**ANNEX K Matrix for the Assessment of the Quality of Project Design**

(from Inception Report)

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| **Relevance** | **Evaluation Comments** | **Prodoc****Reference** |
| Are the intended results likely to contribute to UNEPs Expected Accomplishments and programmatic objectives? | Yes, after revisions and broadening the scope of the project during implementation, the intended results are in line with UNEP’s current PoW (2012 – 2013) and contribute to fulfill the objectives outlined in the Medium-term Strategy 2010-13, in particular as regards ecosystem management and environmental governance. | Para 15 |
| Does the project form a coherent part of a UNEP-approved programme framework? | There was no logframe included in the original PD. The five original objectives were only related to the implementation of the Carpathian Convention and can be seen as a part of a UNEP’s Environmental Governance Thematic Priority at that time and contribute to policy implementation of the UNEP biannual programme 2004-2005 (UNEP/GC.22/6). Furthermore, the project design contributed to several components of the 3rd Montevideo Programme related to effectiveness of environmental, conservation and management and relationships with other fields and is catalyzing regional cooperation.Currently, a follow up project has been included into the approved SP-Governance of the 2014-2017 Programme Framework. | Para 16 |
| Is there complementarity with other UNEP projects, planned and ongoing, including those implemented under the GEF? | Yes, several projects can be mentioned:* ENVSEC (Environment and Security Initiative)
* MDGF in BiH (project designed to address and overcome the significant barriers faced in effectively environmental services and management at local level)
* One UN, Albania, Montenegro
* current GEF projects in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro and Macedonia
* the future TIM (Transboundary Institutional Mechanisms) project
 | Refers to several para |
| Are the project’s objectives and implementation strategies consistent with: | i) Sub-regional environmental issues and needs? | There is clear consistency with sub-regional environmental issues and needs, the project contributes to global and regional legally binding MEA’s (e.g. the Biodiversity Protocol of the CC is clearly coherent with the CBD, in addition a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed in 2008). Furthermore, there is proven consistency with EU strategies, e.g. involvement in the development of the Strategy for the Danube Region. | Para 16, 17 |
| ii) the UNEP mandate and policies at the time of design and implementation? | The 3rd Montevideo Programme included components related to effectiveness of environmental law, conservation and management and relationship with other fields. The project as originally designed is contributing to these components and is catalyzed regional cooperation by:* developing, facilitating and entry into force of the CC
* opening of the UNEP Vienna – ISCC
* supporting environmental cooperation in SEE
* acting as Focal Point for Mountain Partnership
* liaising with relevant organizations
 | Para 16 |
| iii) the relevant GEF focal areas, strategic priorities and operational programme(s)? (if appropriate) | With respect to GEF-5 focal areas strategies and priorities, numerous project activities related to biodiversity, sustainable forest management and cross-cutting capacity development strategy are successfully implemented. | Para 17 |
| iv) Stakeholder priorities and needs? | The project was built up on existing initiatives – a huge network of institutions and organizations taking the needs into account. Numerous examples for successful stakeholder involvement can be listed:* Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative(CEI) which put the region ‘on the map’ and its follow-up programme (CERI)
* Danube-Carpathian Summit – a milestone on the way to a regional agreement and a baseline for future stakeholder involvement
* Dinaric Arc Initiative
* Science for the Carpathians (S4C)
* Etc.
 | Para 12, 18, 27, 34 |
| **Overall rating for Relevance** | **HS** |  |
| **Intended Results and Causality** |  |  |
| Are the objectives realistic? | Yes, outcomes are realistic but the project is an ongoing process | Para 19, 22. 24 |
| Are the causal pathways from project outputs [goods and services] through outcomes [changes in stakeholder behaviour] towards impacts clearly and convincingly described? Is there a clearly presented Theory of Change or intervention logic for the project? | The intervention logic is basically summarized in the PD Supplement – there is no Theory of Change presented | Section 4 |
| Is the timeframe realistic? What is the likelihood that the anticipated project outcomes can be achieved within the stated duration of the project?  | Not applicable, as the project is a continuous activity and the need for an ongoing process | Para 22 |
| Are the activities designed within the project likely to produce their intended results? | Probably yes, but not until the end of the project, as it is an ongoing process | Para 22, 25 |
| Are activities appropriate to produce outputs? | Same as above |  |
| Are activities appropriate to drive change along the intended causal pathway(s)? | Same as above | Section 4 |
| Are impact drivers, assumptions and the roles and capacities of key actors and stakeholders clearly described for each key causal pathway? | Casual pathways are not described, as there is no ToC; few assumptions are mentioned in the original PD and the roles of key actors are described. | Section 4 |
| **Overall rating for Intended Results and causality** | **MS**  |  |
| **Efficiency** |  |  |
| Are any cost- or time-saving measures proposed to bring the project to a successful conclusion within its programmed budget and timeframe? | Not really applicable as the project supports ongoing processes and lessons learned will be applied in the next generation of the project.  | Para 22 |
| Does the project intend to make use of / build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency? | Yes, numerous projects and initiatives | Para 34 |
| **Overall rating for Efficiency** | **S** |  |
| **Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic effects** |  |  |
| Does the project design present a strategy / approach to sustaining outcomes / benefits? | Yes, as the Carpathian Convention is itself a sustaining strategy and project replicates these experiences in other parts of this sub-region; there are many project examples in the Balkans and other mountain regions. | Para 33 |
| Does the design identify the social or political factors that may influence positively or negatively the sustenance of project results and progress towards impacts? Does the design foresee sufficient activities to promote government and stakeholder awareness, interests, commitment and incentives to execute, enforce and pursue the programmes, plans, agreements, monitoring systems etc. prepared and agreed upon under the project? | Yes, in particular the partnership with and support by EU macro-regional strategies and funding programmes contributing to governmental ownership and strengthening implementation (several EU Carpathian projects, e.g. BioREGIO Carpathians, ACCESS 2MOUNTAIN, etc. | Para 28 |
| If funding is required to sustain project outcomes and benefits, does the design propose adequate measures / mechanisms to secure this funding?  | Yes, through assessed and voluntary contributions by governments as well as supporting projects. |  |
| Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project results and onward progress towards impact? | Yes, financial crisis may have major impacts and may affect implementation specifically on national level. | Para 30, 37 |
| Does the project design adequately describe the institutional frameworks, governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. required to sustain project results? | The project itself created the governance structure of the CC, rules of procedures and financial rules of the CC;UNEP Vienna – ISCC services are still on an interim basis however and the secretariat’s mandate needs to be clarified. | Section 2Para 27 |
| Does the project design identify environmental factors, positive or negative, that can influence the future flow of project benefits? Are there any project outputs or higher level results that are likely to affect the environment, which, in turn, might affect sustainability of project benefits? | Project addresses countries and economies in transition, possible negative impacts of the developments need to be mitigated, which is one of the core principles of the CC. | Para 29 |
| Does the project design foresee adequate measures to catalyze behavioural changes in terms of use and application by the relevant stakeholders of (e.g.):  | i) technologies and approaches show-cased by the demonstration projects; | Yes, several examples can be mentioned:* ACCESS2MOUNTAIN
* BioREGIO Carpathians
* Alps – Carpathian Corridor
 | In several para |
| ii) strategic programmes and plans developed | Yes, through several protocols of the CC, like Biodiversity Protocol, Forest Protocol, Tourism Protocol | Section 2 |
| iii) assessment, monitoring and management systems established at a national and sub-regional level | Yes, worthwhile to mention are:* Science for the Carpathians
* CC information system
* Assessments in the Danube river basin
* Cooperation with EEA
 |  |
| Does the project design foresee adequate measures to contribute to institutional changes? [An important aspect of the catalytic role of the project is its contribution to institutional uptake or mainstreaming of project-piloted approaches in any regional or national demonstration projects] | CC signed and adopted by seven countries,EU Strategy for the Danube Region influenced, etc. | Section 1 Section 2Para 28 |
| Does the project design foresee adequate measures to contribute to policy changes (on paper and in implementation of policy)? | On paper yes, but policy implementation is depended on political and economic situation in the countries, effective capacity building for stakeholders to engage in EU programmes  |  |
| Does the project design foresee adequate measures to contribute to sustain follow-on financing (catalytic financing) from Governments, the GEF or other donors? | Follow-up platform for the development of projects and close interaction with United Nations Country Teams (e.g. GEF project development) and EU and partnerships with national and regional governments in EU projects | Para 29 |
| Does the project design foresee adequate measures to create opportunities for particular individuals or institutions (“champions”) to catalyze change (without which the project would not achieve all of its results)? | Yes, on one hand there are the Focal Points, on the other hand, several National park Directors within the Carpathian Network of Protected Areas, representatives from the scientific and NGO community, e.g. WWF | Several para |
| Are the planned activities likely to generate the level of ownership by the main national and regional stakeholders necessary to allow for the project results to be sustained? | Implementation work is in progress, currently there are three protocols signed (biodiversity, forest, tourism); but there is cross – sectoral coordination necessary to get other sectors involved, e.g. transport, energy, | Section 2Para 23 |
| **Overall rating for Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic effects** | **L ??? (the evaluator is unsure of the rating and wishes to learn more from interviewee which will then be reflected in the main evaluation report)** |  |
| **Risk identification and Social Safeguards** |  |  |
| Are critical risks appropriately addressed? | There are critical risks (economic, social, financial, environmental) as the project is implemented in countries in transitions. There is the clear need to identify and mitigate those risks and political support is needed from all sectors. The project addresses these needs and aims to improve governance on national, regional and transboundary level. | Para 37 |
| Are assumptions properly specified as factors affecting achievement of project results that are beyond the control of the project? | In the original PD (2003) some few assumptions are mentioned. | Section 4 |
| Are potentially negative environmental, economic and social impacts of projects identified? | Yes, a background paper ‘The Carpathians – existing instruments and programmes and a Carpathian sector analysis’ (December 2002) identified potential impacts and results were used in the negotiation process towards the CC;Furthermore, in each of the project concepts/proposals for funding. |  |
| **Overall rating for** **Risk identification and Social Safeguards** | **S**  |  |
| **Governance and Supervision Arrangements** |  |  |
| Is the project governance model comprehensive, clear and appropriate? | Yes, UNEP Vienna – ISCC office established. | Section 1 and 2 |
| Are roles and responsibilities clearly defined? | There is the need to clarify roles and responsibilities; furthermore, there is the pending decision concerning the permanent secretariat. | Para 23, 27 |
| Are supervision / oversight arrangements clear and appropriate? | Delegation of authority to ISCC needs to be clarified/strengthened/formalized. | Para 23 |
| **Overall rating for Governance and Supervision Arrangements** |  **U**  |  |
| **Management, Execution and Partnership Arrangements** |  |  |
| Have the capacities of partners been adequately assessed? | Main partners are governments of countries with economies in transition. |  |
| Are the execution arrangements clear? | There is the need to distinguish activities as part of the UNEP PoW and the PoW of the CC. Since an important bulk of activities of the Carpathian Convention PoW, which are not within the UNEP PoW, will be managed through the Carpathian Convention Trust Fund in the future, there is a need to develop a follow up project encompassing the activities, which are part of the UNEP Programme of work and implemented by UNEP Vienna – ISCC.  | Para 38 |
| Are the roles and responsibilities of internal and external partners properly specified? | The project has mainly external partners and it seems that their roles and responsibilities are defined. |  |
| **Overall rating for Management, Execution and Partnership Arrangements** | **MS** |  |
| **Financial Planning / budgeting** |  |  |  |
| Are there any obvious deficiencies in the budgets / financial planning? | There are no deficiencies in budget / financial planning, nevertheless it should be mentioned that one part of the financial planning is done by CC, the other part by UNEP PoW. |  |
| Is the resource utilization cost effective? Is the project viable in respect of resource mobilization potential? | Yes, see above projects and additional support by bilateral donors (Austria, Italy, ...).  | Para 36 |
| Are the financial and administrative arrangements including flows of funds clearly described? | Yes for the CC, a number of supporting ‘projects’ are handled as activities of the present project. |  |
| **Overall rating for Financial Planning / budgeting** | **S** |  |
| **Monitoring** |  |  |
| Does the logical framework:* capture the key elements of the Theory of Change for the project?
* have ‘SMART’ indicators for outcomes and objectives?
* have appropriate 'means of verification'?
* identify assumptions in an adequate manner?
 | Originally, there was no logframe included in the PD, the revised project design presents outcomes, outputs (but confusion with terminology) and milestones; there are indicators and means of verification included; assumptions are not addressed in an adequate manner. | Section 4 |
| Are the milestones and performance indicators appropriate and sufficient to foster management towards outcomes and higher level objectives? | There are quantitative indicators, but no qualitative ones  |  |
| Is there baseline information in relation to key performance indicators? |  Yes – in the retrofitted framework  |  |
| Has the method for the baseline data collection been explained? | No  |  |
| Has the desired level of achievement (targets) been specified for indicators of outcomes and are targets based on a reasoned estimate of baseline? | Since retrofitting the project design yes |  |
| Has the time frame for monitoring activities been specified? | Continuous monitoring within the CC institutional framework; application of PIMS for UNEP PoW | Para 39 |
| Are the organisational arrangements for project level progress monitoring clearly specified? | Yes, on several levels:* in the framework of CC
* UNEP result-based management methodology
* ENVSEC evaluation
 |  |
| Has a budget been allocated for monitoring project progress in implementation against outputs and outcomes? | Only for the ENVSEC evaluation |  |
| Overall, is the approach to monitoring progress and performance within the project adequate?  | Yes, as now included in the PIMS |  |
| **Overall rating for Monitoring** | **MS** |  |
| **Evaluation** |  |  |
| Is there an adequate plan for evaluation? | The original project design included only a self evaluation. | Para 39, 53 |
| Has the time frame for evaluation activities been specified? | No |  |
| Is there an explicit budget provision for mid-term review and terminal evaluation? | There is no budget provision for the mid-term review, for the final evaluation funding is extremely limited as it was not scheduled right from the beginning. | Para 39 |
| Is the budget sufficient? | No, due to this financial constraints the terminal evaluation is carried out under several limitations. |  |
| **Overall rating for Evaluation** | **U** |  |