken between the ProDoc’s design and formulation and the project’s start influences its appropriateness – hence the examination and review of the ProDoc at the Inception stages when changes are proposed, agreed and approved. In addition, it is also possible that the ProDoc could require further changes during the lifetime of the project to reflect changing circumstances and experience gained. This could take place annually, if necessary.

It would be cumbersome to change the entire ProDoc and have the new version signed afresh, each time these changes are brought about. Instead, the changes take place in the LogFrame which captures the essence of the ProDoc and the project. Such changes to the LogFrame are proposed, discussed, agreed to and approved at the PSC which comprises membership by all the original ProDoc signatories. Annual Work Plans, Quarterly Plans and Quarterly Reports, are all reliant on the LogFrame, so is a project’s M&E Plan, and so is the annual accounting to the GEF through the APR/PIR or similar instrument. And, so is a terminal evaluation.

2.3.3 The approach adopted

Three basic tools were used in the search for primary data and information – firstly documents review, secondly face-to-face consultations and thirdly written comments and telephone interviews. Face-to-face consultations were the preferred method of consultation and were carried out with a wide catchment of stakeholders. Triangulation was used to ensure that empirical evidence collected from one source, for example documentation such as reports, was validated from other sources, for example through interviews or surveys. Sometimes, the information was not available in document form and only available from consultations. In this situation, the Evaluators sought to corroborate opinions expressed and information given, by posing the same questions to more than one consultee. Anecdotal evidence was taken into account only if in the judgment of the Evaluators the information was important and the source was considered reliable. In such cases, the possible limitations of this information are noted.

The evaluation process comprised three phases. The first phase was one of data and information gathering. It started with a review of relevant documents made available electronically by UNDP, FAO, the Project Management Unit and the OKACOM Secretariat. In addition, relevant websites were also visited and studied. Soon after its arrival in Gaborone, the team received extensive briefings and additional documentation. Following this, the team embarked on a broad programme of consultations with key stakeholders in each of the three riparian states namely, Angola, Namibia and Botswana. The aim was to capture as broad a catchment of views and opinions as possible within the time available.

The second phase focused on analysis, discussion and drafting by the team operating from home base. This phase concluded with the production of the draft version of the report which was forwarded to the PMU, FAO and UNDP to be released for comments.

The third and final phase refined the draft in the light of the seven sets of comments received, and produced the first version of the final report. Information provided in the comments received was used substantially in revising the draft. Following a directive from FAO as the EA, the final report was recast in the structure given in annex 1 of the ToRs and this second version was produced.

Guidance provided by GEF and UNDP, was adhered to by the team in undertaking this terminal evaluation. As noted in the Acknowledgements, the team benefited greatly from the wide spectrum of views, opinions and advice that it received during the course of its work. However, the conclusions reached and the recommendations made, represent the independent views of the team members alone.

If the recommendations of this TE are accepted, there will be a follow-up project of about six months duration, the main purpose of which would be to finalize the SAP. At the end of that period, the Evaluation Team will be available to reconvene and the additional progress could be reflected in an addendum or an updated version of this report.

2.3.4 Evaluation boundaries

The EPSMO project had a very ambitious timescale (see section 2.2 on project design) and although this report is being finalized less than one month from project closure, activities are still being carried out towards the Outcomes and the Objective and the situation is changing continuously. Under the circumstances, the Evaluation Team has had to determine boundaries for its assessment and we set 30 June 2010 as the cut-off date for the purpose of the draft TE report. Since then, additional information has become available to the Evaluators through the comments received on the draft. More specific information was also received in the form of the preliminary draft of the PIR2010 which, while incomplete and still requiring approval, provided an update nonetheless. Furthermore, the Evaluators also received the financial data as at the end of the second quarter – June 2010. We therefore shifted the time boundary to 03 August.

A further boundary was set on the scope of this evaluation. In spite of representations made to the Evaluators, it is not within our competence to assess the technical aspects of either the TDA or the SAP. On the other hand, the process applied by the project to produce these two key products as well as the likelihood of their sustainability, are fundamental elements of our assessment.

2.3.5 Mission activities and assignment timeline

The evaluation was conducted by a team of two independent evaluators. The team commenced its work from homebase in mid-May 2010. It then arrived in Gaborone on 30 May and after four days, travelled to Maun. After three days in Maun the evaluation team travelled to Windhoek for a visit of four days. From Windhoek, the team travelled to Luanda and after seven days went for a brief visit to Pretoria. The mission ended on 18 June.

Following a period of about two weeks, the evaluation team presented its draft report and invited comments from stakeholders. The evaluation team reviewed its draft report in the light of comments received and the first version of the final report was delivered in early August. This second version was delivered in mid-August.

A detailed schedule and time line for the evaluation is in Annex 3.

2.3.6 Documents reviewed and consulted

The evaluation team was provided with an initial list of documents in the Terms of Reference. Further advice on relevant documents, as well as the documents themselves in most cases, was provided by UNDP, FAO, the PMU and the OKACOM Secretariat. The evaluation team sought additional documentation to provide us with the background to the project, insights into project implementation and management, a record of project outputs, etc. References to documentation are noted, in most cases, in footnotes and the full list of documents reviewed and/or consulted by the team is in Annex 4 which also contains a short list of the websites that were visited and reviewed.

2.3.7 Consultations

Consultations by the evaluation team took place primarily in the three capital cities namely, Luanda, Windhoek and Gaborone. However, brief visits were also undertaken to Pretoria and Maun and a number of meetings were held there as well.

The team consulted 61 individuals in all. These ranged from the key stakeholders (OKACOM Commissioners and OBSC members, UNDP and GEF) to project personnel and consultants, various government officials and technical specialists dealing with water and related issues, and NGOs. Most meetings followed the same pattern, namely, a brief introduction on the purpose of the mission followed by an identification of the relationship that the consultee had with the project, if any, and his/her views on the project. Particular emphasis was placed on whether the consultee felt that the project had achieved its Objectives, whether it had done this effectively and as required, and whether the project's products and benefits were likely to be sustainable. Face-to-face consultations were the preferred mode, however, telephone and electronic consultations with key individuals were also conducted. The evaluation team gave an undertaking that the sources of information will not be disclosed unless this was important for the report and in such cases, only with the agreement of the source.

A full list of persons met and consulted by the evaluation team is to be found in Annex 5.

2.3.8 The rating system

GEF guidance requires certain project aspects to be addressed by a terminal evaluation and a commentary, analysis and rating is required for each of:

- Project concept and design
- Stakeholder participation in project formulation
- Implementation approach
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Stakeholder participation
- Attainment of Outcomes and achievement of Objective

These aspects, which form the framework of the core sections of this report, are augmented as considered necessary to also address issues that arose during the evaluation.

Each of the aspects has been rated separately with brief justifications based on findings. In addition, the various project elements have also been rated, as has the project as a whole.

According to GEF guidance⁵, when rating the project's outcomes, *relevance* and *effectiveness* are to be considered as critical criteria – satisfactory performance on relevance and effectiveness is essential to satisfactory performance overall.

The standard GEF rating system was applied, namely:

Highly Satisfactory (HS): The project has no shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency

Satisfactory (S): The project has minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency

Moderately Satisfactory (MS): The project has moderate shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency

⁵ *Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluations*. Global Environment Facility, Evaluation Office. Evaluation Document No.3. 2008

Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): The project has significant shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency

Unsatisfactory (U): The project has major shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The project has severe shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in terms of relevance, effectiveness or efficiency

The rating of various elements of the project is necessarily subjective but it is carried out according to GEF guidance and ethics, and based on the past experience of the evaluators. A score of Highly Satisfactory is not common (around 4%)⁶ since it can only be applied in situations which are exceptional and where no improvement is possible. At the other end of the scale, a score of Highly Unsatisfactory (HU) is also not common (1%) and the greater part of projects and project elements are rated in the Satisfactory (S) to Moderately Satisfactory (MS) quartile (76%).

2.4 Structure of the evaluation

This final version of the evaluation report has changed since the one shared with stakeholders for comments. The scope and contents were changed to reflect the comments received; however, changes to the structure were also made following a requirement by FAO, as the EA, for us to adhere strictly to the structure given in Annex 1 of the ToRs. We favour the original structure which reflected GEF generic guidance⁷ and satisfied the standards established by UNEG⁸. We have also augmented the structure provided in the ToRs, with sections on governance, risks and risk management, project impacts, relevance, effectiveness, and conclusions, which were not included in the structure given.

An effort was made to keep this report brief, to the point and easy to understand. It is made up of five substantive sections. Following the executive summary that encapsulates the essence of the information contained in the report, the first part provides the background to the assignment. It starts with a brief introduction which explains the purpose of the evaluation, exactly what was evaluated and the methods used to evaluate the project. This is followed by the section which provides an introduction to the EPSMO project.

The next part is the main substantive part of this report and presents the findings of the evaluation exercise in terms of the project formulation, its implementation, its administration and management, its achievements, results and impacts, and the relevance and effectiveness of the project as well as the potential sustainability of the products and services that it produced. The findings are based on factual evidence obtained by the team through document reviews and consultations with stakeholders and beneficiaries.

The fourth part is the conclusions section which gathers together a summary of the ratings given and conclusions that had been reached throughout the report and augments them to create a cohesive ending arising from the investigation. It also contains a list of lessons that have emerged from this project. This section in turn leads to the final section comprising the recommendations.

A number of annexes provide supplementary information.

⁶ GEF Evaluation Office, *Annual Performance Report 2008*. GEF Council Paper GEF/ME/C.35/Inf. 5, May 28, 2009

⁷ Global Environment Facility Evaluation Office (2008) *Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluations*. Evaluation Document No.3.

⁸ UNEG United Nations Evaluation Group (2005) *Standards for Evaluation in the UN System*.

3 THE PROJECT AND ITS DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

3.1 Project chronology

The Okavango River Basin (ORB) remains one of the least human impacted river basins on the African continent. However, by the mid-1990s, Angola, Botswana and Namibia realized that the Okavango River Basin was being subjected to a series of environmental and hydrological pressures that were beginning to threaten the integrity of this system including the Okavango Delta. In response, the three riparian countries committed themselves, through the Okavango River Basin Commission⁹, to conduct an Environmental Assessment as the basis for an Integrated Management Plan to address the problems of resource degradation that were becoming evident in the Basin; and, in 1996, they approached GEF with a request for financial support for the implementation of their programme.

This was approved and the GEF Preparatory Phase, known as the PDF 'B', ran from 1997 to 2000. The Environmental Protection and Sustainable Management of the Okavango River Basin (EPSMO) Project was finally approved by the GEF Council in August 2000 and in April 2003 it became effective following the signing of the Project Document by all parties. It is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and executed by the Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Due to further delays the Project started in November 2004. In October 2005 the Project Manager resigned and UNDP decided to halt any new project activities pending the outcome of an Interim Evaluation. The Interim Evaluation (often referred to as the Mid-Term Evaluation or MTE) took place in the latter half of 2006 (see section 3.5.3, below) and concluded, *inter alia*, that the project could be restarted and had good prospects as long as a portfolio of recommendations was adopted.

The project was planned to be implemented over three years so it was originally scheduled to come to an end at the end of 2007. However, delays in the establishment phase retarded project interventions and hindered the delivery rate. In effect, the project was restarted in 2007 with a close out date of April 2010. After an extension of four months, it is due to be closed at the end of August 2010.

3.2 Problems that the project seeks to address

According to the ProDoc (page 8, para 13), the draft TDA which was produced during the PDF 'B' phase, confirmed the three countries' concerns and found that "*the natural resources of the ORB were already subject to demands for water and land from agriculture, and urban and industrial development, from both within and outside the Basin ... these demands were already resulting in modified water quantity, quality and sediment flows*" and raised the issue of "*minimum requirements*" if the Basin was to continue to "*furnish its environmental benefits and maintain a critical stock of freshwater assets. However, the national institutional and policy responses till then had focused exclusively on supply management and in financial, economic and environmental terms, this approach was not considered sustainable*". The draft TDA anticipated irreversible changes in the Basin's water balance, and hydrochemical and hydrogeomorphological impacts. It concluded that such changes would in turn impact the productivity and environmental integrity of the Basin as a whole¹⁰.

⁹ The Okavango River Basin Commission (OKACOM) was established by the governments of Angola, Namibia and Botswana through the 1994 OKACOM Agreement which was subsequently updated by the 2007 Agreement on OKACOM restructuring.

¹⁰ While the draft TDA findings were used to justify the project, subsequent and more detailed investigations during the drafting of the final TDA did not confirm these impacts and threats.

The ProDoc identified the proximate cause of environmental degradation as three-fold – unplanned abstraction from watercourses and aquifers, increased effluent disposal and pollution from non-point sources, and the accelerated erosion of land that is hydrogeomorphologically linked to the Basin. But the root causes were seen to lie with patterns of socio-economic development – population growth, urbanization and industrialization. Key factors in these trends included: over-grazing which was resulting in accelerated land and soil degradation in Namibia and Botswana; unplanned development in Angola along de-mined transport corridors in the Cubango and Cuito sub-basins as the post conflict resettlement occurred; and pressure for new and increased abstraction of water to service urban expansion and irrigated agriculture. These were the threats and causes that the project was designed to address.

GEF support was provided on the understanding that the project would yield global environmental benefits in addition to the regional and national ones. The global benefits (see section 4.3.3.2) were to accrue through the transboundary nature of the work which was to be implemented by the project through the TDA and the SAP.

3.3 Development Objective and Outcomes of the project

According to the ProDoc, the overall project Development Objective was :

To alleviate imminent and long-term threats to the linked land and water systems of the Okavango River through the joint management of the Okavango River Basin water resources and the protection of its linked aquatic ecosystems, comprising all wetlands, fluvial and lacustrine systems, and their biological diversity.

The project design (see section 4.1.1 below) adopted a two-stage approach. Stage 1, the subject of EPSMO, was to involve the preparation of the SAP. Stage 2, the subject of a subsequent intervention, will involve implementation of the SAP.

The ProDoc further explained that the purpose of Stage 1 was threefold :

- **First** - to overcome current policy, institutional, human resource and information barriers and constraints to coordination and joint management of the Basin
- **Second** - to complete a transboundary analysis (TDA) to underpin a programme of joint management
- **Third** - to facilitate the formulation of an implementable programme of joint management to address threats to the Basin's linked land and water systems. The GEF Strategic Action Programme (SAP) approach will be used as the programming instrument for the project

These three “purposes” of the project provided the framework for the three Components of the project and can be considered as its three Outcomes.

The SAP is the ultimate and final result of the project. It includes baseline and additional actions to address priority transboundary issues and provide a monitoring and evaluation tool for implementation. It also recommends the development and testing of a set of institutional mechanisms and implementation methodologies, including pilot demonstrations that explicitly link regional, national and local initiatives in land and water management. Additionally, it involves preparation of a basin-wide framework in which trans-boundary priorities can be addressed and project interventions monitored. At national level (the majority of interventions) the SAP is implemented through the National Action Plans (NAPs).

The TDA informs and guides the development of the SAP and is a platform where transboundary externalities can be examined and resolved. The TDA underpins SAP design and indicates monitoring and reporting criteria for SAP implementation. Most importantly, the process of completing the TDA is intended to inform policies and initiatives to be launched in preparation for SAP implementation.

3.4 Main stakeholders

The ProDoc notes that many public organisations as well as individual scientific and research institutions and consultants have invested their resources in understanding and analysing the Okavango Basin. The ProDoc also refers to schools, colleges, research institutions, and NGOs in the Basin as having a high degree of interest in an Okavango initiative. However, it failed to identify specifically who the key stakeholders in the project were. It then made a commitment to involve various stakeholders in project monitoring, evaluation, and implementation through numerous consultations and workshops and improved internet access among stakeholders. The ProDoc also dedicated an annex to the subject, entitled Public Involvement Plan Summary, and made mention of ways in which to involve the stakeholders. The PMU has provided the Evaluators with an account of how stakeholders have been involved in project implementation and this is discussed more fully in section 4.2.6 below.

Based on their perceived degree of influence on the project and their expressed interest in it, the evaluation team identified the following as the key stakeholders for the purpose of consultations: the OKACOM Commissioners, members of the OBSC, the OKACOM Secretariat; GEF; FAO; UNDP Country Offices; personnel of the Project Management Unit; the management, technical and scientific communities in each riparian State, especially those with responsibilities for water planning and management; and local NGOs.

3.5 Results expected

The ProDoc foresaw the End of Project Situation as one where:

- Key institutional barriers to integrated management will have been overcome.
- Broad awareness about the state of the basin will have been raised at the national, regional and international levels. This will draw attention of decision makers to the critical planning needs and guarantee political and financial support for SAP implementation.
- OKACOM will have been strengthened as both a political forum for involving key high level government officials to negotiate the sharing of transboundary water and as an initiator of policy shifts at national and regional level.
- There will be in place -
 - mechanisms for consultation, communication, and participation in all three riparian countries;
 - an updateable knowledge base;
 - policy initiatives launched and cross sectoral integration mechanisms established;
 - a joint programme for management of the basin;
 - natural resource management capacity built at regional and national level;
 - finance mobilised for SAP implementation and beyond.
- The project will have demonstrated new collaborative approaches to transboundary water management that are based on open understanding and consensus while also fulfilling the countries' stated desires to understand and protect the basin in order to meet a potentially divergent range of national interests including disparate levels of socio-economic development, nature conservation, and eco-tourism.
- Explicit links between this International Waters project and the GEF's biodiversity focal area are anticipated and will be articulated in the SAP. This is particularly the case in Botswana where natural resource conservation activities will be promoted on the basis of the water resource management analysis carried out in the project.

In addition, the LogFrame Matrix in Annex 3 of the ProDoc, listed the following as indicators of the satisfactory achievement of the three components :

- Consultative fora established
- Enabling environment (policy, law institutions and human resources) enhanced
- Public and private sector capacity to implement SAP
- OKACOM review completed and internalised
- Completed TDA
- SAP endorsed and financed

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Project formulation

4.1.1 Conceptualization / design

The GEF programme of support was to be divided into two phases. The first phase comprised two main elements, namely a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) and a Strategic Action Programme (SAP); the second phase was to be the implementation of the SAP.

In the first phase (which comprises this project), the TDA was intended to provide for the analysis of priority transboundary environmental problems, identify the scale and causes of degradation (proximate, intermediate and root), information gaps, policy distortions and institutional deficiencies, as well as generate the hydrological, biophysical and socioeconomic models that were needed to facilitate joint management across the basin on the basis of wide participation and the removal of institutional barriers.

Through a comprehensive consultative process resulting in clear policy, legal, institutional and financial commitments, the SAP would then structure diverse inputs and identify the specific resources necessary for implementation of the transboundary elements of the Environmental Assessment and the Integrated Management Plan which were the initial targets of OKACOM. The ProDoc provides for a process of formal endorsement of the SAP by the participating governments, support to the translation of SAP provisions into national policy and legislation, and the mobilisation of institutional and investment resources for its implementation. The SAP is intended to establish clear priorities to be endorsed at the highest levels of each of the three governments and disseminated widely across the basin. Priority transboundary concerns as well as sectoral interventions in areas such as climate change will be identified. Coordination of priorities with those identified under the climate change and biodiversity focal areas will be undertaken during the SAP formulation. The countries and the GEF will agree on the baseline environmental commitments (which should be funded domestically or through donors or loans) and activities that are additional for solving the transboundary priority problems. A major donor conference will be held when the SAP is in the draft stage to facilitate international commitments to action.

This design is according to the classical approach taken by GEF for this type of intervention – carry out a TDA to assess the situation and determine what the issues and options are, formulate a joint programme of action (the SAP) arising from the TDA investigation, and create the mechanisms for a coordinated approach to implement the SAP, mostly through NAPs. The project design takes into account the fact that a draft TDA had already been prepared during the preparatory phase.

The approach is based on the experience gained from past GEF IW projects. However, the three year timescale turned out to have been unrealistic and this flaw in project design shows a lack of understanding of the length of time required to engage stakeholders, and more so, to guide them to an agreed, negotiated position on the SAP.

The design has also been criticized for its “one model fits all” approach which may not have recognized sufficiently the particular characteristics of the ORB such as the circumstances faced by Angola in the period immediately following a civil war; and the fact that contrary to most other water bodies worldwide, the ORB is comparatively unspoiled which meant that the SAP will have a preventative rather than a recovery focus.

Other specific aspects of project design such as risks and risk management, the LogFrame Matrix, and stakeholder involvement, are discussed in respective sections below.

Overall rating for project concept and design is **Moderately Satisfactory (S)**.

4.1.2 Project planning

The time-scale that was accepted by the key stakeholders when they signed the ProDoc has already been alluded to above as a possible flaw in project design and meticulous planning and monitoring were therefore required to overcome this barrier.

After its abortive initial period and when the project was restarted following the MTE, a new Work Plan for 2007-10 and a Total Annual Work Plan and Budget were proposed by the EA/PMU and adopted by the PSC meeting of October 2007. The Work Plan and Budget for 2007-10 provides a better picture of the focus and timelines of project planning at the time and this is illustrated in the following table.

Table 1. Planned expenditure, per Outcome, from 2007 to 2010

	2007	2008	2009	2010	TOTALS
Outcome 1	293,000	233,000	21,000	0	547,000
Outcome 2 (TDA)	324,500	1,253,500	256,500	0	1,834,500
Outcome 3 (SAP)	0	376,500	661,500	10,000	1,048,000

The above information illustrates the correct relationship between the TDA and the SAP in terms of expenditure but shows that work on the TDA was planned to run over three years. The MTE had warned that the time needed for SAP was being eroded in favour of the TDA. The MTE concluded that *“The emphasis should be shifted away from the TDA and more to the SAP component. The TDA must be completed in the shortest possible time and while it must be able to provide a solid foundation for the SAP, if gaps are identified, it is not essential to wait until they are filled. Gaps can be recorded and the SAP can provide the activities that will fill the gaps at the operational phase”* and recommended that *“the investigation should commence as soon as possible and be carried out over a 12-month period, but no more”*.

In the event, the recommendation was not followed through and, as recorded in the minutes of the PSC2008, the plans were disrupted when the start of the TDA investigations was delayed. FAO and the PMU blame the “consortium” approach proposed by UNDP for the TDA in Angola which had to be abandoned and wasted precious time. UNDP blames bad planning on the part of the EA and the PMU. The Evaluators feel that while the aborted consortium approach may have influenced timing, this is what adaptive management is supposed to resolve.

We also detected a lack of appreciation on the part of the EA, the PMU and stakeholders of what the TDA/SAP process is all about. There was no recognition among stakeholders consulted by the Evaluators that the SAP was the paramount project product which had to be negotiated, agreed and endorsed; and that the TDA was only a foundation for the SAP.

As a result of bad planning, lack of adaptive management and lack of appreciation of the steps involved in getting the SAP approved and endorsed, the project has not delivered on its most important target.

4.1.3 Project ownership

This is a project of the Governments of Angola, Botswana and Namibia whose relationship with the project is through their Permanent Okavango River Basin Commission (OKACOM). As Pinheiro *et*.

al.¹¹ explain, it was OKACOM that developed the project concept and approached GEF through UNDP for assistance. OKACOM set up the Okavango Basin Steering Committee (OBSC) originally to manage this project. It also set up a number of task forces (e.g. hydrology, institutions, biodiversity) which were instrumental in achieving project Outputs.

In the summary and signature page of the ProDoc, OKACOM is identified as the project's Coordinating Agency while Angola, which is designated as the lead country, accepted to serve as the host for the PMU. An elaborate implementation structure was set up at the beginning of the project so as to gain full participation of each riparian country. This was achieved through National Coordinating Units (NCU) and OBSC. The Commission went further and identified opportunities for participation by community groups in the basin in project implementation.

While OKACOM expressed a high degree of ownership over the project, the ProDoc indicated that GEF also saw itself as co-owner of the project when it stated that *"In all documentation, information, signage, and written and oral communication, this project will be referred to by the title "GEF Environmental Protection and Sustainable Management of the Okavango River Basin".*¹²

In effect, and from the indications available to the Evaluation Team, there is no doubt that OKACOM sees itself as the project owner. This was acknowledged by most of those consulted and the evaluation team concludes that the high level of ownership of the project by OKACOM and OBSC has served the project well. On the other hand, some stakeholders view OKACOM as not involved enough and would have liked to see the project coordinated by OKASec as is the case with ORASECOM. As GEF support for the project comes to an end, a number of stakeholders expressed the further view that OKACOM should assert itself as project owner, assume responsibility to secure funding and ensure that the Secretariat is empowered to finalize the development of outputs such as the SAP. Unfortunately, this was not possible in the case of the ORB since OKASec only came into being half way through EPSMO and its mandate restricts it from such a role.

4.1.4 Stakeholder participation at the project formulation stage

The ProDoc highlighted the process that was used in project formulation which aimed at ensuring that all relevant stakeholders made their input into the design of the project. Care was taken to ensure that all interest groups were consulted. These included government entities, community groups, academic and research institutions as well as representatives of the global community whose interest in the project was due to the international significance of the Okavango Delta. The ProDoc also reported that the consultation process set up during the PDF work provided a clear message that education, participation and consultation had to go hand in hand. Both community members and leaders expressed the opinion that they would not be able to participate in the consultative process if they did not have a good grasp of all the issues. Schools, colleges, research institutions, and NGOs in the basin expressed a high degree of interest in the initiative and a number of stakeholder meetings and consultations were held. The project made provision for a significant education, training, and information effort to be included.

FAO advised the evaluation team that all Government inputs in project design and formulation were channelled exclusively through the OBSC, the delegated sub-committee of OKACOM. National OBSC members were active in providing and facilitating much technical information during the PDF

¹¹ Pinheiro, Isidro, Gabaake Gabaake and Piet Heyns (2002) Cooperation in the Okavango River Basin: The OKACOM perspective. Chapter 5 in Turton, Anthony (Ed) (2002) *Transboundary Rivers, Sovereignty and Development : Hydropolitical drivers in the Okavango Basin*. African Waters Issues Research Unit, Pretoria

¹² FAO correctly notes that times have changed since the ProDoc was written and these sentiments are not as strongly pursued any more. However, the fact remains that the ProDoc is still the basis for the signed agreement between the parties and as it has not been changed, the commitments still stand.

'B' phase. Formal meetings of OBSC were then used to review the draft TDA and negotiate and finalize the project brief and the project document.

Stakeholder participation in the project formulation stages was **Satisfactory (S)**.

4.1.5 Linkages between the project and other interventions

The EPSMO ProDoc mentions a number of water resources management initiatives that were ongoing in the basin at the time of project design. However, having mentioned these initiatives, the ProDoc fails to identify linkages that the project may/should have with them, whether there are any mutual benefits to be gained from cooperation, or whether there are any lessons that could have arisen from them.

However, in spite of this, EPSMO has pursued linkages and collaboration with a number of relevant initiatives at regional and national level. Of these, two were particularly significant – linkages with the OKACOM Secretariat; and collaboration in the formulation of the TDA.

Linkages with the OKACOM Secretariat go back to 2004, when USAID supported the establishment of an Interim Secretariat through the Integrated River Basin Management project. The establishment of the full Secretariat also received further support from the Swedish Agency for International Development Agency starting in 2007. Both these programmes, which can be considered as co-financing to EPSMO, were focused on the programme elements of Component 1 of the EPSMO project. This allowed the EPSMO project to divert project resources from Component 1 to focus on Components 2 and 3.

Collaboration also took place with a number of initiatives for the benefit of the TDA. For example, in Botswana, the Okavango Delta Management Plan was developed by the Government as a process aimed at improving the understanding of the hydro-ecological dynamics of the Delta and its linkages with socio-economic development, especially the burgeoning tourism industry. This planning process resulted in the formulation of a comprehensive management plan of the area covered by the Delta. The Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Centre of the University of Botswana conducts ongoing research into the hydrology, ecology and socio-economic dynamics of the Okavango Delta. In addition, a UNDP/GEF project on Building Local Capacity for Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in the Okavango Delta (BIOkavango) has been under implementation in the Delta area since 2006. The aim of the project is to lift the barriers to mainstreaming biodiversity conservation objectives into the activities of the water, tourism and fisheries sectors. Researchers from HOORC have led research and consultancy inputs into the process while the BIOkavango collaborated in the environmental flows assessments that have been used to develop the Okavango Basin Decision Support System under the TDA.

4.2 Project implementation

4.2.1 Project governance

4.2.1.1 Implementation and institutional framework

The Project is executed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on behalf of UNDP which is the GEF Implementing Agency and execution is *“based on the rules and procedures established by the United Nations System”*.

The ProDoc noted that “OKACOM will continue in its role as the inter-governmental mechanism for co-ordination, delegating specific tasks to OBSC and linking high-level policy and decision-makers from the three Okavango basin countries” and that the PSC “will have overall responsibility for the project and will provide management and financial guidance”.

The ProDoc noted also that the Project Management Unit (PMU) “will be appointed by the PSC and will work under its guidance to oversee day to day implementation of project activities”. Specific line ministry coordination and multidisciplinary collaboration, including national NGOs, were to be undertaken at country level by the National Co-ordination Units (NCUs) led by the respective National Project Coordinator (NPC).

Over the last two years the institutional framework has been broadened with the establishment of an OKACOM Secretariat to service the administrative and secretarial needs of the Commission. This Secretariat is staffed by an Executive Secretary, a Communications Specialist and administrative staff responsible for Finance and Administration. The Agreement among the three riparian states that established the Secretariat also provided for the Secretariat assuming increasing technical roles in future.

A weakness that the evaluation team observed was that the institutions set up by the Commission, with the exception of the Secretariat, are not engaged on a full time basis. Members of the NCUs, the OBSC and the Commission itself are all full time employees of their Governments and/or non-governmental organisations in the three riparian countries. OKACOM, OBSC and the NCUs only existed when they convened at specific times during the year to deliberate on issues they were mandated with.

Day to day project management was the responsibility of the Project Management Unit that was headed by a Project Manager and a Basin Planner who were recruited by FAO as the Executing Agency. The PMU was accountable to the PSC for project implementation matters and to FAO for administrative matters. The PMU reported on progress with the implementation of project elements to the Commission through technical bodies such as the OBSC and through its regular reporting to the PSC and the TPR. A number of stakeholders expressed concern to the Evaluation Team about the apparent lack of a clear line of accountability between the PMU and OKACOM and ventured that this might have contributed to the failure by the project to achieve its intended objectives. In fact, accountability to OKACOM was not intended as part of the implementation framework¹³ and this misunderstanding of the lines of accountability had contributed to the problems the project faced before the MTE.

4.2.1.2 Project Steering

It is usual for the Project Steering Committee to set the policy for a project and provide guidance and directions to the Project Manager and other project stakeholders. It also supports UNDP which maintains ultimate accountability to the GEF for the delivery of project products and the administration of project funds. In the case of EPSMO, UNDP, FAO and the three Governments (through their OKACOM Commissioners) formed part of the PSC which, at the time of the MTE, was not functioning effectively and was the subject of a number of recommendations on membership, ToRs, role and functions and procedures.

Following the MTE, the PSC was reconstituted and fresh Terms of Reference and procedures were adopted at the PSC meeting of October 2007. The same meeting also proposed changes to the TPR, acknowledging that its role was to focus on management oversight related to outcomes of the project as well as to provide overall guidance for strategy, policy and outcomes of the project. In effect the stakeholders decided to establish the TPR as the highest governance body for the project.

¹³ However, the PMU reported that it saw itself as “accountable to OKACOM on project strategy and to FAO on operational issues.”

In spite of some criticisms regarding the timeliness of documentation, especially those requiring translation, for PSC meetings, the project has benefited from an effective Steering Committee and the regular TPR event.

4.2.1.3 The role of the Governments

The three Governments of Angola, Namibia and Botswana are the project owners through the Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) which was established by the Governments in 1994¹⁴. The Governments have worked through OKACOM for the purpose of this project, and they have been well served.

The ultimate product of the project, which is the SAP, is a policy document which will need to be endorsed politically at a high level in the shape of an international agreement. It will therefore require a broader scope of Government sectors than is currently represented in OKACOM. These should include organizations from sectors such as Tourism, Environment, Agriculture, Energy, Health, Fisheries, Foreign Affairs, and the Attorney-General's Office.

The evaluators feel that the Governments need to take a more direct role so that with the continuing technical support of OKACOM they can ensure that the SAP truly reflects the views and priorities of a wide scope of ORB actors and stakeholders.

4.2.1.4 The role of UNDP as the Implementing Agency

As Implementing Agency, UNDP is responsible to the GEF for the timely and cost-effective delivery of the agreed project outcomes. It achieves this through its understandings with the participating Governments as delineated in the ProDoc and its contractual arrangement with FAO as Executing Agency. UNDP has an obligation to ensure accountability, and its efforts in this respect are spearheaded by the Principal Project Country Office, which in the case of this project is its office in Angola. Within the UNDP system, the Angola Country Office has been delegated with legal responsibility for the GEF funds.

The role of UNDP also extends into co-funding and the ProDoc identifies the sum of US\$300,000 as its contribution. However, it is unclear whether this amount is in cash or in kind and this is discussed further below (see section 4.2.5.3).

The UNDP Resident Representative in Angola may approve, following consultation and agreement with the UNDP/GEF Regional Office and the Government signatories to the project document, revisions or additions to any of the annexes of the ProDoc, revisions which do not involve significant changes in the immediate objectives, outputs or activities of the project, and mandatory annual revisions which re-phase the delivery of agreed project inputs or increased expert or other costs due to inflation or to take into account agency expenditure flexibility. The UNDP Resident Representative in Angola also chairs the Annual Tripartite Review, coordinates inputs from the participating UNDP Country Offices into the annual Project Implementation Review for submission to UNDP/GEF, ensures that project objectives are advanced and undertakes official transmission of reports to the GEF focal points of the participating countries.

The UNDP Country Offices in Botswana and Namibia, have a lesser role than that of the Country Office in Angola, but they are still required to act as the project focal point, in coordination with the PMU and FAO, for all national stakeholders, ensuring prompt sharing and transparency of information, providing networking support services through the PSC by linking the project with

¹⁴ Agreement between the Governments of the Republic of Angola, the Republic of Botswana and the Republic of Namibia on the Establishment of a Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission. 1994

relevant national initiatives, providing inputs into the annual GEF Project Implementation Review, maintaining close links with the national FAO Offices and undertaking the official transmission of reports to country GEF focal points. The MTE detected a low level of interest on the part of the UNDP CO in Botswana, and this TE has not seen evidence of an improvement; more recently, the level of interest of the UNDP CO in Namibia has also declined.

Since the MTE, UNDP-Angola has taken a more proactive role in monitoring and supporting the project and in communicating with its sister offices in Gaborone and Windhoek. Although the Office is still in the process of dedicating appropriate resources to the environment theme, a good working relationship was established with the PMU.

The work of the UNDP Country Offices is supported by the UNDP/GEF Regional Coordination Office, which also provides coordination within the whole UNDP/GEF portfolio of projects for the region. More specifically, the UNDP/GEF Regional Office provides technical support to UNDP Country Offices and Government GEF Operational Focal Points, assists the executing agency with the recruitment of senior project personnel, approves the project inception report and terminal reports, reviews budget revisions prior to signature, follows up closely on implementation progress, assures the eligibility of project interventions in light of GEF policy guidance and approved project design, represents UNDP/GEF on the PSC, and approves Annual Project Implementation Reports, including performance ratings, for submission to GEF. To fulfil these responsibilities, the Regional Technical Advisor responsible for the project must be fully engaged in the project implementation and in close communication with UNDP COs, EA and PMU. The role of RTA in supporting the UNDP COs and EA/PMU is particularly important for regional initiatives.

Working relationships (particularly administrative and reporting processes) between UNDP and FAO were reported to have improved significantly from the situation which existed at the time of the MTE as a result of a clearer understanding brought about by an Aide-Mémoire signed between the two agencies. However, UNDP advised the team that there were still some difficulties with the administrative procedures used by FAO in executing the project and that it was unable to obtain the full cooperation of the EA, making it difficult to oversee project implementation.

4.2.1.5 Conclusions on project governance

The problems with governance facing the project at the time of the MTE were, in the main, resolved and roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders became better understood. There is also a better understanding of the objectives, constraints, procedures and processes of the GEF.

The clarification of the role of the PSC and its close alignment with the TPR have been instrumental in providing more effective project governance.

The Governments have worked through OKACOM for the implementation of this project and this has been effective to date. However, there is now a need for them to assume a more active role and one involving a broader scope of actors and stakeholders to ensure that the SAP truly reflects the full national interest in each country beyond the water sector.

The UNDP Principal Country Office in Angola adopted a more proactive role since the MTE. In addition, UNDP was able to reach agreement on its requirements, with FAO through an Aide-Mémoire between the two agencies. However, in spite of the Aide-Mémoire, UNDP reported that some aspects of the relationship remain difficult and the level of cooperation between the two agencies is not high.

Overall, and especially following the MTE, project governance has been **Satisfactory (S)**.

4.2.2 Project management and administration

4.2.2.1 The role of FAO as the Executing Agency

FAO has a contractual arrangement with UNDP to facilitate, support, administer and execute the project so as to achieve the stated objectives and outputs. The role of FAO is spelled out in an Aide-Mémoire dated 06 February 2007, which was prepared jointly by UNDP and FAO upon the re-activation of the project following the MTE. As the project Executing Agency, FAO has the overall responsibility and accountability for the delivery of all the technical, financial, operational and administrative services to achieve the stated outputs and objectives. Through the signed ProDoc, FAO is also accountable to the three Governments for delivery of the services that should lead to the achievement of the Outcomes and Objective.

FAO advised the MTE Evaluation Team that it sees itself as having three roles in particular and these were repeated in the Aide-Mémoire:

“Technical: *the technical role of FAO is to ensure that all project activities are conducted according to the highest technical standards and in a timely manner. FAO deploys its subject specialists across the full range of project outputs. World class expertise in natural resource management, agricultural practice, economics and international water law are available in-house to respond to project requests.*

Operational: *the operational role can be summarized as to ensure effective and efficient project management in order to allow the implementation of all activities as envisaged in the project document, its annexes and annual work plans, in support of the technical role described above. This includes consultation with and substantive reporting to the parties involved.*

Administrative: *to support the technical and operational roles, including smooth implementation of all activities, from personnel to procurement, to general project administration, and financial services, including reporting on financial accountability. FAO rules and regulations are to be applied.”*

Under the guidance and oversight of the Project Steering Committee, FAO as the Executing Agency, was responsible for the following functions:

1. monitoring project activities, evaluating impacts, and reporting on progress in implementation to the PSC;
2. coordinating the recruitment of project staff and consultants through competitive and transparent recruitment procedures. The Project Manager and National Coordinators were appointed by the PSC and recruited by FAO. The PSC also had the responsibility to approve the terms of reference and recruitment criteria for consultants recruited by the EA;
3. procuring non-expendable equipment and software;
4. coordinating independent evaluations of the project, under the oversight of UNDP and the OBSC;
5. managing project accounts and reporting to the PSC on disbursements;
6. coordinating the preparation of work plans, for approval by the PSC;
7. arranging for audits of expenditures in compliance with UN System procedures.

FAO charged a servicing fee known as the Project Servicing Cost, and this amounted to 10% of the GEF project budget. This is in common with other UN agencies and it covered administrative services (such as recruitment and servicing, procurement and contracts, budgeting, accounting, reporting, custody of funds, etc) as well as operational services (such as expert identification, supervision and monitoring, specifications for equipment, etc).

In addition, the ProDoc identified the sum of \$150,000 as an in-kind contribution by FAO to the project. According to FAO, this was the value of the contribution by the Lead Technical Unit which

“coordinated detailed review and advice from subject specialists in environmental economics, remote sensing, soils, integrated pest management, fisheries, forestry, water law and land tenure upon request from the Project Manager”. FAO advised the Team that its specialists have reviewed all TDA thematic reports, including the climate change hydrology report.

FAO also noted that the in-kind contribution *“also includes the time provided by FAO technical staff, not charged directly to the project budget, for responding to direct technical requests from the Project Manager and his team. This can be estimated at 8 weeks per year (approximately equivalent to US\$ 35,000/year) and includes the compilation of sub-national data sets and GIS products derived from FAO databases”.*

The choice of FAO as Executing Agency had been questioned at the time of the MTE and it was felt that it may not be the best organization to be assigned the task. The MTE concluded, *inter alia*, that *“The comparative advantage that FAO was meant to bring to this project is not significant, in that the most unique component is the technical element and this could have been obtained on contract, separately from the administrative element which would have been more efficiently carried out by an organization with support systems attuned to those of UNDP.”* FAO has undeniable knowledge of the agricultural and water related aspects of the EPSMO project. It also advised the Team that its expertise was broad and covered Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Economics, Rural Investment, and Natural Resource Law through specific FAO Departments or the Legal Office. The Evaluators, however, did not come across any of this work.

The MTE also criticised FAO procedures for disbursements, recruitment and travel authorization, as well as financial management – *“It was alleged to the evaluation team that the FAO process is too cumbersome for the expeditious implementation of projects.”* However, the TE Evaluators have been assured that there has been a dramatic improvement, brought about mainly by the transfer of Budget Holder responsibilities from the Accra regional office to the HQ in Rome. This has helped streamline some operations within the management system, however, as discussed elsewhere in this report, this improvement may not have been enough or as far-reaching as it needed to be. For example, financial recording and reporting by FAO as the EA has not been helpful to project management or this Terminal Evaluation. We experienced difficulties obtaining detailed financial reports per Outcome (still not available prior to 2007) and in spite of the late provision of information on co-funding, the situation is still unclear.

The Evaluation Team sensed a wish on the part of FAO to own the project and we feel that FAO has operated as the IA to quite an extent. We have also detected a cavalier attitude towards the Governments whereby the EA sees the TDA and SAP as being prepared by others for the Governments merely to agree and clear – *“The TDA and SAP document production is in hand. If countries choose not to agree or clear either this is part of the political risk factor”.*

4.2.2.2 The Project Management Unit

The ProDoc foresaw the establishment of a Project Management Unit (PMU) led by the Project Manager and comprising *“national programme co-ordinators [and] the best possible expertise from the riparian countries in water resources; natural resource management; environmental specialists (with emphasis on wetlands); and social and community development”.*

The PMU was established in Luanda¹⁵ and the Project Manager (also referred to as CTA) was to be assisted by an Assistant Project Manager/Basin Planner and a Project Administrative Assistant. In addition, the project also provided salary support for the National Project Coordinator (NPC) in Angola. The Inception Report refers to the difficulties and delays encountered with these

¹⁵ The location of the PMU in Luanda, in accordance with the OKACOM decision taken in June 2001, has been questioned by many spoken to by the Evaluators. They felt that Luanda was not an easy place to operate from and that this may have contributed significantly to the problems the project had to face.

appointments which hindered the project from making progress.

The first PM only served for one year and declined the renewal of his contract and resigned. Following the resignation of the PM, the Angola NPC assumed the role of interim Project Manager and after the MTE a new PM was recruited. In effect, professional project personnel at the PMU comprised a Project Manager and the National Project Coordinator for Angola who doubled up as Basin Planner. This small two-person PMU, which was put in place following the MTE, relied to a great extent on the personal dedication of the individuals concerned for its effectiveness. The presence of the Basin Planner in the PMU facilitated project management and implementation as the incumbent was well respected in Angola and therefore managed to defuse the tensions that had nearly scuttled the project in the past. In addition, the Project Manager was very effective in communicating with the principals in all three countries hence the considerable progress that was achieved with project implementation in the three year timeframe since the project was re-started. This was especially significant given the fact that serious consideration had been given to closing the project before he was brought on board.

As host Government, Angola was expected to provide suitable premises for the PMU as part of its contribution in-kind. However, project funds had to be made available to provide the PMU with office accommodation as a result of a misunderstanding on procurement and disbursement procedures. This was an expensive and unplanned drain on project funds.

Stakeholders acknowledged in general terms the progress towards project objectives under the guidance of the PMU with a draft TDA and SAP under development, however, some also expressed concern regarding the management approach used by the PMU. It was alleged that decisions did not always follow from comprehensive consultative processes (e.g. with OKACOM and/or OBSC) and some felt that the PMU had assumed unexpected and unnecessary control over the project. To illustrate this, stakeholders pointed to the lack of transparency they saw in the recruitment of consultants hired by the PMU. The Evaluators could not establish whether agreed criteria were used to identify consultants despite the fact that a lot of consultant input was hired to develop the specific products the project has yielded. It is however important to note that the PMU worked with the OBSC and OKACOM both of which convene regularly but at intervals and the approach adopted by the PMU might therefore have been motivated by the need to get work done expediently.

National Coordination Units (NCUs), the functional equivalents of inter-ministerial committees, were established and fully functional in Botswana and Namibia. They are chaired by the National Project Coordinators and work through the various Task Forces that were established at country level. The NCUs have been able to contribute effectively to the drafting of the TDA and SAP.

The national executing agencies under UNDP cooperation agreements have been: the Ministry of Energy and Water in Angola; the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Water Affairs in Botswana; and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development in Namibia. It is expected that the spread of institutions involved in the Okavango Basin management processes will be expanded to include all relevant user sectors. RBOs are expected to deal with an increasing array of issues that go beyond classical water resources management. The concept of IWRM itself incorporates planning for the management of water and all associated resources. This will require that the spread of institutions involved in basin-wide planning processes in the Okavango Basin, be expanded to include those responsible for tourism, environmental management, mining, energy, fisheries, agriculture, aquaculture, etc.

We are assured from both sides that a close working relationship was established between the PMU and the OKASec once the latter was established. The PMU worked effectively with the Secretariat at least on logistical issues such as to secure meetings with OBSC/OKACOM, and throughout the entire TDA process (each within their clearly defined mandates).

4.2.2.3 Conclusions on project administration and management

Project management had suffered badly at the time of the MTE due to a breakdown in communication within the project. This Evaluation Team has established that the situation improved dramatically with the appointment of a new Project Manager. The countries were working together more smoothly resulting in the production of a draft TDA and a preliminary SAP. However, and in spite of an Aide-Mémoire on roles, responsibilities and cooperation, concerns still remain on the relationship between the IA and the EA and the different expectations held by each of each other. On the other hand, a good working relationship was established between the PMU and the OKACOM Secretariat once the latter was set up.

Project administration and management improved considerably following the MTE, however, a number of shortcomings remain and administration and management are considered as having been carried out **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

4.2.3 Monitoring and evaluation

4.2.3.1 The GEF M&E requirements

The GEF requires that all projects must include “a concrete and fully budgeted monitoring and evaluation plan by the time of Work Programme entry for full-sized projects”.¹⁶

The M&E Plan required by GEF should comprise a number of minimum requirements as in the following table. The table also contains the Evaluators’ summary observations on the way that this project satisfies these elements.

Table 2. GEF M&E minimum requirements

GEF M&E REQUIREMENTS	EVALUATORS’ COMMENTS
SMART indicators for project implementation, or, if no indicators are identified, an alternative plan for monitoring that will deliver reliable and valid information to management	Indicators are provided in the LogFrame, however, few satisfy the SMART criteria. So-called “Indicators” at the Objective level merely state what type of Indicators should be identified. Those at Outcomes (called “Purpose”) level simply note the end-of-project situation and the “fit” between the Outcomes and the Indicators is not good. Indicators are provided at the Outputs and Activities level where they are rarely required – they mostly repeat the wording of the Activity. In general, Indicators are weak and not helpful as an aid to measure project implementation.
SMART indicators for results (outcomes and, if applicable, impacts), and, where appropriate, corporate-level indicators	According to the ProDoc, “the project will develop a set of ‘indicators’ to track the short and long-term impacts of this and other related projects in the ORB. Key indicators will include process (e.g. policy, legal, institutional, etc. reforms), stress reduction (e.g. reduced pollutant loads or per capita water demands, etc.), and environmental status (e.g. cleaner waters, restored habitats, etc.)” The Evaluators are not aware of any such Indicators having been developed.
A project baseline or, if major baseline indicators are not identified, an alternative plan for addressing this within one year of implementation	Baselines are discussed in the incremental costs analysis and elsewhere in the ProDoc, and while helpful, this is not done specifically as a departure point for measuring project progress or achievement. The LogFrame does not indicate baselines.
An M&E Plan with identification of reviews and evaluations which will be undertaken, such as mid-term reviews or evaluations of activities	The ProDoc discussed and described such a Plan but did not provide one. It did, however, tabulate the “standard monitoring and evaluation activities, timeframes and responsibilities”, and left the impression that a more robust M&E Plan will be produced. The Evaluators have not seen such a plan.
An organizational setup and budgets for	As far as can be ascertained, the project did not dedicate specific

¹⁶ See - <http://gefweb.org/MonitoringandEvaluation/MEPoliciesProcedures/MEPTools/meptstandards.html>

monitoring and evaluation	resources (human or budgetary) for monitoring. A single item appears under Monitoring & Evaluation in the budget for Mid-Term and Terminal Evaluations and there are two Monitoring & Evaluation consultancies. However, the latter are thought to be related to the TDA/SAP formulation.
---------------------------	---

An even more specific indication of a project's compliance with the GEF M&E expectations is provided by the instrument of assessment used by the GEF itself which states that – *a project needs to be in compliance with all the critical parameters and needs to perform sufficiently well on all the parameters together. To be classified as compliant, projects are required to score at least a 2 (on a scale of 1 to 3, with 3 being the highest) on each of the critical parameters and to have an aggregate score of 26 out of a maximum of 39.*¹⁷

Table 3. Instrument for Assessment of M&E Plans

PARAMETERS	RAW RESPONSE AND POSSIBLE	PROJECT SCORE
1 Is there at least one specific indicator in the log frame for each of the project objectives and outcomes?	Yes.....3 No.....1	2 (not SMART)
2 Are the indicators in the log frame relevant to the chosen objectives and outcomes?	Yes.....3 Yes, but only some are relevant.....2 No.....1	2
3 Are the indicators in the log frame sufficient to assess achievement of the objectives and outcomes?	Sufficient.....3 Largely Sufficient.....2 Some important indicators are missing.....1	1
4 Are the indicators for project objectives and Outcomes quantifiable?	Yes.....3 Some of them are.....2 No, or else it has not been shown how the indicators could be quantified.....1	2
5 Has the complete and relevant baseline information been provided?	Yes, complete baseline info provided.....3 Partial info but baseline survey in 1st year.....2.5 No info but baseline survey in 1st year.....2 Only partial baseline information.....1.5 No info provided.....1	1.5
6 Has the methodology for determining the Baseline been explained?	Yes.....3 No.....1	2
7 Has a separate budget been allocated to M&E activities?	Yes.....3 No.....1	1
8 Have the responsibilities been clearly specified for the M&E activities?	Yes, and clearly specified.....3 Yes, broadly specified.....2 No.....1	1
9 Have the time frames been specified for the M&E activities?	Yes, for all the activities.....3 Yes, but only for major activities2 No.....1	2.5
10 Have the performance standards (targets) been specified in the log frame for the project outputs?	Yes, for all the outputs.....3 Yes, but only for major outputs.....2 No.....1	1.5 (some Indicators serve as Targets)
11 Have the targets been specified for the indicators for project objectives and outcomes in the log frame?	Yes, for most.....3 Yes, but only for some indicators2 No1	2.5
12 Are the specified targets for indicators of project objective and outcomes based on initial conditions?	Yes, for most.....3 Yes, but only for some of the indicators.....2 No.....1	1
13 Do the project documents mention having made a Provision for mid term and terminal evaluation?	Yes, both mid term and terminal evaluation...3 Only terminal evaluation.....2.5 Only mid term evaluation.....1.5 No information provided.....1	3
TOTAL		23

¹⁷ GEF Evaluation Office, *Annual Performance Report 2008*. GEF Council Paper GEF/ME/C.35/Inf. 5, May 28, 2009

As can be seen from the above assessment, the project is not compliant on a number of parameters and has scored 23 out of a possible 39 (with 26 required for compliance).

The Evaluators conclude that while the EPSMO project did carry out some monitoring activities, these were not according to an effective M&E Plan and we find the design and planning of M&E to have been **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)**.

4.2.3.2 The LogFrame Matrix, project monitoring and adaptive management

The Logical Framework Matrix (LogFrame) normally provides a summary of what the project aims to achieve with departure points (baseline), targets, indicators and risks along the way. The EPSMO LogFrame lacked some of these elements and was not as useful a tool for those implementing the project. The LogFrame is not meant to be fixed but it evolves during the life of the project with changes precipitated by two possible influences – firstly, corrections to a faulty project design; secondly, judicious refinements to reflect changing circumstances (adaptive management). The EPSMO LogFrame did not change significantly during the project lifetime. Some adjustments to the original outputs/activities and indicators were made and these were reflected in the PIR-2005. However, a more thorough review of the LogFrame which was recommended by the MTE in December 2006 to reflect changed circumstances, does not seem to have been carried out.

The PIR often serves as the key mechanism for reporting on progress. In particular its section on 'Rating of Project Progress towards Meeting Objective', which is written by the Project Manager, the Implementing Agency and the IA/GEF Regional Technical Advisor¹⁸, is usually analytical and considers the trend in results observed from different perspectives over a period of time. It can also identify shortcomings and possible reasons and explores corrective action leading to adaptive management. The project experienced some serious difficulties in its early days and in the PIR2005 and PIR2006 it was rated as Unsatisfactory (U) on most aspects and UNDP suspended further activities until an Independent Interim Evaluation (MTE) had been carried out (see below). The PIR2007 which followed the MTE and the re-starting of the project was less negative in its ratings but there were still concerns. By the PIR2008, a new Project Manager had been appointed and the project was reported as surging ahead as a result. Its ratings jumped to Satisfactory (S) and Moderately Satisfactory (MS) in recognition. This positive rating was also seen in the PIR2009. PIR2010 was only available as a preliminary draft at the time of the TE and according to the PM (the only rating given) the project is rated Satisfactory (S).

Another reporting mechanism at a much more micro level, is the Project Workplan and Quarterly Reports which should provide the Project Manager with a detailed plan of action and a tool for measuring achievement against forecasts. The project Workplan was revised (together with the budget) in May 2007 following the MTE and endorsed by the TPR in October 2007. The Evaluators have received the Workplan dated 2009-2010 (said to have been updated in March 2010) which covers the period from January 2009 to July 2010; and we received seven Quarterly Progress Reports covering four quarters in 2008, two quarters in 2009 and one quarter in 2010. Some Progress Reports did have a bullet list headed "work plans" for the coming quarter and one identified "challenges", however, no QPR reported clearly against these forward commitments¹⁹.

From this record we can only conclude that while the PIR was used effectively by UNDP for monitoring project progress, and while the Work Plan and the Quarterly Progress Reports indicate a degree of planning, there was no evident active monitoring by the PMU or the EA and the project's monitoring performance is seen as **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)**.

¹⁸ The same analysis by the Government and the Executing Agency is optional, but it is rarely done. In the opinion of the Evaluators this is a weakness in the PIR system because neither the Government nor the Executing Agency can relate to it and this should be one of the main purposes of the exercise.

¹⁹ According to FAO, all quarterly financial reports and project delivery reports were submitted to UNDP on time, exactly as specified by UNDP in the aide-memoires. All PIRs have been filled in by the FAO project manager, as required

Likewise, there is no evidence of systematic use of the LogFrame, or its monitoring and evaluation leading to adaptive management and the rating is considered as **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)**.

4.2.3.3 The Mid-Term Evaluation

The project did not have a Mid-Term Evaluation, however, an Independent Interim Evaluation was carried out before the project was re-started after its suspension by UNDP. In the absence of a mid-term evaluation, the Interim Evaluation is being considered as an equivalent and referred to in this report as the MTE.

The MTE was carried out between September and December 2006 and was set as a pre-condition by UNDP to the re-starting of the project which was experiencing serious difficulties with governance, administration and delivery.

The MTE found that the *“expectations of various stakeholders are in harmony, but the means of achieving the project objectives are the subject of contention. Roles and responsibilities are not clear, the procedures of the Implementing Agency and the Executing Agency are not well understood, project governance is weak, the inception phase got bogged down in secondary activities, delivery rate is well below normal, the Project Manager has resigned, and project activities are currently halted.”* It then concluded that *“If the Governments can demonstrate that there is still the political will to sustain the project and with a clearer understanding and acceptance of the various roles and responsibilities, the restructuring and acceptance of the PSC as the highest body for project governance, the enhancement of support and monitoring by the Implementing Agency, the streamlining of the administrative procedures of the Executing Agency, and the removal of other barriers that have hindered it to date, the evaluation team believes that the project is viable and that if restarted it has a good chance of attaining its objectives successfully.”*

The MTE made 32 recommendations and presented them as a “package” to overcome the barriers that were seen as hindering project success. The recommendations were discussed at the October 2007 PSC Meeting after UNDP presented a response matrix on the recommendations. It was mentioned that the response matrix must be *“considered as a living document and should be updated by the PMU”*, and it was decided that *“The PMU will periodically update and distribute the matrix”*. The Evaluators are not aware of any such updating prior to their request to the PMU, the EA and the IA for the purpose of this TE.

The Evaluators were advised that the usual, formal management response to the MTE recommendations was not produced for the EPSMO project and we received instead individual responses from the PMU and the EA together with copies of relevant documents such as the exchange of correspondence with OKACOM on the re-starting of the project activities and the Aide-Mémoire which recorded the agreement between UNDP and FAO which clarifies respective roles and responsibilities. The responses and updates to the MTE recommendations that we have received, have been combined in a single table in Annex 7 and according to these responses, 24 out of the 32 recommendations were accepted and acted upon. A further five were partly acted upon and only three were not. The three recommendations not acted upon were:

- that UNDP COs must take a more proactive role in this and other GEF projects with their Environment Units adequately resourced and empowered to backstop, monitor and support projects. This is absolutely essential in respect of the UNDP Angola Country Office which is the Principal UNDP Office for the project
- that GEF and UNDP clarify objectives, constraints, procedures and processes of the GEF for all stakeholders, through a regional GEF workshop/seminar
- that UNDP organize a start-up workshop with the participation of the members of the PSC, PMU, NCUs, OKACOM, OBSC, and partner NGOs

4.2.4 Risks and risk management

The ProDoc is weak in identifying potential risks specifically and more so in identifying mitigation measures. The following table is gleaned from relevant text of the ProDoc and unfortunately it cannot be very explicit. The table was submitted to the PMU and the EA for their comment but none was received. Subsequently, comments were made by FAO and these are reported in the third column together with our own comments.

Table 4. Risks and mitigation measures

RISK	MITIGATION MEASURE	EVALUATORS' COMMENT
The long-term success of this initiative depends primarily on the political willingness of the riparian countries to co-operate not only on regional transboundary issues, but also to collaborate positively across the linked sectors within their national administrations and socio-economic systems	No mitigation measures proposed	<p>FAO advised that this risk was appreciated and monitored constantly by UNDP and FAO, particularly in trying to get clear decisions out of OKACOM during the formulation and pre 2007 phase. The MTE and the use of the TPR helped improve country cooperation on the project, but was still constrained by the affiliation of the OKACOM Commissioners (Water Affairs)</p> <p>This is a High risk which may yet materialize when the SAP comes up for negotiation and could jeopardize the entire purpose of the project. It is negligent of the ProDoc not to consider mitigation measures</p>
any undermining of OKACOM's position as the prime technical adviser to all three governments on the ORB will pose a serious risk to SAP implementation	No mitigation measures proposed	<p>According to FAO, the evolution of OKACOM agreement with SIDA support is supported by the project and was seen as the main mitigation measure. A strengthened OKASEC could be anticipated as indicated in the 16th OKACOM meeting</p> <p>As above – could still materialize since the SAP will need ownership from a broader scope of sectors than currently involved. However, this is not seen as a serious threat to SAP implementation</p>
An ongoing concern is the ability of OKACOM and related institutions in the riparian countries to implement progressive natural resource policy. While OKACOM has a mandate as an inclusive body, sectoral interests may crowd out key partners across environmental, agricultural, financial and planning departments and agencies	To prevent this from occurring, the consultation and communication components have been designed to address this risk from the inception of the project	There is not much evidence of the mitigation measure having been implemented – the emphasis is still on water and other sectors have yet to be brought on board
The current uncertainty over peace in Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo poses risks to project implementation if unrest in the region spills over into the ORB	if access to the catchments and the risks of land-mines inhibit direct data collection more emphasis will be placed on remote sensing and detailed interpretation of multi-temporal imagery	This risk did not materialize
In the case of major unrest, which threatens project implementation, UNDP will suspend operations in accordance with standard UNDP rules and procedures	The risk of international water disputes through lack of communication and understanding over water as the ORB is progressively re-settled and developed in Angola is minimised by the effective	This risk did not materialize as stated; but the project was in fact suspended for other reasons which were not foreseen at the time of project formulation

	dialogue that takes place within OKACOM	
SAP formulation needs to proceed as quickly as possible to establish a meaningful framework for riparian co-operation and avoid unilateral action on the basis of drought conditions or other national imperatives such as dealing with the emergency re-settlement of refugees in the ORB	No mitigation measures proposed	FAO advised that The project has relied on the revised OKACOM agreement to mitigate this risk. OKACOM is now an international organization with an expanded mandate The delays and inconclusiveness of the SAP exercise mean that this risk is still extant. MTE recommendations which could have served as mitigation were not implemented
locating the PMU in Angola will impose higher transaction costs on the project	The implementing and executing agency will need to constantly review operational realities that arise from placing the PMU in Luanda. The implications of this will be taken into account during the scheduled TPR meetings and during the ongoing M&E process	This risk has materialized – project costs, especially rent, have been a drain on project funds. The mitigation measures proposed merely led to confirmation and did not lead to a solution

Risk management was not addressed properly in the ProDoc and, it seems, that it was not addressed actively by the PMU or the EA either. The high risk that political agreement on the SAP could turn out to be elusive and could jeopardize the entire project is still possible and there are no mitigation measures. Risk identification, mitigation and management are **Unsatisfactory (U)**.

4.2.5 Financial management

4.2.5.1 Budget and financial planning

According to the ProDoc, the project had a total budget of US\$7.467 million, of which the GEF provided US\$5.391 million (US\$5.765 million including the PDF financing). Total co-financing, which is discussed in the following section, was expected to reach US\$2.076 million (virtually all in kind). The following table shows the amounts allocated in the initial budget to each Output.

Table 5. Original project financing by Outputs (in US\$) (from ProDoc)

Project Components/Outputs	TOTAL	Co-financing	GEF
Component A: Joint Management			
Output A1: Expertise	731,700	35,000	696,700
Output A2: Stakeholder Participation	934,850	100,000	834,850
Output A3: Policy initiatives	360,800	315,000	45,800
Output A4: Monitoring and Evaluation	161,675	0	161,675
Total: A.	2,189,025	450,000	1,739,025
Component B: Completed TDA			
Output B1: Basin water resource analysis	1,966,820	1,426,000	540,820
Output B2: Socio-economic analysis	720,200	200,000	520,200
Output B3: Super-imposed frameworks	94,069	0	94,069
Output B4: Environmental assets	117,630	0	117,630
Output B5: Alternatives	500,576	0	500,576
Output B6: Water management models	127,450	0	127,450
Output B7: Criteria	90,140	0	90,140
Total B.	3,616,885	1,626,000	1,990,885
Component C: SAP Formulation			
Output C1: Technical & policy implications of options	111,660	0	111,660
Output C2: Joint management plan negotiated	417,040	0	417,040
Output C3: Commitments defined	137,190	0	137,190
Output C4: SAP document produced	245,210	0	245,210

Total C.	1,171,000	0	1,171,000
Project Support Services	490,091	0	490,091
TOTALS (excluding PDF)	7,467,000	2,076,000	5,391,000

The Team was advised that the establishment and running costs of the PMU, its personnel and overall project expenses, were distributed proportionally across all outputs in the above original budget.

The relative allocations to the three Outcomes have changed during the life of the project and these changes are tracked in the table below.

Table 6. Changes in the GEF component of the project budget²⁰

PROJECT COMPONENTS/OUTPUTS	ORIGINAL (as in ProDoc)	FIRST REVISION (Nov 2005)	SECOND REVISION (post-MTE, Jan 2007)	SPENT TO END JUNE 2010	BUDGET REMAINING (ESTIMATED)
Outcome 1: Joint Management	1,739,025	2,644,102	1,398,441	1,429,658.78	-31,217.78
Outcome 2: Completed TDA	1,990,885	1,572,680	2,110,060	2,165,450.34	-55,390.34
Outcome 3: SAP Formulation	1,171,000	684,128	1,047,000	416,980.42	630,019.58
Project Management Unit	0	0	346,318	478,622.69	-132,304.69
Project Support Services	490,091	490,090	490,091	477,962.09	12,128.91
OVERALL TOTALS	5,391,001	5,391,000	5,391,910	4,968,674.32	423,235.68

A major influence on the relative distribution of resources between Outcomes was the identification of the PMU and related expenses. Following the first budget revision at the Inception Phase, the costs of the PMU and “central” project personnel were now lumped together under Output A1: Expertise, and this, which in the opinion of the Evaluators is no more transparent than before, led to a substantial increase in the allocation for Outcome 1. This was reversed when, at the second revision, PMU expenses were identified as a separate item which, at 9% of the total budget would be well within the GEF requirements. However, this figure does not include the unidentifiable PMU expenditures prior to the Second Budget Revision.

The EA mentioned to the Evaluators that the adoption of some of the activities under Outcome 1 by parallel projects (in effect, considered as co-financing and discussed below), freed up resources which were redistributed to Outcomes 2 and 3. The precise details and timing of these changes were not clear to the Evaluators.

As can be seen from the above table, the First Budget Revision increased the budget for Outcome 1 significantly and reduced the budget for Outcomes 2 and 3, reducing the latter to almost half of what the ProDoc had allocated in the original budget. The Second Revision re-set the allocation for Outcome 1 close to the original (when the allocation for the PMU is taken into account), and distributed the savings to Outcomes 2 and 3 (as already noted above, this revision appears to have an additional US\$910 in total budget).

By the end of the second quarter of 2010 (latest figures available at the time of writing) the budgets for Outcomes 1 and 2 were slightly overspent while the Outcome 3 budget was less than 40% spent or committed. This situation could become worrisome since further expenditure is expected under Outcome 2 to finalize the TDA and have it printed; and the low SAP expenditure reflects the significant amount of work that is still required under this Outcome.

²⁰ Figures as supplied by FAO first as expenditure up to 31 March, and more recently as expenditure up to 30 June. The figures are not always clear and some do not seem to add up. For example, in the column headed “Second Revision” the figures that were provided by FAO total US\$910 beyond budget. Although this table was later withdrawn, no substitute figures were provided for the post-MTE revision. Therefore, in trying to determine the budget remaining (final column), after deducting the figures in the column headed Spent to end June 2010 (from FAO), all calculations are US\$910 out.

Financial planning and the budgets featured at each PSC meeting in 2005, 2007, 2008 and 2009. In the latter two the discussion on project finances was substantial and focussed primarily on reporting formats. Whereas in the PIRs, discussion on financial matters seemed to focus on co-funding and this is discussed below. The project accounts are presumed to have been audited by the EA but the results were not made available to the Evaluators.

UNDP advised the Evaluators that although the situation has improved measurably since the MTE, some of the difficulties created by the different accounting systems and financial reporting approaches used by UNDP and FAO still persisted.

For example, the PSC2008 Minutes reported that *“Ms. Kamia Carvalho of UNDP Angola expressed concern that the FAO budgets only show planned expenditures and outstanding obligations as lump sums and requested that a clear breakdown be provided. Furthermore Ms. Carvalho of UNDP Angola requested a clear table showing planned expenditure vs. actual expenditure so the flow of funds could be anticipated indicating that the discrepancy between the two reflects negatively upon the performance of the UNDP Angola country office. She reiterated that this is serious concern to the country office since she is unable to request and effectively manage the funds for the EPSMO project due to inadequate and incorrect reporting”* and *“Ms. Kamia Carvalho representing UNDP Angola indicated that the budgets presented were incomplete and unclear pointing out that the total amount indicated in the table with non-recurrent major expenditures does not correspond with the total indicated under outcome B for 2008 in the project budget. Dr. Yamamoto stressed that this table should not be an approximation but should indicate the exact amounts to be spent and should be exactly equal to the amount indicated in the project budget.”*

FAO advised the Evaluators that there is a communication problem between UNDP Angola and UNDP NY. We were assured that *“FAO reported on financial figures in a timely basis using templates from UNDP, and found out on various occasions that the reports produced by FAO had not been uploading into UNDP database, therefore showing a low delivery, while the project was spending at a high percentage ratio Often UNDP Angola informed FAO that their database recorded a 0% delivery, despite the all reports being delivered on time FAO used the UNDP template in word format: this action is initiated by NRL/Technical Unit, and the report is then audited by the Finance Dept before it is sent to UNDP NY. At UNDP NY they do not disburse funds before UNDP Angola gives them the green light. All this process did not allow FAO Hqs to receive the requested funds on time. Sometimes the requested funds were received after 2 to 3 months from original request, and following many reminders.”*

The Evaluators are confused, but one thing is clear – the financial systems used by the two agencies are not compatible.

Financial planning and management have been **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)**.

4.2.5.2 The disbursement process

In the face of significant problems faced at the time by the project, the MTE made a number of recommendations to FAO on financial management, particularly the disbursement process, travel requests, a higher level of delegation to the PM, etc, in an effort to streamline the process. At the time, FAO advised the MTE team that they were prepared to consider a higher level of financial delegation to the Project Manager.

In the event, FAO moved the budget holder from Accra back to HQ in Rome and advised that *“the FAOR in Angola now has increased delegated authority and requests are processed by the budget holder within 3 working days. The PMU has expressed satisfaction with the new budget holder arrangements and PMU activities are no longer constrained.”* We were also advised that *“The response to travel requests by Rome is now much faster and the PMU does not anticipate any constraint to travel within Angola or the region, including Johannesburg.”*

On his part, the PM confirmed that while a TA is still required as per FAO rules, the travel approval process and the issuing of tickets has been streamlined. He also noted that although an imprest account was not created and funds were not transferred, authorization was vested in the PM.

However, and in spite of these significant improvements, we have been alerted to inexplicable delays with the settlement of consultancy fees and travelling expenses with some invoices going for three months before they were settled. FAO advised that fees were disbursed within 2-3 days after confirmation by the PM that the outputs have been delivered by the consultants and this would seem to indicate that the hold-up was at the PMU level.

FAO did concede that the selection of consultants was at times subject to delays as sometimes the consultants needed to provide more details on previous earnings, pass the basic and advanced security tests, and undergo a medical examination if their consultancy duration was to exceed six months. The situation was much improved towards mid-2008, when the PM was aware of all documents needed for the processing of a consultancy.

The disbursement process is rated as **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

4.2.5.3 Co-financing

On the ProDoc summary page, the three Governments are each shown as co-funding US\$542,000 in parallel financing in-kind; FAO US\$150,000 also in-kind; and UNDP US\$300,000 apparently in cash (although this figure does not seem to appear any further in project transactions) – for a total of US\$2,076,000. The GEF requires co-funding on a proportion of 1:1 or better, but the amount pledged according to the ProDoc was less than 1:0.5²¹.

From Table 2 above it can be seen that the project was depending almost completely on co-funding for Output A3 - Policy Initiatives and Output B1 - Basin Water Resource Analysis; less so, but still significant was its dependence on co-funding for Output B2 – Socio-economic Analysis. The ProDoc also stated in its Incremental Cost Analysis, Annex II, *“Co-financing has been secured for institutional strengthening aspects and several expressions of support to the SAP process have been given by national and international NGOs and bilateral donors. Total co-financing confirmed by the participating governments amounts to US\$2,076,000. Further co-financing is anticipated at project inception when donor support will be re-mobilised.”* However, the Evaluators were advised that these co-financing figures were rough estimates at the time the ProDoc was finalized, which was 3-5 years prior to project initiation. By the time the project started, the situation was completely different and the co-financing figures no longer applied.

The main co-financing source during the first year of project operation was the USAID-funded IRBM Project and the main activity conducted on a shared expense basis between EPSMO and IRBM was the rehabilitation of hydrometric stations in the Angolan part of the Basin.

FAO further advised that the following additional co-financing was made available beyond that declared in the ProDoc:

- US\$600,000 from FAO, for Outcome 2, comprising US\$125,000 through regular programme co-finance of climate change and groundwater studies for the TDA; and US\$475,000 through the Okavango Water Audit – Italian co-finance under FAO Water Scarcity Programme
- US\$1.2 million (approximately) from USAID, available for Outcome 1: Interim Secretariat support from RBM project (2005-2008); and for Outcome 2: Co-finance of hydromet station rehabilitation

²¹ Both FAO and UNDP noted that as a GEF-3 project, EPSMO was subject to lower expectations in terms of co-financing. However, as far back as the GEF Council of October 2002 (Agenda item 9), 1:1 was being considered as a modest ratio of co-financing.

in Angola plus joint meetings

- US\$1.2 million (approximately) from SIDA for Outcome 1: Funding of OKASEC (2007-2010)

PIR2005 gives the figure for co-funding as US\$2,425,000 but does not explain the discrepancy between this figure and that in the ProDoc. Then, under Partnership Strategies, it claims IRBM co-funding of US\$6 million over 4 years (2004-2008) as *In kind project cooperation: Co-financing of various project activities; coordinated project implementation; provision of support services; exchange of information and sharing of experience*. It also claims ERP co-funding of US\$2.2 million over 3 years (2004 - 2006) for similar activities. Furthermore, under Project Funding it lists *Proposed co-funding* as US\$2.425 million, but *Actual co-funding* as US\$10.625 million.

At the time of PIR2006 the project was in difficulties. The PIR reported that total co-financing achieved to 30 June 2006 was US\$2.4 million (US\$1.4 million from USAID and US\$1.0 million from SIDA). However, it was still forecasting an optimistic US\$9.3 million in co-financing from the same two sources by the end of the project.

PIR2007, which followed on the MTE and the restarting of the project, said that *“Information on co-financing (both in-kind and cash) has not been closely monitored since the departure of the Project Manager; thus figures not available for this PIR. Once the new project manager is in place, the co-finance figures should be monitored and analyzed more closely and reported in the following PIRs”* and it did not provide a figure for co-funding to 30 June 2007. The Evaluators believe that if the PMU was dysfunctional, it was incumbent on the EA to step into the breach.

The PIR2008 summary page gives the figure for co-financing as US\$0.3 million, then, in its Financial Information table it has no entries for co-funding for Estimated Total Disbursement to 30 June 2008, while still expecting US\$9.3 million in co-funding by the end of the project.

PIR2009 shows US\$150,000 from FAO as the only co-financing Total Disbursement to 30 June 2009. It does not show the USAID and the SIDA figures which had been shown in all PIRs right from the start of the project. It also sets the expected co-financing by the end of the project at US\$2.116 million.

The latest co-funding information provided to the Evaluators is from the draft PIR2010 and is as in the table below.

Table 7. Co-financing according to the draft PIR2010

	SOURCE	COMMITTED AS IN PRODOC	ADDITIONAL AFTER PROJECT START	EXPECTED TOTAL BY END OF PROJECT
Cash Cofinancing – Partner Managed	USAID (IRBM project and interim secretariat 2005-2007)		\$1,400,000	\$1,400,000
	SIDA (OKASEC funding 2008-2011)		\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000
	Angola OKACOM contribution			\$0
	Botswana OKACOM contribution			\$0
	Namibia OKACOM contribution			\$0
In-Kind Cofinancing	Angola	\$542,000	\$25,000	\$567,000
	Botswana	\$542,000	\$25,000	\$567,000
	Namibia	\$542,000	\$25,000	\$567,000
	FAO	\$150,000		\$150,000
	UNDP	\$300,000		\$300,000
	Additional FAO co-finance (2009-10)		\$125,000	\$125,000
	FAO Basin Audit (2009-2011)		\$475,000	
TOTAL COFINANCING		\$2,076,000	\$2,800,000	\$4,876,000

Once again, the picture has changed and the expected amount of co-financing by the end of the project is now set as US\$4.8 million. As these significant amounts did not happen in the past year, it is surprising that the same persons reporting on co-funding could report an increase of over 100%.

FAO advised that co-finance “was always going to be opportunistic given the low levels of co-finance declared in the project document (which did include provision of PMU office facilities by the host country). Nevertheless both Project Managers were able to engage with donors and initiatives across the basin. This eventually resulted in important contributions to project outputs from USAID and SIDA that would have been difficult to 'hard-wire' into EPSMO given that they had their own self-contained terms of reference. In fact the 'casual' arrangements may have been more effective (we cost-shared meeting costs, hydrometric station rehab etc) as an adaptive approach rather than trying to pre-programme specific project components”.

It is difficult to trace co-funding figures in project documentation. What information there is, is inconsistent and does not inspire confidence in its veracity. From the patchy and inconsistent information available to us, we are led to conclude that co-funding has not been effectively solicited, managed or monitored and rate it as **Unsatisfactory (U)**.

4.2.6 Stakeholders, partnerships and information management

4.2.6.1 Stakeholder participation during the implementation stage

Stakeholder involvement in project implementation has been influenced by the nature of the project and its focus on the development of a TDA and SAP. True involvement was limited to government entities, research and technical entities operational in the basin, and the NGOs that have been active in the area to date. Community participation has been limited, but there have been modest contributions to the formulation of the two outcomes.

The PMU was expected to develop a public participation plan but this did not materialise. In the event, the Evaluators gleaned the commitments for public participation that were made in Annex VIII: Public Involvement Plan Summary of the ProDoc and presented this in table form to the PMU. The response of the PMU is in Annex 6 while the following table summarizes the Evaluators' views on the extent of participation in project implementation by the key stakeholders.

Table 8. Summary of stakeholder involvement in project implementation

STAKEHOLDER	RELATIONSHIP WITH PROJECT	EXTENT OF INVOLVEMENT
Government of Angola	Owner	Participation by the three governments has been through the OKACOM Commissioners. Botswana's ODMP process has been particularly important in highlighting the need for involvement of all government entities in the management of the basin.
Government of Botswana	Owner	
Government of Namibia	Owner	
UNDP CO in Luanda	I.A. Principal UNDP office	Since the MTE, the Angola CO has accepted their critical role in the project and became more active. The CO has indicated that it may be able to provide additional resources to support any necessary project extension.
UNDP CO in Gaborone	I.A. UNDP support office	Not very active. As a result of the ODMP the CO now recognises the need to engage more and has pledged to support the finalisation of the SAP through support to the negotiation processes required.
UNDP CO in Windhoek	I.A. UNDP support office	Somewhat more active. Support role requires better communication from Luanda.
UNDP/GEF	Funding source	As the IA, UNDP/GEF has a large stake in the project and seeks the project success. Involvement in the project has been hampered by their less than optimal relationship with the EA.
OKACOM	Owners/Prime beneficiaries	OKACOM have a strong sense of ownership of the project and this has served the project well. The Commission has benefited immensely from

		the EPSMO project with a draft TDA and a SAP framework now in place. There is a need for the Commission to better define the role of the Secretariat beyond just administrative functions if the programme initiated under EPSMO is to be sustainable into the future.
OBSC	Technical support	The OBSC has been the PMUs technical and management link to OKACOM. Technical capacity limitations have been identified with some members but overall, the Committee has been actively and effectively involved with the project.
FAO HQ in Rome	Executing Agency and Budget Holder	The FAO HQ office in Rome has been very active in project management performing monitoring visits to the project which are all documented. Since the Budget Holder functions were transferred to this office from Accra, project management improved resulting in more effective delivery.
FAO CO in Luanda	EA support office	The FAO Country Office demonstrates renewed interest in project implementation especially following the arrival of the new Country Representative. This interest bodes well for the proposed follow-on phase.
FAO CO in Windhoek	EA support office	Acting as Disbursing Office upon request from FAO HQ for payment of national consultants or rental of meeting rooms/logistics during workshops.
NGOs	Implementation partners	There are not many NGOs that are active in the project area. NGO participation has been greater in Namibia and Botswana where civil society organisations have been involved as service providers to the project. In Angola, NGO participation has been limited to one NGO (ACADIR) which has provided facilities for project activities in Menongue.
Communities	Ultimate beneficiaries	The Every River Project established community basin-wide forums which were to liaise directly with OKACOM to develop community based programmes. In Botswana this forum made extensive inputs into the ODMP processes. This process was also further strengthened under the IRBM project but the Evaluators did not identify any meaningful involvement of communities in the development of the TDA and the SAP.
Technical/research institutions	Partners for data and info	The formulation of the TDA and the SAP has largely been driven by the involvement of research and academic institutions in all three countries. The Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Centre in Maun, Botswana, the Augustinho Neto University in Luanda, Angola and the Polytechnic of Namibia in Windhoek were the drivers of the research that fed into the TDA. Staff at these institutions were supported by consultants that were engaged to deliver on specific outputs such as e-flows. There was therefore very extensive participation by technical and research entities in project activities.
Other related projects	Complementary partners	One complementary project that the EPSMO project liaised with was the USAID funded IRBM project. This project contributed to the establishment of the OKASec as well as the institutionalisation of dialogue among the basin states. The products from this initiative as well as that of another projects, BIOkavango ²² , have also been used by the project in the development of the TDA and SAP.

Involvement of stakeholders in project implementation has been varied, with OKACOM and technical/research institutions very well involved, but communities less so, mainly because of the nature of the tasks; it is rated as **Satisfactory (S)**.

4.2.6.2 Partners and partnership Strategy

The OECD²³ considers Stakeholders as “Agencies, organizations, groups or individuals who have a direct or indirect interest in the development intervention or its evaluation”. This definition is all-embracing and includes Partners and Beneficiaries which are defined in turn as: “Beneficiaries - The individuals, groups, or organizations, whether targeted or not, that benefit, directly or indirectly, from the development intervention”; and “Partners - The individuals and/or organizations that collaborate to achieve mutually agreed upon objectives”. In the case of Partners, the OECD adds that “the

²² The BIOkavango Project has contributed financially to the development of some of the specific components of the TDA, e.g. Integrated Flows Assessment component.

²³ DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation (2002) *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management*. OECD, Paris.

concept of partnership connotes shared goals, common responsibility for outcomes, distinct accountabilities and reciprocal obligations”.

From this definition, OKACOM, FAO and UNDP (all three COs and the regional UNDP/GEF RTA) are partners for the purpose of GEF while a number of institutions in each of the three riparian countries also fall within the definition of true partners in that they do have shared goals, a common and shared responsibility for outcomes and distinct accountabilities and reciprocal obligations.

In addition, the Okavango Basin's high environmental value and its near-pristine state have attracted the interest of a wide range of stakeholders as well as the international community. At the regional, national and local level the basin is seen as an important source of environmental goods and services that, with judicious planning and management, could be used to impact on poverty. At the same time, there is an acknowledgement that this auspicious situation may not last in the face of identified threats to the ORB's ecosystem integrity.

The perceived need for early action on Okavango Basin conservation and management issues has motivated national, regional and international stakeholders, with the support of donor agencies like SIDA, USAID, EU and the GEF, to initiate various projects in the Okavango Basin. Of these, the three which have had the closest working relationship with the project were:

- Okavango Improved River Basin Management Project (IRBM), funded by USAID, US\$5-6 million over 4 years (2004-2008) and which supported the interim OKACOM Secretariat. (A follow-on project was being developed at the time of writing)
- “Every River Has its People” (ERP)–Okavango, funded by SIDA, Phase 2, US\$2 million over 3 years (2004–2006)
- OKACOM Secretariat, assisted by SIDA, 2008-2011, US\$1.2 million

Although they do not fall completely within the definition of partnerships, the above are considered as parallel projects and some of their activities have been considered as co-funding for the purpose of the EPSMO project. While no formal agreement for collaboration was finalized, the three projects had agreed in principle to coordinate their efforts at a meeting in Johannesburg in February 2005. A significant output from that meeting was a list of indicative follow-up actions which the three partners agreed each would carry out.

There were also other projects with which collaboration has been varied. These included a number of GEF projects (e.g. Strengthening the Protected Areas Network, Botswana NBSAP, Angola NBSAP); others in which FAO was involved (e.g. AfDB food security in Angola, National Irrigation Policy & Strategy in Botswana, Review of the Green Scheme in Namibia); and others such as the Okavango Delta Management Plan Project in Botswana.

Partnerships between EPSMO and other initiatives in the ORB are rated as **Satisfactory (S)**.

4.2.6.3 Information management

Information management and knowledge transfer are pre-requisites for effective sustainability and raising awareness. This project has generated a fair amount of data, information and knowledge, mostly of a technical nature and associated with the TDA formulation process.

The mechanism for dissemination of project products has been primarily the project website²⁴ which is attractive and informative and reaches out with project products such as the draft TDA. It has an obvious ‘Documents Centre’ link leading to a well-organized source of publications and other information material arising from the project. There is also a link to ‘Educational Materials’ but the page is not very impressive. The ‘On-line Forums’ appear somewhat odd with topics such as

²⁴ <http://epsmo.iwlearn.org/>

Livestock prices in China. And it is a pity that under the 'Contact Us' page, the details of the NCs of Botswana and Namibia are not shown.

It is also presumed that information materials were made available through the project's "network" to targeted beneficiaries and to other parties who were expected to be interested. In connection with this, the project was challenged by the need to provide translation services into Portuguese which was not always easy to arrange. Translation may have been better achieved if it had been a responsibility of the Angolan Government (as a contribution in-kind).

Some technical information has been the subject of dispute and this is surprising since OBSC appears to be acting as a peer-review body.

Finally, it needs to be mentioned that the requests (which are standard practice in a TE) by the Evaluation Team for information, were not always easily met by the PMU or the EA.

4.3 Results and impacts

4.3.1 Measuring progress and success

The departure point for an evaluation of results achieved is the LogFrame in the ProDoc which is expected to provide a departure point (the baseline), targets, and indicators of progress along the way. The baseline is a fundamental minimum requirement of GEF M&E Policy.

However, the EPSMO LogFrame did not provide baselines and merely referred to the types of Indicators that could be set for the Objective, and did not set any; neither did it identify any Outcomes. However, under Project Purpose it listed three bullet points which eventually were recognized as the project's three Outcomes and provided six largely unhelpful, collective Indicators.

The Project Inception Report usually confirms or amends the LogFrame but the Inception Report (April 2005) for EPSMO did not mention the LogFrame.

The next guide as to the LogFrame is the series of PIRs. The first PIR for EPSMO in July 2005, clearly identified the Outcomes and assigned each a cluster of Indicators. These Indicators remained constant right up to PIR2008 and, it seems, right up to PIR2009, however, the latter adopted a different format which has not been easy to follow. PIR2010 has the same different format and as it is still in preliminary draft form, its use for this TE has been limited.

This Terminal Evaluation has used the Indicators as in the PIRs for its assessment of progress towards the Objective and Outcomes. More specifically, it focuses on the Indicators as carried in each of the PIRs until 2008 and the results as reported in PIR2009 and PIR2010. The self assessment by the PMU (see Annex 8) was not very helpful. The information gleaned from these sources was supplemented and corroborated through consultations and documents review.

4.3.2 Results achieved

4.3.2.1 The Project Development Objective

According to the ProDoc, the project Objective was:

To alleviate imminent and long-term threats to the linked land and water systems of the OR through the joint management of the ORB water resources and the protection of its linked aquatic ecosystems, comprising all wetlands, fluvial and lacustrine systems, and their biological diversity, and there have been no changes to this wording.

In assessing the achievement of the project Objective, the first step is to “dissect” it into its key elements as follows:

What to do?	alleviate
Of what?	imminent and long-term threats
Where?	in the linked land and water systems of the ORB
How?	through joint management and protection

This Evaluation therefore needs to answer two key questions regarding the Objective²⁵ –

- Has the Project alleviated imminent and long-term threats? and,
- Was this done through joint management and protection?

In an effort to assist with answering these questions, the ProDoc LogFrame lists the following as Indicators of Performance:

- *Environmental indicators (state-response, stress reduction, and source vulnerability)*
- *Socio-economic indicators (policy, legal, and institutional processes)*

In fact, these are not indicators and are not of much practical use to those implementing or managing the project, or this Terminal Evaluation. The Inception Report is silent regarding the LogFrame and Indicators, and although the Minutes of the 2005 PSC meeting mentioned a Review²⁶, the Evaluators were unable to find any further reference to the issue.

Another attempt at providing “Indicators” appeared against the Objective in the PIR2005 and subsequent ones. These were:

- Indicator 1: Institutional arrangements for project implementation put in place and operational
- Indicator 2: Trans-boundary diagnostic analysis (TDA) completed
- Indicator 3: Strategic action programme (SAP) formulated

Once again, these are not Indicators of whether and to what extent the Objective has been met. They are simply the stated products of the project and do not indicate whether the “*imminent and long-term threats*” have been “*alleviated*”.

The following table uses the three “Indicators” from the PIRs (in spite of their limitations), records the progress as reported by PIR2009 (updated wherever possible with information from PIR2010), and adds comments by the evaluators based on the information gleaned from documents we have reviewed and consultations we have held.

²⁵ Submissions received have questioned the fundamental feasibility of the Objective or, more accurately, its wording. In reality, the objective of EPSMO is not to alleviate threats but to prepare the foundation (the SAP) for such work. Strictly speaking, the Objective cannot be met through the activities proposed and within the time scale available. This TE has recognized that the true objective of EPSMO is a foundational one and the analysis of progress and results has been carried out with this in mind.

²⁶ Item (ii) in Annex C of the Minutes states: “A strategic project review meeting will be held in late November 2005 in Luanda with the presence of OBSC members from all three countries to review the objectives, outputs, activities and time frame of the project”.

Table 9. Achievements towards the Project Objective and Evaluators' comments

Project Objective: To alleviate imminent and long-term threats to the linked land and water systems of the OR through the joint management of the ORB water resources and the protection of its linked aquatic ecosystems, comprising all wetlands, fluvial and lacustrine systems, and their biological diversity		
"INDICATORS"	RESULTS AS IN PIR2009 AND AS UPDATED BY THE PMU and PIR2010	EVALUATORS' COMMENTS
<p>1: Institutional arrangements for project implementation put in place and operational</p>	<p>The first meeting of the restructured Botswana NISC and NCU was held on the 7th and 8th of July 2008 and on the 7th of April 2009. Decisions taken by the Botswana NCU include the modalities to conduct TDA related work in Botswana, review and comments on the proposal submitted by the University of Botswana for TDA research, and monitoring of outputs related to the TDA and the first iteration of the Botswana National Action Program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Namibia NCU was re-organized as an integral unit within the Government of Namibia mandated Okavango Basin Committee. The PMU and the government jointly established the Namibia Okavango Basin Committee. Basin Committee will function and the National Inter-sectoral Committee and the Executive Board of the Okavango Basin Committee will act as the National Coordinating Unit. The Namibia National Action Program will be adopted as the Basin Management Plan. • Namibia NCU met on the 3rd and 4th of July and the 4th of October 2008. Initiated and manages the TDA process in Namibia • Angola NCU meets on a regular basis • Angola NISC meeting was held. Need to expand was recognized and letters were sent. Responses were received from the line ministries. <p>Update: In 2010 the NISC in Angola was reconstituted and met to develop the NAP. In Namibia the OkBMC referred to above organized a successful meeting also for the NAP In Botswana the NCU functions but the NISC has not been effective NISCs have met in each of the three countries in connection with TDA and NAPs</p>	<p>The Objective sought "<i>alleviation of threats through joint management</i>" and the "Indicator" sought "<i>operational institutional arrangements</i>".</p> <p>Unfortunately, the so-called indicator is not helpful in determining the extent to which the Objective has been reached since these are merely the activities that are expected during the inception period of any project. Although these were challenging in the case of this project, they are not results.</p> <p>Even so, the institutional arrangements described, even with the PMU and PIR2010 updates, are not very substantive.</p>
<p>2: Trans-boundary diagnostic analysis (TDA) completed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LoA was signed with Namibia Nature Foundation for TDA research in Namibia • LoA was signed with University of Botswana for TDA research in Botswana • LoA with an Angolan NGO for Community participation • Agreement with University of Agostinho Neto Science Faculty for research works on Environmental Flows Assessment in Angola and was formalized in a meeting held in Luanda on the 20th of February. • All consultancies were issued for TDA work in Angola • A joint program was developed between a national GEF project in Botswana and the Okavango Project to jointly conduct the Environmental Flows Assessment component of the TDA • All three TDA teams conducted joint surveys of the basin • TDA integration meetings were held on 15-16 Nov and on 30th March to 8th of April, and 7th to 12th of June 2009. • A water resources planning model and an inundation model were configured by project and national hydrologists • A customized Decision Support System was developed for the ORB • Capacity building meeting was held for the Angola consultant team in Mussulo (Luanda) on 05 – 06 February • A TDA consultation workshop was conducted in Maun Botswana to capture information for the TDA on the 24th of February with wide stakeholder participation • A partnership was initiated with the University of Cape Town to downscale Global Climate Change models for the ORB and to develop a climate change adaptation strategy for the Okavango TDA • All reports for the Environmental Flows Assessment Component were finalized and inserted into the Decision Support System • 7 TDA national TDA reports were produced • A presentation on preliminary results and methodology was held at a High-level Conference on Strengthening Transboundary Freshwater Governance held in Bangkok Thailand <p>Update: The first draft of the TDA was discussed by the OBSC (TTT) in November 2009. Specific recommendations were made and consultancies were commissioned to address those needs. The second draft of the TDA was made available in January 2010. Thereafter an English editor was hired to reformat the document. At the time of reporting comments were received on the final draft and are being incorporated. All reports finalized, drafts discussed and adopted, TDA ready for the printer</p>	<p>The Objective sought "<i>alleviation of threats through joint management</i>" and the "Indicator" aimed to deliver "<i>a completed TDA</i>".</p> <p>The reported achievement comprises many meetings, workshops, agreements and consultancies which are not results. There are also some outstanding reservations on the geographical basis for the TDA. But eventually a draft TDA is reported which has been adopted at a special OBSC meeting.</p> <p>The Evaluators have concerns that the TDA which is due to go to the printer will not have the full ownership required to serve as a robust foundation for the SAP.</p>

<p>3: Strategic action programme (SAP) formulated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAP development meetings were held in Namibia and Botswana on the 4th and 8th of July 2008 respectively. <input type="checkbox"/> NAP meeting in Angola was held in the first week of August 2008. <input type="checkbox"/> NAP drafts were developed <input type="checkbox"/> Second round of meetings in Botswana and Namibia were held in November 08 <input type="checkbox"/> First SAP discussion to develop long list was held November 19-21, 2008. <input type="checkbox"/> A SAP technical Advisor was identified and contracted <input type="checkbox"/> NAPs remain approximately 40% completed and the SAP 20% completed²⁷. <p>Update: A series of meetings were held in all three countries in Feb 2010 to identify national priorities for the SAP A draft SAP framework was presented to the TPR in March 2010. The SAP was further elaborated by the OBSC at meeting in May 2010 A revised draft SAP was presented to the countries for comments in on the 25th of May Comments were received and a final SAP is being formulated by the project with the support of two consultants. Three national consultancies have been launched to develop the National Action Program. The SAP consultants will finalize the SAP, support the PMU in coordinating a regional (OKACOM) meeting to confirm objectives and commitment Three national meetings are also envisaged to confirm national ownership of SAPs</p>	<p>The Objective sought “<i>alleviation of threats through joint management</i>” and the “Indicator” sought “<i>a formulated SAP</i>”.</p> <p>A draft SAP has been produced but most consultees felt that crucial negotiated and agreed elements are missing. It was also pointed out to us that the current version of the SAP lacks Objectives. It is most unlikely that the SAP will be finalized satisfactorily by the time the project is closed at the end of August 2010.</p>
<p>The Evaluators accepted that this project proceeded without meaningful Indicators of progress towards the Objective. Some stakeholders have also questioned whether the wording of the Objective was realistic – “<i>over the time span of the ESPMO project, could those threats have been realistically alleviated?</i>” and “<i>Under the TDA/SAP was there any scope for actual joint management and protection?</i>” We conclude that while progress has been made towards it, the Objective of <i>alleviating imminent and long-term threats to the linked land and water systems of the ORB through joint management</i>, has not really been achieved and we rate progress towards the Objective as set in the ProDoc as Moderately Satisfactory (MS); we also agree with comments we have received, that the wording of the Objective was unrealistic.</p>		

²⁷ The level of completion is a moot point with some stakeholders believing that the level of completion is much lower.

4.3.2.2 Outcome 1: *Strengthened mechanisms for joint management of the ORB*

The above wording is from the LogFrame, however, the PIRs have a slightly different wording, namely: ***Strengthened mechanisms for joint management of the ORB put in place and functioning***. The difference is small but very significant and we have adopted the PIRs wording.

An assessment of whether this Outcome has been attained according to the PIRs wording requires an answer to the questions –

- Have stronger mechanisms for joint management been put in place? and,
- Are they functioning?

In an effort to obtain answers to these questions, the Evaluators first examined the four Outputs that were targeted under this Outcome and the following table lists the Outputs, notes the progress as reported by the PMU and adds the Evaluators' comments.

Table 10. Outcome 1 Outputs, Results and Evaluators' comments

Outcome 1: <i>Strengthened mechanisms for joint management of the ORB put in place and functioning</i>		
OUTPUTS FROM LOGFRAME AND PIRs	RESULTS ACCORDING TO PMU	EVALUATORS' COMMENTS
Output A1 Expertise within the riparian countries strengthened to drive the necessary inter-governmental and intra-governmental technical and policy initiatives in water resource planning and management of the ORB	Significant steps taken towards this objective through the TDA process where key personnel from all sectors were given hand-on practical training	This is a relevant Output which, if achieved, will contribute significantly to the Outcome. The PMU reported that expertise was strengthened through the TDA development process. The Evaluators are aware of the significant progress made since the MTE towards this Output and suggest that an additional area of expertise for future capacity building is in negotiation skills.
Output A2 Basin-wide mechanisms for stakeholder participation in basin management established and tested to secure consensus and ensure replicability and taking to scale	Whenever possible project consultation and management structures were established incorporating existing national or regional structures. In Botswana the existing Wetlands management committee was strengthened to act as the ISC and the NCU, in Namibia similar approach was taken with the OkBMC	This is another relevant Output. The Evaluators have noted the high level of participation by the Governments through OKACOM and the OBSC and suggest that this now needs to be extended to the beneficiary stakeholders of the ORB.
Output A3 Policy, legal, institutional and human resource initiatives launched for the ORB and linked to national policy reviews to co-ordinate water resource management approaches across the basin	Comprehensive policy and governance review was conducted for the TDA. Change and strengthening in the SAP	This Output would have been more relevant to the "joint management" sought by the Outcome if it had focussed on harmonization of relevant policies, legal and institutional resources across the three countries. The PMU reported comprehensive reviews but no harmonization.
Output A4 Monitoring and evaluation procedures for implementation of joint management	Through the TDA which establishes the current baseline	Since joint management is still a distant target, this Output is somewhat premature. The PMU reports that a baseline has been established through the TDA. The Evaluators are aware that a thorough monitoring and evaluation process will be incorporated into the SAP.

Next, the Evaluators examined progress towards the Outcome in the light of the 16 Indicators (origin unknown) found in the PIRs and our assessment is summarized in Table 8 on the next page.

Table 11. Analysis of the Indicators for Outcome 1 and progress achieved

Outcome 1: Strengthened mechanisms for joint management of the ORB put in place and functioning Questions that need answering: Have stronger mechanisms been put in place? Are they functioning?				
INDICATORS AS IN PIRs	COMMENT ON THE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO THE SMART CRITERIA	RELEVANCE TO OUTCOME 1	RESULTS ACCORDING TO PIR2009	EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS
1. PMU and NCUs to be established within 3 months of project inception	Not Specific for " <i>mechanisms for joint management</i> " and their " <i>functioning</i> "; it is Measurable , and Achievable and Attributable to the project; not Relevant , but Trackable	This is not an Indicator for this Outcome. In fact it is only an Activity that the Project must carry out if it is to become operational. A more appropriate Indicator would have focussed on " <i>strengthened mechanisms</i> ", " <i>joint management</i> " and " <i>functioning mechanisms</i> "	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first meeting of the restructured Botswana NISC and NCU was held on the 7th and 8th of July 2008 and on the 7th of April 2009. Decisions taken by the Botswana NCU include the modalities to conduct TDA related work in Botswana, review and comments on the proposal submitted by the University of Botswana for TDA research, and monitoring of outputs related to the TDA and the first iteration of the Botswana National Action Program. 	<p>The so-called Indicator has been met, though not "within 3 months". In spite of the various difficulties met both with the PMU and the NCUs, both were established and functioned. The latter can be expected to become part of the "stronger mechanism" targeted by the Outcome. The PMU would have had a longer lasting legacy had it been established within the OKACOM Secretariat.</p> <p>The Indicator has been partly met.</p>
2. Regional expert working group (TTT) established and operational within 6 months of project inception	Not very Specific for " <i>mechanisms for joint management</i> " and their " <i>functioning</i> "; it is Measurable , and Achievable and Attributable to the project; but not entirely Relevant , while Trackable	This Indicator would have been more Specific and Relevant had it focussed on " <i>functioning</i> ". Focussing on " <i>operational</i> " is not clear enough and needs indicators of its own.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Namibia NCU was re-organized as an integral unit within the Government of Namibia mandated Okavango Basin Committee. The PMU and the government jointly established the Namibia Okavango Basin Committee. Basin Committee will function and the National Inter-sectoral Committee and the Executive Board of the Okavango Basin Committee will act as the National Coordinating Unit. The Namibia National Action Program will be adopted as the Basin Management Plan. Namibia NCU met on the 3rd and 4th of July and the 4th of October 2008. Initiated and manages the TDA process in Namibia Angola NCU meets on a regular basis Angola NISC meeting was held. Need to expand was recognized and letters were sent. Responses were received from the line ministries. 	<p>No reported progress with the establishment and functioning of the TTT in the PIR or the PMU assessment. However, the Evaluators are aware that the OBSC is functioning as the TTT for this project and that it has been established and meets regularly to discuss and agree on technical documents such as the TDA. Unfortunately, the OBSC is an organ of the OKACOM and anything it agrees on, even of a purely technical nature, has to be referred to OKACOM for discussion and endorsement or rejection.</p> <p>The Indicator has been met and does indicate a contribution to the Outcome.</p>
3. National inter-ministerial/inter-sectoral committees (NICs)	Specific for " <i>mechanisms for joint management</i> " and their " <i>functioning</i> " but only at national level; it is partly	This is a good Indicator of a " <i>mechanism for joint management</i> " but only at	National inter-ministerial/ inter-sectoral committees (NICs) were established in all three countries in the last reporting period. In	This Indicator has been met since the NICs have been established, however, there could be queries as to the extent of their "operational"

established and operational	Measurable , and Achievable ; not clearly Attributable to the project; partly Relevant and Trackable	national level. As above, it focuses on “ <i>operational</i> ” which is difficult to determine without more indicators.	Botswana and Namibia they have met twice and in Angola once.	prosess. The NICs will be tested fully when the SAP comes up for negotiation and agreement. The Indicator has been partly met and has the potential for a very important contribution to the Outcome target of stronger mechanisms.
4. Training needs identified within 6 months of project inception	Not Specific for “ <i>mechanisms for joint management</i> ” and their “ <i>functioning</i> ”; it is Measurable , and Achievable and Attributable to the project; not Relevant , but Trackable	This Indicator is foundational and process oriented whereas the Outcome sought a result. On its own it says nothing about the Outcome.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A training workshop was held for the TDA technical team in Angola from the 4th to the 6th of February 2009 • In a joint program with the Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Center the project is supporting the participation of two Angola TDA consultants and two students in a training course in Botswana • The knowledge Capture workshop in specific and the Environmental Flows Assessment in general provide an opportunity for practical training. 	The Indicator sought merely the identification of training needs – the project delivered this and in addition provided some actual training. Although it says little about the Outcome targets, this Indicator has been met and exceeded.
5. Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings convened within first 3 months and regular bi-annual meetings scheduled	Specific to “ <i>joint management</i> ” and “ <i>functioning</i> ” and Measurable ; probably Achievable and Attributable to the project; it is Relevant and Trackable This is a SMART Indicator	This Indicator indicates whether the project has made progress towards “ <i>joint management</i> ” and even though it says nothing about “ <i>functioning</i> ” it is Relevant to the Outcome.	A PSC meeting was held in November 2008 and again in May 2009. A TPR meeting held in December 2008 approved the work plan and budget for 2009-2010	After significant early problems, the PSC has functioned well. It is a good manifestation of a “stronger mechanism for joint management” as sought by the Outcome. This Indicator has been met successfully.
6. Project strategies and operations and activities on the ground are coordinated with other ORB-wide projects and their donors, towards integrated ORB-wide programming and project implementation, under the guidance of OBSC/OKACOM	Specific to “ <i>joint management</i> ” on a regional basis; not easily Measurable , and difficult to know when Achieved ; could be Attributed to the project; it is Relevant , but not easy to Track	This Indicator addresses a very important aspect of “ <i>joint management</i> ” but does not develop it sufficiently. It needed a measure of “ <i>coordination</i> ” to become really useful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The NAP meetings held in all three countries were facilitated by personnel trained in participation methods by the USAID Integrated River Basin Management Project. <input type="checkbox"/> The Executive Secretary of the OKACOM Secretariat is closely working with the project on the formulation of the TDA and the SAP <input type="checkbox"/> The Environmental Flows Component of the TDA is being jointly executed with the GEF funded BOKAVANGO Project <input type="checkbox"/> A joint presentation on preliminary results and methodology was presented at a High-level Conference on Strengthening Transboundary Freshwater Governance held in Bangkok Thailand with the BOKAVANGO project <input type="checkbox"/> The project is providing co-funding (in-kind) for the SADC Regional Climate Change Programme Strategic Transboundary Water Resources Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> The project is providing co-funding (in-kind) for the World Bank study on Climate Change thresholds in the Okavango System 	This is a very important Indicator but perhaps it was too ambitious. Although EPSMO was thought of highly on its establishment, it may have lost some of its credibility as a result of its early difficulties and lack of delivery. Coordination with other initiatives required a substantial effort on the part of EPSMO and some success can be claimed. This Indicator has been partly met.
7. Awareness building/	Not Specific for “ <i>mechanisms for joint</i> ”	This Indicator is foundational	Awareness raising presentations and	The project has made an effort to raise

<p>consultation with stakeholders in Angola, Namibia, and Botswana, through meetings and workshops</p>	<p><i>management</i>" and their "<i>functioning</i>"; it is Measurable, and Achievable and Attributable to the project; but only partly Relevant; maybe Trackable</p>	<p>and process oriented (same as 4 above) whereas the Outcome sought a result. On its own it says nothing about the Outcome. "<i>Meetings and workshops</i>" are not results</p>	<p>outreach activities continue: these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Two meetings at two riparian communities in the Angola <input type="checkbox"/> Three briefings of the Governor, Vice Governor and provincial authorities in the province of Kuando Kubango in Angola. <input type="checkbox"/> Presentations at a stakeholder meeting at the principal provincial capital in Angola <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation to the Okavango River Basin Committee in Namibia <input type="checkbox"/> Briefing of the National Director of Environment and the World Bank country office in Angola <input type="checkbox"/> Press conference held in province of Kuando Kubango in Angola and featured in provincial news <input type="checkbox"/> featured in Angola National News Paper (Journal de Economia e Fiananca) 	<p>awareness at the upstream/executive level and the Evaluators are aware of similar, but less extensive, efforts at community level. The Indicator has been partly met, but it is unknown whether and to what extent awareness raising has led to "stronger mechanisms for joint management".</p>
<p>8. NGO sub-forum established and consulted</p>	<p>Specific for "<i>mechanisms for joint management</i>" and their "<i>functioning</i>"; it is Measurable, and Achievable and Attributable to the project; it is Relevant and Trackable. This is a SMART Indicator</p>	<p>This Indicator, like 5 above, indicates whether the project has made progress towards "<i>joint management</i>" and even though it says little about "<i>functioning</i>" it is Relevant to the Outcome and a good Indicator</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> the community participation strategy continues with a regional NGO in Angola <input type="checkbox"/> A community participation strategy is included in the LoA with the Namibia Nature Foundation which is the leading Environmental NGO in Namibia. 	<p>The Evaluators are aware of good progress towards this important Indicator of "mechanisms for joint management".</p> <p>The Indicator has been met.</p>
<p>9. Outreach to schools and training institutions, and environmental curricula adopted in schools</p>	<p>Not Specific for "<i>mechanisms for joint management</i>" and their "<i>functioning</i>"; it is difficult to Measure, but possibly Achievable and Attributable to the project; but not entirely Relevant, although Trackable</p>	<p>This Indicator is foundational and process oriented (same as 4 above) whereas the Outcome sought a result. On its own it says nothing about the Outcome. "<i>Environmental curricula</i>" are not results</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The project recruited and trained a team of lecturers and students from the National University of Angola (Agostinho Neto University) to conduct the research for the TDA in Angola. The training was done by leading river ecologists and hydrologists. <input type="checkbox"/> Two junior lectures from the institutions were sent to the University of Botswana for training <input type="checkbox"/> An LoA was signed between the project and the Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Center of the University of Botswana for TDA work. 	<p>The Indicator sought outreach to two different constituencies – schools (related to awareness raising) and training institutions (related to Outcome 2 and TDA). They are very different and require different strategies and activities, and neither is specific to joint management as sought by this Outcome.</p>
<p>10. All relevant institutional players identified and formally enlisted to participate in the ORB initiative</p>	<p>Specific to "<i>joint management</i>" and "<i>functioning</i>" but difficult to Measure "<i>all</i>"; probably Achievable and Attributable to the project; it is Relevant but difficult to Track</p>	<p>This Indicator needed to go a bit beyond "<i>identified</i>" and "<i>enlisted</i>" and indicate actual "<i>participation</i>" to be really useful as an indication for the Outcome.</p>		<p>No results are given for this ambitious Indicator and the Evaluators are not aware of progress towards it.</p>
<p>11. Pilot and demonstration projects identified, executed and evaluated</p>	<p>Not Specific for "<i>mechanisms for joint management</i>" and their "<i>functioning</i>"; it is Measurable, and Achievable and Attributable to the project; but only partly Relevant; maybe Trackable</p>	<p>Pilots and demonstration projects are not results – they are preparatory activities and say little or nothing about "<i>mechanisms for joint</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A concept paper on a pilot project on Tourism exchange between the three Okavango countries was commented by all three states. • Concept developed and consultancy issued 	<p>The Indicator sought identification, execution and evaluation of pilot projects; according to PIR2009 the project delivered identification. PIR2010 reports four pilot projects underway in Angola with co-funding from FAO, with a focus</p>

		<i>management</i> ” and their “ <i>functioning</i> ” – not useful as an Indicator for the Outcome	for conservation agriculture pilot in Angola	on sustainable agricultural practices This Indicator does not appear to have been met.
12. EPSMO communication strategy developed and implemented	Only partly Specific for “ <i>mechanisms for joint management</i> ” but says nothing about “ <i>functioning</i> ”; it is difficult to Measure but should be Achievable and Attributable to the project; but only partly Relevant ; should be Trackable	This is only a means to an end rather than a result – it says nothing about “ <i>mechanisms for joint management</i> ” and their “ <i>functioning</i> ”	• The EPSMO communication strategy will be developed together through the OKACOM Secretariat. No significant progress has been made since the Secretariat is not fully functional. ²⁸	The communication strategy has been developed (although not reported to us) and the Indicator has been met.
13. Project website established and operating	Not Specific for “ <i>mechanisms for joint management</i> ” and their “ <i>functioning</i> ”; it is Measurable , and Achievable and Attributable to the project; but not entirely Relevant to the Outcome, although Trackable	Another means to an end, rather than a result. This Indicator says nothing about “ <i>mechanisms for joint management</i> ” and their “ <i>functioning</i> ”	No progress has been made since the last reporting period	The project website was developed by OKASec and housed at the IW:LEARN platform. Regular updates and uploading of documents are done by OKASEC according to a special LoA between OKASEC and EPSMO/FAO to provide these services This Indicator has been met.
14. Publications compiled and disseminated by the project	Not Specific for “ <i>mechanisms for joint management</i> ” and their “ <i>functioning</i> ”; it is Measurable , and Achievable and Attributable to the project; but not entirely Relevant to the Outcome, although Trackable	As above	No publication and dissemination activities have taken place by the project, as TDA has not been finalized	In spite of this bland statement from the PIR2009, the Evaluators are aware of a number of “publications” which are available through the project website. This Indicator has been met.
15. Legal, policy and institutional arrangements reviewed within 24 months of project inception	Partly Specific for “ <i>mechanisms for joint management</i> ” and their “ <i>functioning</i> ”; it is Measurable , and Achievable but not clearly Attributable to the project; not very Relevant , although Trackable	This Indicator would be useful if it was refined further and taken to indicate a result – a review is not a result and does not say much about “ <i>mechanisms for joint management</i> ” or their “ <i>functioning</i> ”	A comprehensive, in-depth legal, policy and institutional review is underway	No update on this was provided to the Evaluators and PIR2010 is silent. This Indicator does not appear to have been met. However, one submission considered the Governance report for the TDA as satisfying this Indicator.
16. National policy initiatives and reforms launched	Partly Specific for “ <i>mechanisms for joint management</i> ” and their “ <i>functioning</i> ”; it is difficult to Measure , but possibly Achievable ; not Attributable to the project; only partly Relevant , although Trackable but only in the long term	Same as above – it could become a useful Indicator with a bit more thought	No new national policy initiatives and reforms, triggered by the project, have yet been launched, since the TDA is not yet complete and the SAP process is still nascent	PIR2010 reported two rounds of national consultations and priority national policy initiatives and reforms identified and included in the NAPs. This could be considered as reforms having been launched and the Indicator has been met.
<p>Overall comments on the achievement of Outcome 1: The Outcome sought <i>functioning mechanisms for joint management</i> and by using the Indicators selected, it is very difficult to determine if this has been achieved. The Evaluators are therefore relying on documents they have reviewed and consultations they have had with stakeholders as well as the PIR2009 (updated by the draft PIR2010) and the PMU self-assessment to assess the extent to which “<i>mechanisms for joint management</i>” have been “<i>put in place</i>” by the project and whether these are “<i>functioning</i>”. We have concluded from our findings that some mechanisms have been put in place but they are not functioning as effectively as they should. Progress made towards Outcome 1 by the project has been Moderately Satisfactory (MS).</p>				

²⁸ OKASec advised the Evaluators that it is developing a communication strategy which is not limited to just this project.

4.3.2.3 Outcome 2: Completed transboundary diagnostic analysis

An assessment of whether this Outcome has been attained requires an answer to the simple question – Is the transboundary analysis completed? And, in an effort to obtain answers to this question, the Evaluators first examined the seven Outputs that were targeted under this Outcome and the following table lists the Outputs, notes the progress as reported by the PMU and adds the Evaluators’ comments.

Table 12. Outcome 2 Outputs, Results and Evaluators’ comments

Outcome 2: Completed transboundary diagnostic analysis		
OUTPUTS FROM LOGFRAME AND PIRs	RESULTS ACCORDING TO PMU	EVALUATORS’ COMMENTS
Output B1 Water resource assessment and analysis completed to establish hydro-environmental processes, characteristics and limits	Hydrological modelling conducted through the TDA (especially the IFA component) and used to simulate limits of acceptable change that informed the characterisation of development scenarios in the basin.	Comprehensive studies are reported in the draft TDA. There is generally an improved understanding of the hydrological profile of the basin.
Output B2 Socio-economic analysis completed to establish current and future patterns of water resource use and levels of demand	Conducted through the TDA and used to develop the preferred development scenario for the basin which is based on increasing investments in tourism and provision of water and sanitation services to growing urban centres that are expected in the basin.	The socio-economic dynamics in the basin have been assessed and used to develop the development scenarios. These scenarios will be used to inform the development of the SAP.
Output B3 Water resource and socio-economic analysis super-imposed to define environmental system limits and parameters	Conducted and completed through the TDA process.	Limits identified and used to define socio-economic development scenarios.
Output B4 Environmental assets of the ORB described and valued to structure models	Conducted through the TDA. Angola has now embarked upon an environmental assessment study, the parameters of which have not been discussed with other riparians. This is a work in progress as not all gaps identified in the initial Draft TDA have been filled.	Resource valuation not completed. This process will be important in developing scenarios for inclusion in the SAP as they will form the basis for negotiating the SAP among the three countries.
Output B5 Comprehensive set of water resource <u>alternatives</u> for the ORB assessed and tested (at pilot level) to structure model scenarios	Done partially	Not completed
Output B6 Water resource development and management <u>models</u> used to produce water resource management options	Environmental Flows assessments conducted through the TDA.	E-flows have been conducted. They will be useful in development of scenarios for development in the basin. However, opinions from the region express concerns that “ <i>the models set up for catchment hydrology and scenarios will have to be re-done from nil</i> ”
Output B7 Economic and environmental <u>criteria</u> produced to guide water resource development and allocation decisions	Conducted through the TDA	Investment scenarios defined on the basis of these criteria.

Next, the Evaluators examined progress towards the Outcome in the light of the Indicators (origin unknown) found in the PIRs and our assessment is summarized in Table 10 on the next page.

Table 13. Analysis of the Indicators for Outcome 2 and progress achieved

Outcome 2: Completed transboundary diagnostic analysis Question that needs answering: Has the transboundary analysis been carried out?				
INDICATORS AS IN PIRS	COMMENT ON THE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO THE SMART CRITERIA	RELEVANCE TO OUTCOME 2	RESULTS ACCORDING TO PIR2009	EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS
1. Project GIS base set up, GIS base populated, and GIS products generated	Indicator is Specific to transboundary analysis and Measurable, Achievable and Attributable to the project. It is also Relevant and Trackable . This is a SMART Indicator	GIS data bases are the basis of the analysis that will underpin the joint management approach	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant progress has been made on identifying and compiling GIS data in all three countries <input type="checkbox"/> A number of maps and other reference material has been developed for the TDA <input type="checkbox"/> A basin-wide data base is under development in partnership with the Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Center.	This indicator has been met with comprehensive data sets and overlays produced.
2. Consultancies on TDA-related work commissioned and satisfactory reports received	Not very Specific as to which TDA-related work. Measurable and Achievable only in so far as one can count the number of assignments conducted. Studies are Relevant and Trackable	Consultancies were relevant to this outcome as there was limited capacity among key stakeholders for conducting the TDA process. However, this Indicator says nothing on whether the Outcome has been carried out	<input type="checkbox"/> All consultancies for the TDA have been commissioned <input type="checkbox"/> In this reporting period a number of final reports and intermediary reports were received	The PMU contracted with numerous service providers who have produced work of varying quality. The processes used to contract have been questioned while some consultants claim to have gone unpaid for months.
3. TDA workshops held with regional technical working group (TTT)	Indicator is Specific as it provided for review of outputs; It is Measurable, Achievable and Attributable to the project. Workshops were Relevant as they allowed for Stakeholder participation in the TDA processes. Trackable as to when these workshops were held.	The Workshops were relevant to the TDA Analysis as they provided for joint review of the outputs by the three countries. However, as above, this Indicator says nothing on whether the Outcome has been carried out	<input type="checkbox"/> A TDA workshops with the Okavango Basin Steering Committee (acting as the project TTT) was held in November 2008 at which a TDA outline was presented and revised. <input type="checkbox"/> Another TDA workshop was held with the OBSC in May 2009 at which a draft TDA was presented and revised.	Workshops conducted and used as basis for disseminating information on project implementation to OKACOM and other stakeholders. There have been isolated complaints from some quarters that the results of these workshops have not been disseminated which might affect progress towards finalising the TDA. Delays in translation as well as questionable quality have also been reported.
4. Frameworks and models developed on the basis of existing and/ or new data/ information	Specific to Water Resources Management; Measurable, Achievable and Attributable to the project. Relevant as they provided basis for basin wide analysis. Trackable . This is a SMART Indicator	Frameworks and models for water resources management were relevant to the development of joint management plans. This is also an illustration of the "analysis" required for the TDA	<input type="checkbox"/> A water resources planning model and an inundation model were configured by project and national hydrologists <input type="checkbox"/> These models used models developed by the University of Botswana and preliminary work done by the WERRD project as a starting point	These products will be useful in the development of basin-wide plans.
5. State-response, stress reduction, and process indicators identified and M&E	Indicator is Specific to the development of the DSS, Measurable . It is however doubtful if it is	The DSS developed as part of this process is relevant to this Outcome as it will assist with	<input type="checkbox"/> The Environmental Flows Component of the TDA is scenarios analysis with different levels of water resources development, to	The Indicator sought the identification of Indicators, and the development for M&E procedures – the project delivered something

<p>procedures for SAP implementation developed</p>	<p>Achievable as responses to the changing scenarios are difficult to quantify. It is however Attributable and Relevant to the project. The results are also Trackable.</p>	<p>joint management, monitoring and decision making across the basin. However, while this work contributes to the “analytical” targets of the Outcome, it does not indicate whether the TDA has been completed.</p>	<p>allow decision makers to assess their options. Each scenario describes its development options and predicts the associated: Changes in flow regime, Changes to the aquatic ecosystems, Changes to the lives of people who depend on the ecosystems. All scenarios describe future changes (positive and negative) relative to Present Day baseline. This provides a basis to develop Indicators and M&E procedures for long-term monitoring of the ORB. This process is yet underway and will be completed as scheduled in the next reporting period.</p>	<p>else. E-flows and the DSS developed are expected to be useful in development of the SAP. However, the M&E procedures for the SAP have not been developed as targeted. It is also somewhat strange for an Indicator to be developing Indicators.</p>
<p>6 TDA document drafted, presented, discussed, finalized, and officially approved</p>	<p>This Indicator is a mixed process/results Indicator and is Specific to this outcome. It is difficult to Measure and Achieve as the situation in the basin is in a constant state of change. It could be Attributable to the project and it is Relevant to the Outcome. It is also Trackable.</p>	<p>The Indicator is relevant to the production of the TDA; in fact it <u>is</u> the production of the TDA.</p>	<p>A draft outline TDA was presented to the PSC in May 2009. Final TDA is scheduled to be complete by October 2009</p>	<p>The TDA has consumed most of the project's and OKACOM's attention leaving little time for the development of the SAP. And yet the Indicator has not been met completely, since although the TDA has been finalized, it is not known whether it has been officially approved.</p>

Overall comments on the achievement of Outcome 2:

The Outcome sought the completion of a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis for the basin. Technical information has been collected, the DSS has been developed and a great deal of analysis carried out – significant progress has been made towards this Outcome, a final draft is available, and an OBSC meeting has reached consensus on it. However, some of the basic parameters are still being questioned²⁹ and as has been symptomatic of EPSMO, different views are held on its robustness as a foundation for the SAP. The evaluation team rates progress under this Outcome as **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

²⁹ The latest submission from Namibia, dated 18 June 2010, and available to the Evaluators, comprised 42 pages of comments and concluded that “the current draft of the TDA is not acceptable” and although consensus was apparently recorded at an OBSC meeting, not all stakeholders are convinced.

4.3.2.4 Outcome 3: Strategic Action Programme (SAP) formulated

An assessment of whether this Outcome has been attained according to the above wording requires answers to the question – Has the SAP been formulated?

In an effort to obtain answers to the question, the Evaluators first examined the five Outputs that were targeted under this Outcome and the following table lists the Outputs, notes the progress as reported by the PMU and adds the Evaluators' comments.

Table 14. Outcome 3 Outputs, Results and Evaluators' comments

Outcome 3: Strategic Action Programme (SAP) formulated		
OUTPUTS FROM LOGFRAME AND PIRs	RESULTS ACCORDING TO PMU	EVALUATORS' COMMENTS
Output C1 Technical and policy implications of water resources management options evaluated	<i>No results reported by the PMU</i>	This is important as it feeds into the SAP. Will need to be done as the first step in the proposed extension period.
Output C2 Integrated management plan negotiated and designed	Underway	Too early to comment as SAP is still under development. Both OKACOM and OBSC have not approved the draft that has been produced.
Output C3 Policy, legal, institutional, human resource and financial arrangements and <u>commitments</u> necessary for SAP implementation defined	Underway	Nothing has happened in this regard. This will be the subject of the proposed project extension.
Output C4 SAP document produced and endorsed through integration of outputs C1, C2 & C3 in <u>collaborative process</u> with SAP partners	Underway	SAP document not finalised. The Exit Strategy being pursued by the Evaluators is intended to facilitate the management of this process.
Output C5 SAP finance mobilised in preparation for implementation through donor conferences and other deal flow identification activities	Underway	Donor conference cannot be convened until SAP is finalised. The SADC Water Sector Reference Group will form the basis of this process.

Next, the Evaluators examined progress towards the Outcome in the light of the Indicators (origin unknown) found in the PIRs and our assessment is summarized in Table 12 on the next page.

Table 15. Analysis of the Indicators for Outcome 3 and progress achieved

Outcome 3: Strategic Action Programme (SAP) formulated				
Question that needs answering: Has the SAP been formulated?				
INDICATORS AS IN PIRs	COMMENT ON THE INDICATORS ACCORDING TO THE SMART CRITERIA	RELEVANCE TO OUTCOME 3	RESULTS ACCORDING TO PIR2009	EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS
TDA results presented and the political feasibility of identified options for strategic action assessed by holding stakeholder workshops and convening national inter-ministerial committees	Not Specific to the Outcome. More of a process therefore not Measurable . The process is Achievable and Attributable to the project but Relevance to the Outcome is questionable. Difficult to Track	This Indicator says nothing about SAP formulation which is targeted by the Outcome	Too early to convene stakeholder workshops to consider the political feasibility of strategic action options. TDA needs to be finalized first.	The TDA exists in what is claimed to be a final draft, however, there is still contention around some fundamental elements – “ <i>political feasibility</i> ” not yet tested. In the interest of expediency, the project commenced the SAP formulation process but a lot more work is required. It is unlikely that this Indicator will be met by the time of project closure
Consultancies on SAP-related work commissioned and satisfactory reports received	Not Specific and difficult to Measure . Production of reports Achievable and Attributable to the project but only Relevant by association. Satisfaction with the reports is difficult to Track	Relevance of consultancies to SAP formulation not clear and “satisfactory” requires indicators of its own.	In this reporting period a NAP/SAP technical advisor was identified and recruited. National consultants contracted to work on NAPs in all three countries but not clear what the outputs from their work will be used for..	Consultancies on SAP-related work have been commissioned, some very recently, but whether the reports are or will be “ <i>satisfactory</i> ” is debateable. The Indicator is unlikely to be fully met in view of the short time available. This and similar targets need to be reflected in an Exit Strategy for the project which still does not exist. There will also be a need to liaise with the USAID SAREP II
Joint management plan designed and negotiated amongst the riparian governments and other ORB stakeholders	Specific to SAP process, Measurable, Achievable and Attributable to the project. Relevant and Trackable . This is a SMART Indicator	This is a fundamental component of the Strategy part of the SAP.	Too early for designing and negotiating a joint management plan	The “ <i>design</i> ” and “ <i>negotiation</i> ” of a “ <i>joint management plan</i> ” has not even started, some three weeks from project closure
Donor finance for proposed strategic actions and investments mobilized through consultations and workshops	Specific to SAP process, Measurable, Achievable and Attributable to the project. Relevant and Trackable .	Very relevant to the Outcome and a good indicator of sustainability for the SAP	Too early for donor consultations and Workshops	According to the draft PIR2010, the PMU has briefed GTZ, USAID, Sida, WB (regional & Angola), and GEF on project progress and developed scopes for cooperation. However, this is hardly the “mobilization” of donor funding that was targeted. The project is unlikely to be able to meet this Indicator in the time available with a disbanded PMU.
SAP document drafted, circulated, discussed, finalized, and official endorsement/ signatures obtained from the riparian governments	This Indicator is too Specific to the SAP process – in fact it <i>is</i> the SAP formulation process and adds nothing. It is Measurable, Achievable and Attributable to the project. Relevant and Trackable .	These processes are relevant to the achievement of the Outcome	In this reporting period three NAP meetings in each of the countries and a regional SAP meeting was held. The PMU further developed a comprehensive strategy to finalize the SAP	The draft that has been produced does not meet the basic standards of a SAP. There is need therefore for a process to redefine the document during the proposed extension period.
Overall comments on the achievement of Outcome 3:				
The SAP has not been finalised with only a first draft having been produced. It is very unlikely that this Outcome will be achieved by the time of project closure. The evaluation team rates progress under this Outcome as Unsatisfactory (U) .				

4.3.3 Project impacts

4.3.3.1 Impact analysis

Outputs are the **immediate products** of the project's activities usually within the direct control of the project to deliver; **Outcomes** are the **short to medium term effects** of a project's outputs and are expected to outlive the project; whereas **Impacts**, are the **long-term effects** resulting from a project.

The achievements of Outputs which lead to Outcomes is assessed by LogFrame analysis which is mainly carried out by the Project M&E System, and confirmed by the TE with reliance on good Indicators. The conversion of Outcomes to Impacts often requires an Intermediate stage and this is assessed mainly by TE methodology. It is predicated by Assumptions, and is dependent on Impact Drivers which include Relevance, Sustainability and Catalytic effects.

The EPSMO project has achieved the majority of its Outputs and one of its Outcomes. Another Outcome is partly achieved, but its third Outcome is not. These have led to Intermediate Impacts as planned – namely, frameworks, networks, data bases, tools and methods. These foundational products of the project will, in turn, contribute to Impacts, in time and through the contributions of other interventions. These Impacts are expected to be both global and national.

Progress has been made by the project from Outputs to Outcomes which have been rated ranging from Moderately Satisfactory to Unsatisfactory; and progress has also been made from Outcomes to the Development Objective which has been rated as Moderately Satisfactory. The final step to achieve Global and National Impacts is dependent on the third Outcome, namely the SAP, being achieved after the project closes at the end of August. This will depend on a number of external assumptions being realized.

4.3.3.2 Global environmental impacts

The EPSMO project addressed the GEF Operational Programme #9: Integrated Land and Water Multiple Focal Area Programme, with a focus on “*Preventive measures to address threats to particular geographical areas that typically involve sustainable integrated land and water resources management practices*”. The goal of this Operational Programme is to help groups of countries utilize the full range of technical, economic, financial, regulatory, and institutional measures needed to operationalize sustainable development strategies for international waters and their drainage basins.

The project aimed to achieve strengthened mechanisms for joint management of the Okavango River Basin. This target fits well within the outcomes expected by OP#9 which include the long-term commitment on the part of governments, IAs, donors, and the GEF to leverage the intended sectoral changes to address the root causes of complex environmental problems. Impacts which result in damage to the water resources in one nation often occur upstream in another nation. There is therefore a need for political commitments on the part of neighbouring countries to work together, establish factual priorities, and decide on joint commitments for action. Such collaborative processes were expected to be fostered through the SAP formulation which in turn, must be based on the TDA.

The project objectives also represent a significant contribution to the provisions of the Revised Protocol on Shared Watercourse Systems of SADC. In addition, these objectives also address the concerns of Chapters 18, 10 and 12 of Agenda 21 dealing with freshwater, land resources and fragile ecosystems respectively. It is expected that an agreed SAP will provide a substantive basis for additional GEF support to all three countries for the sustainable management and utilisation of the globally significant ecosystem of the wetlands of the Okavango Delta.

The transboundary nature of the Okavango resource and its threats give it a global dimension and according to the ProDoc, *“The global community will benefit from the protection of a unique hydrological system and its related aquatic ecosystems, that would otherwise be threatened, and for which no equivalents exist.”* However, in project reports and other documentation, there is very little reference to or recognition of the global dimension of EPSMO. In other words, if the project is successful in achieving its Objective and Outcomes, global benefits will accrue, but they will be almost incidental.

4.3.3.3 Regional and national level impacts

At the regional level, the EPSMO project has promoted the formulation of strengthened mechanisms for joint management of the Okavango River Basin. The three riparian states have committed themselves to introducing sectoral changes that will help address the root causes of actual and potential environmental problems in this shared basin. This commitment will assist with the management of the transboundary implications of national actions through the introduction of joint management planning. Such collaborative processes will be fostered through the SAP formulation and implementation.

The project has also focussed on improving the understanding of the hydrological, ecological and socio-economic dynamics of the Okavango basin through a comprehensive Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis which is intended to feed into the formulation of a Strategic Action Programme. The studies that have been conducted through the TDA have improved the levels of understanding of the basin’s attributes at national level, particularly in Angola, where information had not been readily available. This improved awareness of the basin’s attributes will equip the countries for effective participation in the negotiations of the development imperatives that will inevitably characterise the SAP. The TDA and SAP processes have therefore had significant impacts on the capacities of institutions and individuals from the three riparian countries. Skills have been upgraded and there has been valuable exchanges of information and experience. Research and academic institutions that have participated in the TDA and SAP processes have attested to increased level of capacity having been gained from the processes. This increased capacity will readily translate into improved management decisions being taken in the implementation of development programmes in the Okavango basin.

The global, regional and national impacts of this project to date are inextricably intertwined and can be summarised as: effective collaboration mechanisms, effective tools and technical capacity to use them, and enhanced understanding of the Basin system (through the TDA). When the countries adopt an agreed, negotiated SAP and start implementing it, the ultimate impact will be enhanced quality of life for those who depend on the ORB for their habitat, sustenance, employment and well-being, and the protection of ecosystem values and services, on a sustainable basis.

4.3.4 Overall conclusion on project results and impacts

The project has achieved the outcome of collaboration among the three countries in the decision-making processes that affect water resources management and planning in the ORB. At the time of the evaluation there was evidence of all three countries meeting to discuss issues of common concern even though these were largely viewed and expressed from a national perspective. The TDA and initial SAP processes have gone a long way towards institutionalising this situation.

The project has however fallen short on the delivery of its two principal outcomes – the TDA and the SAP. The TDA is considered finalized, but some reservations remain; the SAP is still in an early draft stage. Both documents are still in draft and have not been officially approved by the three riparian states as the project termination date approaches. On the basis of this, the overall conclusion is that the project has not yet delivered on its intended results and more time is needed to ensure that its two key deliverables are secured.

4.4 Relevance, effectiveness³⁰ and sustainability

4.4.1 Relevance of the project to the needs of the ORB

Relevance, according to the OECD³¹ is a measure of the extent to which the objective and outcomes of a project are consistent with “*beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies.*” In other words, does the project address the identified threats and their root causes?

The threats to the Okavango ecosystem and their root causes were discussed in the ProDoc (see also section 1.1.2) and include unplanned water abstraction, increased effluent from point and non-point sources, and accelerated erosion and these are expected to be fully covered in the TDA and the SAP when completed. On the other hand, the root causes were seen to lie with patterns of socio-economic development – population growth, urbanisation and industrialisation, and EPSMO has not really addressed these.

The three Outcomes and the Objective of the project are very relevant to the needs of the ORB. The collaboration mechanisms have brought the three countries closer together, the TDA investigation has analyzed the physical threats in terms of water quantity and quality and socio-economic elements, and the SAP, when completed, will provide a strategic mechanism through which the three countries can provide for their needs while recognizing global values, by removing the threats to the ORB and possibly address their root causes.

Although the project does not address the root causes directly, the relevance of EPSMO initiatives to the needs of the ORB is considered **Satisfactory (S)**.

4.4.2 Effectiveness of project execution

The OECD (*op.cit.*) defines effectiveness as “*the extent to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved, taking into account their relative importance*” and the ProDoc synthesizes the project’s aims and targets in the ‘end of project situation’ as in the following table which also contains the Evaluators’ observations on the extent to which these targets have been met.

Table 16. Achievement of “End of Project” situation as foreseen by the ProDoc

END OF PROJECT SITUATION	EVALUATORS’ COMMENTS
Key institutional barriers to integrated management will have been overcome	Institutional barriers to integrated management may have been lowered, but they have not yet been overcome
Broad awareness about the state of the basin will have been raised at the national, regional and international levels. This will draw attention of decision makers to the critical planning needs and guarantee political and financial support for SAP implementation	Awareness about the state of the ORB has certainly been enhanced nationally, regionally and internationally, but it is not clear whether this has drawn the attention of decision-makers, and there is no discernible guarantee of political or financial support for SAP implementation
OKACOM will have been strengthened as both a political forum for involving key high level government officials to negotiate the sharing of transboundary water and as an initiator of policy shifts at national and regional level	OKACOM is a stronger forum as a result of the project, however, whether it is able to negotiate successfully and initiate policy shifts at national and regional level, remains to be tested
mechanisms for consultation, communication, and participation in all three riparian countries	Effective mechanisms of consultation and communication have been established by the project especially at national

³⁰ According to GEF guidance, “*Relevance and effectiveness will be considered as critical criteria. The overall outcome rating of the project may not be higher than the lowest rating on either of these two criteria. Thus, to have an overall satisfactory rating for outcomes a project must have at least satisfactory ratings on both relevance and effectiveness.*”

³¹ DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation (2002) *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management*. OECD, Paris.

	level, but also regionally; participation at a specific level has also taken place. However, the scope of consultation, communication and participation needs to be broader
an updateable knowledge base	The TDA, and particularly the GIS d-base are a useful product of the project
policy initiatives launched and cross sectoral integration mechanisms established	These targets have yet to be reached
a joint programme for management of the basin	Not achieved by the project and some time away yet
natural resource management capacity built at regional and national level	Not much evidence of this
finance mobilised for SAP implementation and beyond	Not yet started
The project will have demonstrated new collaborative approaches to transboundary water management that are based on open understanding and consensus while also fulfilling the countries' stated desires to understand and protect the basin in order to meet a potentially divergent range of national interests including disparate levels of socio-economic development, nature conservation, and eco-tourism	The project has indeed demonstrated a new collaborative approach to transboundary water management – this must now be extended beyond water and bring in considerations of the broader sectors and their potentially divergent interests, both at national and at regional level. The draft TDA is a good start, but the test is a negotiated and agreed SAP and this is some way off
Explicit links between this International Waters project and the GEF's biodiversity focal area are anticipated and will be articulated in the SAP. This is particularly the case in Botswana where natural resource conservation activities will be promoted on the basis of the water resource management analysis carried out in the project	In Botswana, ODMP and the BIOkavango projects are linked with EPSMO and effectively complement EPSMO for natural resource conservation.

In conclusion it can be said that while EPSMO implementation has been effective in its efforts to create mechanisms for collaboration and in achieving a strong body of knowledge in the form of a TDA (although some aspects are still a matter of contention) the achievement of an agreed and funded SAP is still elusive. Effectiveness is considered as **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

4.4.3 Sustainability Plan / Exit Strategy

4.4.3.1 The current situation

The ToRs for this TE define Sustainability as “*the extent to which benefits continue, within or outside the project domain, from a particular project or program after GEF assistance/external assistance has come to an end*”, and provide a list of factors to improve the sustainability of project outcomes. Top of the list is: “*Development and implementation of a sustainability strategy.*” In spite of repeated requests, the Evaluators have been unable to obtain anything from either the PMU or the EA which could serve as a sustainability plan. In fact, we have some doubts as to whether the term is understood³². Neither could we ascertain whether any of the other “*Relevant factors to improve the sustainability of project outcomes*” had been put in place by the project.

Under normal circumstances, at this stage of implementation, a project would be winding down its activities and implementing its exit strategy. At the time of writing (mid-August 2010), some two weeks from the operational closure date for the project, the two critical Outcomes, namely, the TDA and the SAP are not finalized and the Project Objective has not yet been achieved and neither the two Evaluators nor most of those consulted are confident that the SAP can be attained in the remaining time.

The draft Project Terminal Report is somewhat ambivalent in its conclusions. Regarding the TDA, it says that “*no significant delays are foreseen.*” However, it also says that “*comments received so far from Namibia could possibly result in an impasse*”.

³² We have had statements such as “*The exit strategy has always been an effective handover of all project outputs to OKASEC*”, with no further detail and no recognition that OKASEC does not even have the mandate to “accept” the project outputs.

Regarding the SAP, the draft Report says that *“the next step is for OKACOM to prioritize and restructure the initiatives and the coordination and funding mechanisms proposed in the draft SAP. OKACOM should:*

- a. *Agree on a overarching principles and policies for basin development based on TDA findings and recommendations,*
- b. *prioritize and restructure the proposed initiatives based on immediate and long terms priorities,*
- c. *further define national institutional linkages,*
- d. *commit and agree to funding mechanisms.”*

- all this in the remaining two weeks. According to the PMU, consultants are still to deliver on the tasks listed in the following table.

Table 17. Tasks still to be delivered by consultants, according to the PMU

SAP technical advisor TOR
Refine the existing logical framework for the SAP and define outcomes, outputs and activities in both the logical framework and the narrative report.
Develop indicative budgets for the main SAP components and sub-components
Define national components of SAP activities and link to National Action Programs (National Action Programs will be developed by National Consultants with support from SAP team)
Incorporate final TDA key findings, recommendations and the results of causal chain analysis in the SAP introduction to ensure a clear linkage between the TDA, SAP formulation and SAP implementation.
Develop a set of proposed monitoring indicators to be used to monitor the progress of the SAP implementation, based on 1) TDA findings 2) SAP priorities, and 3) the GEF IW M&E framework, from which the full M & E framework can be developed during the SAP implementation.
In consultation with SAP team, propose implementation mechanisms for SAP components and overall coordination mechanism for SAP implementation.
Develop a draft GEF Project Identification Form
NAP/SAP documentation specialist (most activities already done)
Develop presentation material and incorporate outputs from three NAP meetings in Angola, Botswana and Namibia
Develop presentation material and incorporate outputs from two regional meetings with the Okavango Basin Steering Committee
Participate in and incorporate inputs from two strategy meetings with the PMU and consultant teams
Develop a report template (outline) for the National Action Program including a matrix of project activities.
Incorporating outputs from National Action Program consultants develop and periodically update a matrix of ongoing and planned national and regional project activities and SAP priorities
Ensure that the NAP reports produced by the National Consultants are standardized and compatible.
Provide required input to the consultant finalizing the SAP and developing the project documents for the next phase of GEF funding
NAP consultants
Hold targeted consultations with key officials and review sector development plans, related to Water, Energy Agriculture, Land, Service Provision, Infrastructure Development and Environment to identify relevant ongoing and planned national government initiatives in Angola. Identify and describe clear linkages with proposed SAP activities. Fill in the requisite sections of the project comparison matrix to be provided by the PMU
Provide detailed overview of national budget allocations to the identified activities identified under 1. above.
Hold targeted consultations with key development partners and review project proposals to identify investments in Angola that compliment proposed SAP activities. Likewise also identify relevant national components of ongoing and planned regional projects. Fill in the requisite sections of the project comparison matrix to be provided by the PMU
Provide detailed overview of budget allocations to the activities identified under 3. above
Hold targeted consultations with key officials of the provincial governments of Kuando Kubango, Huambo, Bie, and Moxico to identify local level project activities (nature of activities, scope, sites, proposed budget, implementation mechanisms etc.) that compliment draft SAP initiatives. Likewise identify civil society organizations with relevant priorities or project ongoing or planned.
Respond to specific information requests and facilitate co-funding agreements towards the development of the GEF SAP Implementation project document
Develop presentations and facilitate discussions at two provincial NAP workshops to be held in the provinces of Huambo and Moxico. Record outcomes and incorporate in the NAP
Develop a presentation of the final SAP and the NAP and present to a national workshop in Luanda to mobilize support and develop an implementation plan

There is serious concern that the TDA which might be finalized before project closure may not be universally acceptable; and it is most unlikely that the SAP could be finalized by the time of project closure; in other words, the project will not achieve its Objective. The investment of US\$5.3 million by the GEF is in jeopardy. In these circumstances, an Exit Strategy is absolutely essential and the project does not have one – the situation is considered **Unsatisfactory (U)**.

4.4.3.2 Institutional and financial sustainability

The TDA is acknowledged as a document which could be improved through further gap filling, additional information and further analysis. Its DSS and the GIS database in particular will require frequent and regular updating and monitoring will require further financial resources. The project has not engaged in any plans to hand over its responsibilities for the TDA updating to any institution neither has it made plans for the funding support that will be required. The OKACOM Secretariat has been mentioned as a possible inheritor but it is widely acknowledged that the Secretariat does not have the mandate or the institutional capacity to take up these responsibilities. Considering that the project is closing in less than a month, the financial and institutional sustainability of the TDA is seen as **Moderately Unlikely (MU)**.

The SAP is in a more precarious situation institutionally – it is still at a draft stage and a great deal more work is required before it reaches a stage where it can be accepted as an agreed, negotiated document endorsed at ministerial level. The PMU is virtually disbanded and a number of consultancies are still running. It is unclear who their results are intended for and who will do what with them. As with the TDA, there is no clear, agreed and capacitated successor to the project.

Among the final activities scheduled by the project design under *Outcome 3: Strategic Action Programme (SAP) formulated*, was the mobilization of financial resources from the GEF and elsewhere as co-funding, through a donor conference and other arrangements for SAP implementation. This has not taken place and it is unlikely that it can take place within the time remaining, especially since the SAP is not available. In the circumstances, the institutional and financial sustainability for the SAP is considered as **Moderately Unlikely (MU)**.

4.4.3.3 The OKACOM Secretariat and sustainability

The OKACOM Secretariat was established in 2008 with a mandate to provide secretarial services to the Commission. The PMU worked well with OKASec, each within its defined mandate, but there was never an intention or a plan for OKASec to take over the functions of the EPSMO PMU when the project closed. Instead, there was an understanding that this was not the role or mandate of OKASec and neither did it have the capacity to assume these responsibilities. It is therefore surprising and verging on the naïve for FAO to stress that “*The exit strategy was always OKASEC*” when the Secretariat has neither the capacity nor the mandate to become involved in this way.

While this would seem like a “lost opportunity”, it was OKACOM's decision not to empower the Secretariat, at least for the time being, and the decision has repercussions for EPSMO both in the long and the short term.

For the long term, EPSMO could have made a strong logical case to OKACOM to extend the mandate of its Secretariat. It then could have assisted with capacity building of the Secretariat for the effective and reliable transfer of project management responsibilities and to ensure the sustainability of the project results (e.g., updating TDA and GIS database, coordinating SAP implementation, etc) in the long term.

In the short term, possibly the TDA and definitely the SAP will not be completed by the time of project closure and this TE is recommending a follow-up intervention to complete the work and secure the project Outcomes and Objective. Unfortunately, OKASec lacks the necessary capacity to take over the work that will remain unfinished at the end of the project and although it is the natural link to OKACOM, the involvement of the Secretariat as part of the sustainability mechanism for continuing project activities is circumscribed by its current mandate.

4.4.3.4 Options for salvaging the project results

Considering that the EPSMO project has been in trouble before and that in spite of all efforts devoted to it, it has still failed to deliver, one option is to let the project run its course, close it on 31 August and record the lessons learnt. However, this would be defeatist and OKACOM and the three Governments who put their faith in GEF, UNDP and FAO, would be let down.

Although it is possibly beyond their brief, the Evaluators feel justified in proposing an alternative option in an attempt to attain results and ensure their sustainability.

The approach outlined below is a possible response to what is in effect a crisis situation. It is put forward for consideration by the Project TPR at its meeting in August 2010.

1. The Project should close, and the PMU disbanded, on 31 August 2010, but with an understanding that the work will continue through a follow-up intervention by UNDP, in recognition of its ultimate responsibility for delivery, in collaboration with the Governments³³.
2. The Follow-Up intervention is a salvage operation which will be implemented by UNDP in the DEX modality over a period of six months starting on 01 September 2010 and ending at the end of February 2011.
3. This Terminal Evaluation will remain “open” until February 2011 when the Team will reconvene and an “update” or “addendum” will be prepared for the stakeholders and the GEF.
4. The purpose of the Follow-Up will be to:
 - Gain acceptance of the TDA throughout the ORB and have it officially accepted
 - Achieve a negotiated, agreed SAP, acceptable to the three Governments and the broader constituency of ORB stakeholders
 - Obtain formal endorsement of the SAP at the highest levels of the three Governments
 - Commence the preparation of necessary documentation for GEF support for the implementation of the SAP
 - Organize a Donors’ Conference and obtain pledges of co-funding support for SAP implementation
 - Design and implement an Exit Strategy which identifies and prepares those who are to assume responsibility for the TDA (refining and updating) and the SAP (implementation)
5. A Coordinator will be engaged on contract, by UNDP, to manage the Follow-Up intervention in close collaboration with the OKACOM Secretariat and with each of the three National Coordinators.
6. The Coordinator will be based in the office of the National Director of Water Resources in the Angolan Ministry of Energy and Water, Luanda. The Director is the past National Coordinator for Angola and Basin Planner for EPSMO and this arrangement will provide an excellent opportunity for mentoring and support.
7. The Coordinator will report to the UNDP Resident Representative in Angola as chair of the TPR.
8. Expertise in negotiation skills, SAP development, resource mobilization and GEF documentation drafting will be obtained through consultancies.
9. Funding for the Follow-Up intervention will be arranged by UNDP and the three Governments.

³³ Some stakeholders believe that the follow-up project should be “placed with OKACOM” with “the new Coordinator sitting in Maun with OKASEC (no splitting)”. The Evaluators do not consider this as a feasible option, hence the proposal that the follow-up be implemented in the DEX modality by UNDP.

5 RATINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Assessment summary and ratings

Table 18. Ratings summary

CRITERION	SUMMARY COMMENTS	RATING
PROJECT FORMULATION		
Project concept and design	The concept is sound but the design has one major flaw – the timescale is too short, and other lesser problems	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)
Stakeholder participation in formulation	There was a good level of stakeholder participation in the project formulation stages	Satisfactory (S)
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION		
Project Governance	Clarification of the role of the PSC and its close alignment with the TPR have been instrumental in providing more effective project governance and UNDP was able to reach agreement on its requirements with FAO, even though some aspects of the relationship remain contentious	Satisfactory (S)
Project Administration and Management	Project administration and management improved considerably following the MTE, however, a number of shortcomings remain	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)
Implementation Approach		
Use of the LogFrame and Adaptive Management	There is no evidence of systematic use of the LogFrame, or its monitoring and evaluation leading to adaptive management	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)
Partnerships	Partnerships were forged between EPSMO and other initiatives in the ORB	Satisfactory (S)
Stakeholder participation in implementation	Involvement of stakeholders in project implementation has been varied with OKACOM and technical/research institutions very well involved, but communities less so, mainly because of the nature of the tasks	Satisfactory (S)
Risk management	Risk management was not addressed properly in the ProDoc or by the PMU or the EA. The high risk that political agreement on the SAP could turn out to be elusive and could jeopardize the entire project, is still possible and there are no mitigation measures	Unsatisfactory (U)
Project finances		
Financial planning and management	The situation has improved measurably since the MTE, but some of the difficulties created by the different accounting systems and financial reporting approaches used by UNDP and FAO still persist	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)
Disbursement process	Significant improvements since the MTE, but more could have been effected and there are reported delays with the settlement of consultancy fees	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)
Co-financing	From the patchy and inconsistent information available, co-funding does not appear to have been effectively solicited, managed and monitored	Unsatisfactory (U)
Monitoring and Evaluation		
M&E Design, Plan and Budget	While the EPSMO project did carry out some monitoring activities, these were not according to an effective M&E Plan	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)
Project monitoring	The PIR was used effectively by UNDP for monitoring project progress, and while the Work Plan and the Quarterly Progress Reports indicate a degree of planning, there was no evident monitoring by the PMU or the EA	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)
PROJECT RESULTS : Attainment of Outcomes and achievement of Objective with reference to the Indicators		
Objective: <i>To alleviate imminent and long-term threats to the linked land and water systems of the OR through the joint management of the ORB water resources and the protection of its linked aquatic ecosystems, comprising all wetlands, fluvial and lacustrine systems, and their biological diversity</i>	While progress has been made towards it, the Objective of <i>alleviating imminent and long-term threats to the linked land and water systems of the ORB through joint management</i> , has not really been achieved.	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)
Outcome 1: <i>Strengthened mechanisms for joint management of the ORB put in place and functioning</i>	The Outcome sought <i>functioning mechanisms for joint management</i> and some mechanisms have been put in place but they are not functioning as effectively as they should.	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

CRITERION	SUMMARY COMMENTS	RATING
Outcome 2: Completed transboundary diagnostic analysis	Technical information has been collected, the DSS has been developed and a great deal of analysis carried out – significant progress has been made towards this Outcome, a final draft is available, and an OBSC meeting has reached consensus on it. However, some of the basic parameters are still being questioned and as has been symptomatic of EPSMO, different views are held on its robustness as a foundation for the SAP	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)
Outcome 3: Strategic Action Programme (SAP) formulated	The SAP has not been finalised. Only a first draft has been produced and it is very unlikely that this Outcome will be achieved by the time of project closure.	Unsatisfactory (U)
Relevance, Effectiveness and Sustainability		
Relevance	The project does not address the root causes directly, however, the EPSMO initiatives are relevant to the needs of the ORB	Satisfactory (S)
Effectiveness	EPSMO implementation has been effective in its efforts to create mechanisms for collaboration and in achieving a strong body of knowledge in the form of a TDA (although some aspects are still a matter of contention) the achievement of an agreed and funded SAP is still elusive.	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)
Institutional and financial sustainability of the TDA	Considering that the project is closing in less than two months, the financial and institutional sustainability of the TDA is precarious	Moderately Unlikely (MU)
Institutional and financial sustainability of the SAP	No formal handing over has taken place and neither has there been a donor conference – it is unlikely that they can take place within the time remaining, especially since the SAP is not available	Moderately Unlikely (MU)
Overall Sustainability Plan/Exit Strategy	There is serious concern that the TDA which might be finalized before project closure may not be universally acceptable; and it is most unlikely that the SAP could be finalized by the time of project closure; in other words, the project will not achieve its Objective. The investment of US\$5.3 million by the GEF is in jeopardy. An Exit Strategy is absolutely essential and the project does not have one	Unsatisfactory (U)
OVERALL PROJECT RATING	This is a project that was rescued from failure through the strong commitment of OKACOM and the three riparian Governments. However, although significant improvements have taken place since the MTE especially in project governance, the relationship between the IA and the EA remains a cause for concern. Progress has been made towards each of the three Outcomes, particularly Outcome 1; the TDA may be completed before project closure but the SAP is unlikely to be and the Project Objective will not be attained.	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 Overall conclusion

The LogFrame Matrix in Annex 3 of the ProDoc, listed the following as indicators of the satisfactory achievement of the three components :

- Consultative fora established
- Enabling environment (policy, law institutions and human resources) enhanced
- Public and private sector capacity to implement SAP
- OKACOM review completed and internalised
- Completed TDA
- SAP endorsed and financed

Guided by the above, the overall conclusion of the Evaluation Team is that the project has established consultative fora, enhanced the enabling environment at least partly, and raised

capacity for SAP implementation; and the OKACOM review was carried out under another project. However, EPSMO has failed to achieve one of its intended three Outcomes – the most important one. While dialogue has been maintained and improved among the three basin states as a result of their participation in the project, the countries have only just managed to finish the TDA and have failed to produce the SAP. The EA is making frantic efforts to have the TDA finalised before project closure on 31 August but it could turn out to be a weak document. The SAP is a document that should contain negotiated positions and agreements among the countries and although the EA might be able to produce a draft SAP document in the remaining time, it is unlikely that the negotiations that are needed to have this document financed and endorsed by all three countries and financed, will be concluded in the same timeframe. This is especially so because the issues contained in the SAP go beyond the water sector to include sectors such as agriculture, energy, health, tourism and economic development planning which have not been involved in the processes to date.

EPSMO had a very difficult beginning and it was rescued from failure through the strong commitment of OKACOM and the three riparian Governments. However, while some progress has been made towards each of the three Outcomes, particularly Outcomes 1 and 2, if the SAP is not completed by the project closure, the Project Objective will not have been attained.

5.2.2 Project design and formulation

The project was designed in response to a specific regional need. The three countries had already committed themselves to developing mechanisms to address the threats to the river basin that were becoming evident and GEF support, through the TDA/SAP approach, was to make this possible. As such, EPSMO was very relevant to the needs of the three riparian countries.

The model adopted for the design and implementation of the EPSMO project is a tried and tested model which has yielded positive results elsewhere. However, there have been reservations expressed about the one-size-fits-all approach applied by the GEF and questions were raised with the Evaluators on whether a different approach may have suited better the circumstances of the ORB, in particular the circumstances faced by Angola in the period immediately following a civil war; and the fact that contrary to most other water bodies worldwide, the ORB is comparatively unspoiled.

As stated in the MTE, a design flaw of the project was the three-year implementation timescale which did not take into account the disparities in capacity that existed among the riparian states, and the amount of time required to engage stakeholders and build relationships and trust before a document such as the SAP could be negotiated and agreed.

Project design also provided for the development of linkages between the project and on-going initiatives in the basin. The PMU developed an effective working relationship with OKASec but the latter was constrained by its mandate and lack of capacity. As a result, OKASec does not have the capacity to manage work that the PMU has been unable to finalize.

On a more positive note, the evaluation team concludes that the high level of ownership of the project by OKACOM and OBSC has served the project well.

5.2.3 Project governance

The problems that the project faced with governance at the time of the MTE were, in the main, resolved and roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders became better understood. Clarification of the role of the PSC and its close alignment with the TPR have been instrumental in providing more effective project governance.

As implementing agency, UNDP adopted a more proactive role since the MTE, particularly in the Principal Country Office in Angola. However, in spite of an Aide-Mémoire setting out relative roles and responsibilities, and regular email and telephone contact, the relationship between UNDP and FAO remained strained and there was a lack of cooperation between the two agencies.

The Governments have worked through OKACOM for the implementation of this project and this has been effective to date. However, there is now a need for them to assume a more active role and one involving a broader scope of actors and stakeholders to ensure that the SAP truly reflects the full national interest in each country.

5.2.4 Project administration and management

UNDP, as the agency ultimately accountable for the GEF funds, engaged FAO to serve as the Executing Agency for EPSMO which went through a very “difficult birth” that almost resulted in UNDP terminating it. Many of the difficulties arose as a result of the administrative procedures applied by FAO as the EA. They were also contributed to by the low level of buy-in by the UNDP COs and the fact that UNDP was not assertive enough in its requirements of FAO in the delivery of its contractual obligations. This, in turn, led FAO into assuming a greater level of control than is normally accorded to an EA – in fact FAO often operated as the IA, as well as the EA.

Communication between the EA and IA was reasonable with critical reports such as financial statements and PIRs delivered as required to UNDP by FAO. However, the Evaluation Team struggled to obtain the usual financial, risk management, monitoring, adaptive management, and sustainability planning from FAO or the PMU.

FAO, as the EA, established a PMU which, according to an OKACOM decision was based in Luanda. This decision, honoured by the IA and the EA, came at a cost. The project had to cover the expensive rent for the PMU premises as a result of a misunderstanding between the Angolan Government and the PMU/EA on procurement procedures and other processes. A further cost was the physical distance between the PMU and the OKASec in Maun which prevented a better level of collaboration.

Project management had suffered badly at the time of the MTE due to a breakdown in communication within the project. This Evaluation Team has established that the situation improved dramatically with the appointment of a new Project Manager who is credited with putting the project back on track and leading the progress that has been achieved towards the TDA and the SAP. However, at the time of writing, the PMU is virtually disbanded and these Outcomes have yet to be finalized and it is most unlikely that this additional work can be finalized by the end of August when the project is due to close. It is therefore imperative that the EA (in the absence of a functional PMU) produce a detailed Exit Strategy and this is discussed below.

5.2.5 Financial management

UNDP advised the Evaluators that although the situation has improved measurably since the MTE, some of the difficulties created by the different accounting systems and financial reporting approaches used by UNDP and FAO still persisted. FAO advised the Evaluators that there is a communication problem between UNDP Angola and UNDP NY. The Evaluators are confused, but one thing is clear – the financial systems used by the two agencies are not compatible.

A TA is still required as per FAO rules, but the travel approval process and the issuing of tickets has been streamlined; and although an imprest account was not created and funds were not transferred as recommended by the MTE, authorization was vested in the PM.

We have been alerted to inexplicable delays with the settlement of consultancy fees. FAO advised that fees were disbursed within 2-3 days after confirmation by the PM that the outputs have been delivered by the consultants and this would seem to indicate that the hold-up was at the PMU level.

In spite of significant improvements since the MTE, some of the difficulties created by the different accounting systems and financial reporting approaches used by UNDP and FAO still persisted. An illustration of the lack of financial competency is provided by the patchy and inconsistent information available to us on co-financing which has not been solicited, managed and monitored effectively.

5.2.6 Results and impacts achieved

Overcoming the stalemate which had been reached at the time of the MTE cannot have been easy and the project is recognized widely as having made good progress towards all its targets and achieved some. Unfortunately, the LogFrame matrix and its indicators are not helpful when trying to determine what progress the project has made towards its Objective and Outcomes. The project proceeded without meaningful Indicators of progress towards the Objective and we conclude that while progress has been made towards it, the Objective of *alleviating imminent and long-term threats to the linked land and water systems of the OR through joint management*, has not really been achieved, and is unlikely to be achieved by the time of project closure. Representations made to the Evaluators also noted that the wording of the Objective was somewhat extravagant and unrealistic within the circumstances and the available timeframe.

Outcome 1 sought *functioning mechanisms for joint management* and by using the Indicators selected, it is very difficult to determine if this has been achieved. We are therefore relying on documents we have reviewed and consultations we have had with stakeholders as well as the PIRs and the PMU self-assessment to assess the extent to which "*mechanisms for joint management*" have been "*put in place*" by the project and whether these are "*functioning*". We have concluded from our findings that some mechanisms have been put in place but they are not functioning as effectively as they should.

Outcome 2 sought the completion of a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis for the basin. Technical information has been collected, the DSS has been developed and a great deal of analysis has been carried out. However, there is concern that the TDA which is due to go to the printer will not have the full ownership required to serve as a robust foundation for the SAP.

The SAP targeted as Outcome 3 has not been finalised with only a first draft having been produced; and, it is very unlikely that this Outcome will be achieved by the time of project closure.

The transboundary nature of the Okavango resource and the threats it faces give it a global dimension and this is the reason why GEF is involved. However, in project reports and other documentation, there is very little reference to or recognition of the global dimension of EPSMO. In other words, if the project is successful in achieving its Objective and Outcomes, global benefits will accrue, but they will be almost incidental.

The global, regional and national impacts of this project to date are inextricably intertwined and can be summarised as: effective collaboration mechanisms, effective tools and technical capacity to use them, enhanced understanding of the Basin system (through the TDA). When the countries adopt an agreed, negotiated SAP and start implementing it, the ultimate impact will be enhanced quality of life for those who depend on the ORB for their habitat, sustenance, employment and well-being, and the protection of ecosystem values and services, on a sustainable basis.

EPSMO implementation has been effective in its efforts to create mechanisms for collaboration; it has also been effective in achieving a strong body of knowledge in the form of a TDA (although some aspects are still a matter of contention); but the achievement of an agreed and funded SAP is still elusive.

5.2.7 Monitoring, evaluation and adaptive management

The EPSMO project did carry out some monitoring activities, but these were not according to an effective M&E Plan because none existed. As a result, while the PIR was used effectively by UNDP for monitoring project progress, and while the Work Plan and the Quarterly Progress Reports indicate a degree of planning, there was no evident active monitoring of project performance by the PMU or the EA. Neither is there any evidence of systematic use of the LogFrame, or its monitoring and evaluation leading to adaptive management.

5.2.8 Risk management

Risk management was not addressed properly in the ProDoc and, it seems, that it was not addressed actively by the PMU or the EA either. The high risk that political agreement on the SAP could turn out to be elusive and could jeopardize the entire project, is still possible and there are no mitigation measures.

5.2.9 Government involvement and commitment

The three Governments of Angola, Namibia and Botswana are the project owners through the Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) which was established by the Governments in 1994. The three Governments agreed, contractually, to receive GEF funds and to abide by the procedures of the implementing agency, namely UNDP, according to their respective Standard Basic Assistance Agreements (SBAA) with UNDP. These procedures comprise the legal basis for the project.

The Governments have worked through OKACOM for the purpose of this project, and they have been well served.

Country level involvement in project implementation has been effected almost exclusively by the OKACOM Commissioners and the OBSC members acting upon the mandate given them by their respective Governments. The project has now reached a critical point where the issues it has to deal with go beyond those that were originally targeted. The SAP will require the involvement of more sectors than just water and environment. As a policy document, it will also require accession by authorities higher than OKACOM representatives in each country. As part of the process towards conclusion of the SAP, all sectors that have a stake in the basin need to be involved in the negotiations.

5.2.10 Stakeholder involvement

As observed at the time of the MTE, stakeholder involvement in project implementation has been varied, with OKACOM and technical/research institutions very well involved, but communities less so, mainly because of the nature of the tasks, and in spite of their mobilisation in the early stages of the Okavango basin initiative through the ERP. Institutions such as the UNDP Country Offices in the three riparian countries have also not been as actively involved as they should have been. This may have resulted in the project not being as effectively integrated into national planning processes as it could have been with greater involvement.

The MTE observed that the distinguishing feature of the EPSMO project was that it created a holistic basin-wide context within which other initiatives in the Basin could be nested. This feature

also allowed for the seamless transfer and adoption of relevant and critical programme elements across projects when they ended. Typical examples in the case of EPSMO were with the Okavango Improved River Basin Management Project (IRBM) funded by USAID, and “Every River Has its People” (ERP) funded by SIDA. While no formal agreement for collaboration was finalized, the three projects agreed in principle to coordinate their efforts and a list of indicative follow-up actions was drawn up. However the evaluators found no evidence of EPSMO having adopted elements of these other initiatives after they were closed. The SAREP follow-on has just been contracted as EPSMO closes. It will be critical that the synergy between these initiatives is clearly defined and used to ensure that available resources are effectively deployed to focus on priority actions that are required to advance ORB processes.

5.2.11 Sustainability

There is serious concern that the TDA which might be finalized before project closure may not be universally acceptable; and it is most unlikely that the SAP could be finalized by the time of project closure; in other words, the project will not achieve its Objective. The investment of US\$5.3 million by the GEF is in jeopardy. In these circumstances, an Exit Strategy is absolutely essential and the project does not have one.

A request to the PMU and EA by the Evaluation Team for an exit strategy detailing budgeted activities that need to be implemented to ensure the finalization of the two project outcomes and their subsequent sustainability has not yielded any results. The best the team has received is an itemization of activities in the draft Terminal Report shared with us by the Project Manager. This is a serious shortcoming on the part of the PMU and the EA compounded by the fact that the EA is proceeding to issue contracts to consultants to finalize a SAP even when it is clear that this process will not be finalized before 31 August at project closure; and that does not take into account the need for the SAP to be negotiated, agreed and endorsed.

Considering that the EPSMO project has been in trouble before and that in spite of all the effort that has been devoted to it, it has still failed to deliver, one option is to let the project run its course, close it on 31 August and record the lessons learnt. However, this would be defeatist and it would mean that OKACOM and the three Governments who put their faith in GEF, UNDP and FAO, would be let down.

An alternative option, in response to what is in effect a crisis situation, is put forward by the Evaluation Team for consideration by the Project TPR at its last meeting in August 2010.

5.3 Lessons emerging

There are many lessons that can be drawn from the conclusions above and while most of these are applicable primarily to this project, some may be of broader value. Most arise out of roles and responsibilities, processes and procedures, and governance.

Following on its early difficulties, the project strived to carry out all the planned activities and achieve its targeted Outcomes. While the budget appeared adequate, the **timescale** of three years was overly optimistic. It would seem that the time allowed for stakeholder engagement in GEF projects is often too short.

The lack of clarity in the respective **roles of IA and EA** was a critical factor in the difficulties faced by this project. The lesson is that UNDP may need to re-consider its policy of engaging an agency that is also a GEF IA, as the EA for its regional projects,.

Another factor which created difficulties for the project was the **low level of engagement by UNDP**

COs and in spite of the high level of engagement by the UNDP/RTA, UNDP may need to review its approach to regional projects and the role and function of COs in regional projects. This may need to be framed within the availability of IA resources that UNDP receives as a GEF Implementing Agency.

The purpose of **Indicators** is often misunderstood and rather than serving as an effective tool for assessing project progress, they become a useless, but time consuming exercise at project formulation and are then impossible to reconcile at project implementation. Guidance is required on setting and using Indicators so as to ensure their usefulness.

The **timing of TEs** needs to be reconsidered. It would probably be most effective if it is carried out soon after the final PIR is available.

The importance of a robust **Exit Strategy and Sustainability Plan** cannot be over-stated and there is a need for guidance on what is exactly required. In particular, a project must identify a champion and nurture it/him/her so the project legacy can be passed on.

Co-funding needs to be taken more seriously and the GEF rules and procedures surrounding co-funding must be rationalized. If in-kind contributions by government are to be accepted as co-funding they must be based on reality and must then be accounted for. If it is simply to satisfy some bureaucratic requirement at project formulation and approval, then it should not be raised to a higher level of importance than it deserves, e.g. in the PIRs.

The **LogFrame or Strategic Results Framework** needs to be reviewed annually, as part of the PIR exercise, and the process should extend into considerations of adaptive management, this then to be reflected in the AWP.

IW foundational projects depend on a clear understanding of **the TDA/SAP process** by all key stakeholders. This must be established at the beginning of the project so as to clarify the relationship between the TDA and the SAP. The MTE recommendation of a workshop on GEF, the TDA/SAP process and related matters has merit.

Although it is a tenet of GEF policy that Implementing Agencies apply their own procedures to Terminal Evaluations, there is a need to reconsider the **appropriateness of an EA issuing contracts** for the evaluation of its own performance – the independence of the evaluators and the quality of the evaluation could be jeopardized by this practice.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Terminal Evaluations do not normally make many recommendations, and any recommendations made usually focus on sustainability of project benefits. The recommendations below do address sustainability but before project benefits can be sustained, they need to be achieved. This TE is therefore also focused on the achievement of the TDA and SAP. The recommendations are addressed to the TPR meeting unless otherwise indicated.

6.1 Issue: Project closure

The project is due to close on 31 August 2010 after a no-cost, four-month extension. The PMU has effectively been disbanded already and the project premises relinquished on 31 July 2010.

Recommendations:

6.1.1 It is recommended that UNDP close the project operationally as planned on 31 August 2010, and conclude all contracts for project personnel, consultants and the Executing Agency. It should also initiate the financial closure of the project in collaboration with the EA, for the purpose of the GEF funds.

6.1.2 It is recommended that stakeholders, in particular GEF, be advised by UNDP that project closure on 31 August is made on the understanding that the work will continue through a follow-up intervention by UNDP, in recognition of the IA's ultimate responsibility for delivery, in collaboration with the Governments.

6.1.3 It is recommended to GEF that it considers this Terminal Evaluation as remaining "open" until February 2011 when the Team could reconvene and an "update" or "addendum" could be prepared for the stakeholders and the GEF.

6.2 Issue: Achievement of Project Objective and Outcomes

In early August 2010, less than a month from project closure, the TDA had been virtually finalized but some reservations remained; and the SAP was still at a preliminary draft stage. In effect, the project has not achieved one of its three Outcomes and therefore neither has it reached its Objective.

Recommendations:

6.2.1 It is recommended that any follow-up intervention should assist the OBSC to reach consensus on those aspects of the TDA that require further work, and signal that this further work would be carried out as part of the SAP "package". The follow-up should engage an expert, preferably from the region, who commands the respect of OBSC membership, to facilitate the effort.

6.2.2 It is recommended that the completion of a negotiated and agreed SAP, ready for endorsement at the highest levels of each country, in an equivalent of a regional treaty, be the highest priority of the follow-up intervention. UNDP should engage experts, preferably from the region, to work with OBSC and develop the draft SAP further in terms of scope, contents and format, and to assist the three Governments with the negotiation process.

6.2.3 It is also recommended that in an effort to be strategic, the SAP should establish agreed Environmental Quality Objectives for the ORB, agreed Principles to be adhered to by the three Governments, and other "bottom lines" for future protection and management and development of the ORB.

6.3 Issue: The Follow-up Project

Completion of the SAP will require the follow-up intervention to take the form of a project which will focus on the document as a priority, but which will also assist UNDP and the Governments to carry out other activities targeted by the original ProDoc or required to enhance sustainability.

Recommendations:

6.3.1 It is recommended that the Follow-up Project be implemented by UNDP in the DEX modality over a period of six months starting on 01 September 2010 and ending at the end of February 2011.

6.3.2 It is recommended that the purpose and scope of the Follow-up Project will be to:

- Gain acceptance of the TDA throughout the ORB and have it officially accepted

- Achieve a negotiated, agreed SAP, acceptable to the three Governments and the broader constituency of ORB stakeholders
- Obtain formal endorsement of the SAP at the highest levels of the three Governments
- Commence the preparation of necessary documentation for GEF support for the implementation of the SAP
- Organize a Donors' Conference and obtain pledges of co-funding support for SAP implementation
- Design and implement an Exit Strategy which identifies and prepares those who are to assume responsibility for the TDA (refining and updating) and the SAP (implementation)

6.3.3 It is recommended that a Coordinator be engaged on contract, by UNDP, to manage the Follow-up Project in close collaboration with the OKACOM Secretariat and with each of the three National Coordinators. The Coordinator should be based in the office of the National Director of Water Resources in the Angolan Ministry of Energy and Water in Luanda, as this arrangement will provide an excellent opportunity for mentoring and support. The Coordinator should report to the UNDP Resident Representative in Angola as chair of the TPR.

6.3.4 It is recommended that, as noted above, the necessary expertise in negotiation skills, SAP development, resource mobilization and GEF documentation drafting should be obtained through consultancies awarded under the Follow-up Project.

6.3.5 It is recommended that funding for the Follow-up Project should be arranged by UNDP and the three Governments.

6.4 Issue: Sustainability arrangements

Circumstances have resulted in a situation where the EPSMO project has identified OKASec as its successor to take over its activities and provision of services, which will be on-going, in particular the implementation of the SAP which must be owned by the Governments if it is to be successful. Unfortunately, OKASec is unable to take on these responsibilities under its current mandate and with its current capacity.

Recommendations:

6.4.1 It is recommended that through the Follow-up Project, UNDP should seek the collaboration of SIDA to provide an opportunity for OKACOM to review its Secretariat and assess its needs if it is to assume responsibility for the coordination of SAP implementation.

6.4.2 It is recommended that the three Governments acknowledge that although it has been effective to date, OKACOM requires a broader base to assume a more active role and one involving a broader scope of actors and stakeholders to ensure that the SAP truly reflects the full national interest in each country for the ORB.

6.4.3 It is recommended that the EPSMO NCUs be reconstituted as truly Inter-Ministerial Committees at senior level with a function to set policy directions and track progress with the implementation of the agreed Okavango Basin SAP. Membership of the Committees is at the discretion of the Governments and should include (and possibly be chaired by) institutions with an overall national planning overview such as Foreign Affairs, National Planning, Attorney General's Office and Ministry of Finance.