Removing Barriers to Invasive Plant Management in Africa (RBIPMA) UNEP DGEF: GFL/2328-2711-4890

Consolidated Mid Term Review Report

FINAL VERSION

Report to the **Division of Global Environment Facility Coordination**
UNEP, Nairobi

Prepared by **MTR International Team Leader**

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John Howes

27 September 2008
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

List of Abbreviations

AC	Advisory Committee
AfDB	African Development Bank
AGIS	Agricultural and Geographical Information Systems
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
BL	Budget Line
CABI	CABI Africa
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	Community-based Organization
COP	Conference of Parties
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (Ghana)
EA	Executing Agency
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West Africa States
ECZ	Environmental Council of Zambia
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIAR	Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research
EMP	Ecosystem Management Plan
EPA	Education and Public Awareness
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority (Ethiopia)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FNDP	Fifth National Development Plan (Zambia)
FY	Financial Year
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEFSEC	GEF Secretariat
GIS	Geographic Information System
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
GoG	Government of Ghana
GoU	Government of Uganda
GPS	Global Positioning System
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HEP	Hydro Electric Power
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
IPS	Invasive Plant Species
IWM	Integrated Weed Management
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature (World Conservation Union)
LNP	Lochinvar National Park (Zambia)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (Uganda)
MoARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ethiopia)
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports (Uganda)
MOFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Ghana)
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTENR	Ministry Of Tourism, Environment and Natural Resources (Zambia)
MTTI	Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry (Uganda)
MTR	Mid Term Review
NARO	National Agricultural Research Organisation (Uganda)
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCU	National Coordination Unit

NEA	National Executing Agency
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority (Uganda)
NFA	National Forestry Authority (Uganda)
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NISSAP	National Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan
NP	National Park
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NPD	National Project Director
NSC	National Steering Committee
OPARD	Office of Pastoralist, Agriculture and Rural Development (Ethiopia)
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
PDF	Project Development Fund
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan (Uganda)
PMA	Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (Uganda)
PSC	Pilot Site Coordinator
PSMC	Pilot Site Management Committee
PSO	Pilot Site Office
1Q	First Quarter
RBIPMA	Removing Barriers to Invasive Plant Management in Africa
SMC	Site Management Committee
SOW	Statement of Work
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USD	United States Dollar
VRA	Volta River Authority (Ghana)
WB	World Bank
ZAWA	Zambia Wildlife Authority
ZESCO	Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation

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Executive Summary

The UNEP-GEF Project "Removing Barriers to Invasive Plant Management in Africa" is a collaborative initiative amongst four countries: Uganda, Ethiopia, Ghana and Zambia. The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) is the Implementing Agency (IA), with responsibility for project management, overview, monitoring, and liaison with, and reporting, to GEF. International project coordination is undertaken by CABI and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The National Executing Agencies (NEA) in each of the four countries are:

- *Ethiopian Institute for Agricultural Research (Ethiopia)*
- *Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (Ghana)*
- *National Agricultural Research Organization (Uganda)*
- *Environmental Council of Zambia (Zambia)*

The project aims to develop a coordinated approach towards removing barriers for the effective management and control of invasive alien (plant) species (IAS) that are impacting globally significant biodiversity (and human populations). The main goals of the project are:

- *Strengthening the enabling policy environment for IAS management;*
- *Provision and exchange of critical information amongst key stakeholders in IAS management;*
- *Implementation of IAS control and prevention programmes;*
- *Building capacity for sustainable IAS management.*

The RBIPMA project was launched in December 2005 and is due for completion by end November 2009 (4 year duration).

GEF procedures require all Full Sized Projects to undergo a project Mid Term Review (MTR). The MTR is considered an integral part of the GEF project and it is the responsibility of the project executing agency to implement. The MTR should be based on an extensive and transparent consultation process with key stakeholder groups and project partners. The MTR took place between June and July 2008 and consisted of the drafting of a Country MTR Report by each National Executing Agency and National Coordination Unit, site visits and stakeholder consultations by an International Mid Term Review Team Leader and a National Deputy Mid Term Reviewer to review progress and plans, and ultimately culminated in a series of MTR Workshops in each Country where the Country MTR Reports were presented and discussed. A first draft of the Consolidated Mid Term Review Report was disseminated amongst NCUs and stakeholders in September 2008 and a final version (this report) will be presented to the International Steering Committee Meeting of the RBIPMA in Nairobi, Kenya on 1st to 3rd October 2008.

The project program delivery against benchmarks was variable across all four countries. Zambia and Uganda performed rather satisfactorily, Ethiopia and Ghana less so. These differences were attributed to a variety of reasons, and differing factors in each of the countries. In Ethiopia, for example, the project inception was delayed for more than 1 year, and so implementation was bound to be slower. It should be noted however that the Ethiopian NCU has worked efficiently to get the program back on track within the last year. Ghana has experienced difficulties with Government stability and support for the project has been limited, these have both led to significant delays in delivery. Zambia performed very well, and this was partly attributable to an efficient and dynamic NCU, but also to excellent government support and significant additional

financing. Uganda also performed well and has a strong platform to ensure IAS is absorbed into existing structures.

This report outlines the shortcoming in each country as well as some of the highlights and lessons learned from the first half of the project implementation. It presents a series of recommendations specific to each country, and a section of general remarks applicable to all (18 main recommendations are made in all, and a further 17 general recommendations are presented in Section 6.5). It is hoped that these will assist project implementation between now and the end of the project. A summary of the recommendations for each country are summarized below:

<u>Uganda</u>

Recommendation 1: *Expedite the formation of an Apex Body responsible for the coordination and promotion of IAS issues in Uganda*
Recommendation 2: *Expedite the modification of the NBSAP to include IAS management and control issues*
Recommendation 3: *Ensure that IAS management and prevention issues are embedded within other appropriate policies and plans*
Recommendation 4: *Continue to build capacity at all levels to handle IAS management and prevention*
Recommendation 5: *Improve communications and information sharing on IAS issues*
Recommendation 6: *Fast-track development and approval of cost recovery mechanisms for IAS activities in Uganda*

<u>Ethiopia</u>

Recommendation 1: *Urgent and strategic re-focusing of RBIPMA program components is needed in Ethiopia*
Recommendation 3: *Build consensus to enable a unified approach for the management and control of Prosopis juliflora in Ethiopia*
Recommendation 4: *Develop more effective partnerships with other initiatives / agencies to tackle IAS issues*
Recommendation 5: *Expedite the formation of an Apex Body responsible for the coordination and promotion of IAS issues in Ethiopia*

<u>Ghana</u>

Recommendation 1: *Seek high level Government intervention to solve co-financing stalemate*
Recommendation 2: *Urgent need to promote Draft NISSAP and use it to enhance awareness of IAS issues at the highest levels*
Recommendation 3: *Move to implement the National Communication and Public Awareness Strategy developed under Component 2*
Recommendation 4: *Develop strategies and partnerships to speed up progress with capacity building under Component 4*

<u>Zambia</u>

Recommendation 1: *Expedite the formal establishment of ECZ as the coordinating body for IAS issues in Zambia*
Recommendation 2: *Enhance local partnerships to scale-up IAS control and management*

Recommendation 3: *Fast-track National-level surveys to determine the presence and impact of IAS in Zambia*

Recommendation 4: *Improve communications and information sharing on IAS issues*

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1 Invasive alien species are said to be second to habitat destruction in causing global loss of biodiversity. They are defined as plants or animals that are non-native to an ecosystem and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm as well as harm to human health.

2 The UNEP-GEF Project "R*emoving of Barriers to Invasive Plant Management in Africa"* (RBIPMA) aims to reduce and possibly remove barriers to the management of invasive alien species in four pilot sub-Saharan countries of Ethiopia, Ghana, Uganda and Zambia. The project commenced in December 2005 and is due for completion in November 2009 (four years).

3 The project is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) is the project implementing agency and as such, responsible for management, overview, monitoring, and liaison with, and reporting, to GEF. CABI Africa and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) are responsible for international / regional project coordination.

4 The project has **four technical components** (1-4 below) designed to remove the barriers to invasive plant management identified during the project development phases and a **project coordination and management component** (number 5 below):

(1) Strengthening the enabling policy and institutional environment for cross-sectoral prevention and management of invasive plants.

(2) Utilization of appropriate information on risks, impacts and management of invasive plants by key stakeholder groups and raising awareness levels.

(3) Implementation of strategies for prevention and management of priority invasive plants.

(4) Capacity building for invasive plant management.

(5) Project Management and Coordination.

5 The project addresses critical barriers in the prevention and management of invasive plants that is consistent with the pronouncement of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) on Invasive Alien Species (IAS) as major cause of biodiversity loss. In particular, Article 8(h) of the CBD calls on parties to "prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats and species".

6 A project Mid Term Review took place from June to July 2008 and the results of that review are presented in this Consolidated Mid Term Review Report.

1.2 Scope and Methods of the Mid Term Review

7 GEF project monitoring and evaluation procedures require all Full Sized Projects to undergo a project Mid Term Review (MTR) (and an independent Project Completion Evaluation). The MTR, in contrast to the independent mid term evaluations they replace, is considered an integral part of the GEF project and it is the responsibility of the project executing agency to implement. The MTR should be based on an extensive and transparent consultation process with key stakeholder groups and project partners.

8 The MTR process consists of (i) country MTR workshop(s); (ii) a project review by a small team of international and domestic MTR consultants. During the review process this team visits project sites, holds dialogue with stakeholder groups, reviews outputs & deliverables, and attends the country MTR workshop(s); (iii) preparation of Country MTR Reports by the country executing agencies; (iv) preparation of a Consolidated MTR Report by the team of international and domestic MTR consultants; and (v) a full project SC meeting for formal endorsement of the MTR findings, recommendations and action schedule. The MTR team consists of an International Team Leader (ITL) / Senior Reviewer, domestic Reviewer(s), as well as an MTR Workshop Facilitator in each country. The Terms of Reference for the ITL are detailed in Annex 1, guidelines on the MTR process are detailed in Annex 2, the full travel itinerary of the MTR ITL is included as Annex 3, and a list of persons met on the mission is detailed in Annex 4.

9 The main goal of the MTR is the fine-tuning of work plans for Phase 2 of the project, improving project approaches and optimizing implementation arrangements, based on a review of progress on execution as well as the achievement of project outcomes of Phase 1 as specified in the Project Document at project mid term. The review will assess, amongst other things:

- Execution performance during the first half of the project: determining effectiveness and efficiency of project management and supervision of project activities.
- Delivery on outputs to date: Assessments of project's success in producing each of the programmed outputs, both in quantity and quality, as well as usefulness and timeliness.
- Project progress against available and spent budget;
- Project impact against log-frame benchmarks.
- Sustainability and replicability of project achievements to date.

10 Based on this assessment, the MTR team shall make recommendations on how to continue and improve project implementation during the second half of the project. Specifically, they will:

- Confirm and/or recommend any specific redirecting of program activities in the second half of the project;
- Confirm or change benchmarks;
- Advise on project institutional arrangements;
- Advise on project approaches towards stakeholder groups and other beneficiaries;
- Advise on approaches required to better achieve project objectives and/or outcomes.

11 The review shall also highlight lessons learned and/or best practice features for expansion, the replication elsewhere and strengthening of the GEF project portfolio, in particular. The review of sustainability and replicability of the project will be an integral part of this.

12 It is not the aim of this Consolidated MTR Report to duplicate the conclusions drawn by the Country MTR Reports, but these were used as the basis for the independent review. This report aims to present an overview of the MTR process, a summary of the project performance and impact over the review period and, based on this a set of observations and recommendations for implementation during the second half of the project.

13 The report is divided into six sections. The first is the introduction and background to the project and the scope and methods of the MTR. The next four sections are country by country accounts of the execution performance: assessing the management and institutional, financial and technical aspects of the project in each country, providing insights to sustainability and replicability of project activities, key requirements to sustain or enhance project approaches in the next phase of the project, conclusions based upon lessons learned and best practices and lastly, recommendations – putting the MTR into action. The country order used is Uganda, Ethiopia, Ghana and Zambia – the order of the countries visited by the ITL. The sixth section provides a brief overview of the Mid Term Review Criteria and Ratings on a country by country basis, and also provides general observations and recommendations that have relevance to all country components.

1.3 General constraints for the RBIPMA project

14 Each participating country in the RBIPMA project has different priorities and policies towards IAS. In some countries IAS issues are entrenched in the biodiversity conservation agenda (e.g., in Zambia where the pilot sites are World renowned biodiversity and heritage areas). In other countries IAS issues are more significant in terms of human health and productivity within agricultural systems (e.g., in Ethiopia, the social and agricultural impacts of *Prosopis* and *Parthenium* have been enormous). In some cases IAS are "conflict species" (i.e., they are a threat to biodiversity, ecosystems or forestry and agricultural productivity, but they are utilized by local communities (e.g., *Senna* and *Cymbopogon* in Uganda, *Eichhornia* in Ghana, Uganda and Ethiopia). Other IAS may have little value for humans or wildlife (e.g., *Broussonetia* in Ghana) but are having economic impacts on agricultural and forestry systems, and need to be controlled, but developing appropriate incentives to ensure this happens may not be sustainable.

15 These differing situations have led to significant differences in implementation of the RBIPMA project in the participating countries and levels of sustainability of project actions will vary between the countries. Whilst all participating countries have ratified the CBD, priorities for the conservation of biodiversity and control and management of IAS differ widely. Linking IAS management to agricultural diversity conservation and human economic needs may be a more sustainable option for IAS management within Africa. The formation of national Apex Bodies to coordinate IAS control and management in each country needs to be carefully considered in the second half of the project. In particular the optimal placement of the Apex Body within an existing Government department or agency, and the programming of its activities and budgets to reflect this change will be necessary. Placing IAS into the biodiversity conservation sector when human and agricultural needs are the priority for IAS control and management in a particular country (and vice versa) will not be sustainable.

SECTION 2: UGANDA

2.1 Background

16 The Ugandan component of the RBIPMA, in addition to establishing the national strategy, institutional and legislative framework on the prevention and control of IAS, focuses its project pilots on removing barriers to the management of three invasive plants species – the grass species *Cymbopogon nardus* (lemon grass), the aquatic herb *Eichhornia crassipes* (water hyacinth) and the tree species, *Senna spectabilis*.

17 This includes significant national components, focused on reviewing and amending policy, legislation and the institutional environment; increasing information and awareness about the issues involved and enhancing capacity to deal with the problems. There are also technical demonstration activities underway at two contrasting project sites: in Mbarara district (western Uganda), the focus is on the management of *C. nardus*, which has significantly reduced the productivity of cattle grazing lands; and, in Masindi district (mid-western Uganda), the project addresses the problem of the prolific spread and invasion of parts of the Budongo Forest Reserve by *S. spectabilis*.

18 The National Executing Agency (NEA) of the Uganda component of the RBIPMA is the National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO) and the National Coordination Unit (NCU) is housed within NARO (based at Entebbe). An overview of the institutional set-up is provided below.

19 A comprehensive Mid Term Review Report was prepared by the Uganda NPCU in collaboration with the local executing agencies covering the period December 2005 to December 2007 and this, along with the MTR Workshop (16 to 17 June 2008), the MTR Workshop report, national reviewer reports, and stakeholder consultation throughout this period, forms the basis for this Review.

2.2 Review of project performance and impact in Uganda

2.2.1 Institutional aspects

Overview of the Institutional set-up

20 The National Executing Agency (NEA) of the Uganda component of the RBIPMA is the National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO) which houses the National Coordination Unit (NCU) at its Entebbe head quarters. The NCU has six full time staff, the National Project Coordinator (NPC) (Dr. Gadi Gumisiriza), a Project Assistant (initially the late Mr. Richard Bayo; and now Mr. Peter Beine), a Project Accountant/Administrator (Ms. Zalikah Nabateregga), a project secretary (Ms. Sylivia Nakazibwe), and two project drivers. The NCU reports directly to the National Project Director (Dr. Denis Kyetere, Director-General of NARO) and also to a 12 member National Steering Committee (NSC), which has met eight times up to March 2008.

21 The NCU co-ordinates project activities and leads much of the work itself. However they also work with partners at National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and Faculty of

Forestry and Nature Conservation at Makerere University. Component 3 is driven by two pilot site management committees, based at the local (site) level.

Effectiveness and efficiency of project management and supervision

22 Progress within component 5 (project management and coordination) indicates that the Ugandan NCU has, to date, coordinated and managed the project effectively and efficiently. Overall performance (based upon a review of progress under Output 5.1) shows about 90% completion of these activities, and realistically this is about **75%**. The MTR Report indicates that regular progress reports were prepared and submitted on time, regular monitoring and evaluation exercises at field sites were undertaken y the NCU and eight regular (quarterly) consultative meetings with the NSC were held during the period under review. Of the 13 recommendations drafted by the NSC during these meetings, only one was not acted upon as this required wider stakeholder discussion on how to embed IAS issues into the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP).

23 A decision to reduce the number of proposed project executing committees was taken early on in implementation and rather than appoint an Advisory Committee and sub-committees, the NCU adopted the approach by engaging national consultants on sub-contracts. Between June and December 2006, seven sub-contracts and agreements were signed and a total of 16 outputs were produced for the project components.

24 Project M&E system and reporting were used. Between January 2006 and June 2007 six (6) financial reports were delivered to the PCU and between January 2006 and December 2007 four (4) progress reports were submitted to the PCU.

25 With the arrival of a new Project Assistant in 2008, the workload of the NPC is expected to be eased, and project management and coordination should be further enhanced. The relationship between the NPC and his assistant is excellent which augers well for the effectiveness and efficiency of future project management and coordination.

26 No **key concerns** in the project institutional set-up, management and coordination were reported for Uganda during the MTR. Project performance on the institutional level exceeds the 50% mark and institutional systems appear to be running smoothly. At this stage it is determined that there is no need for any major redirection of implementation in the second half of the project, and the coordination and management of the project should continue under the present secretariat and staff.

27 Furthermore, site management committees should remain in place and continue to be empowered to implement and revise the management plans to address wider issues of ecosystem degradation by invasive plants. More budget should be allocated for pilot site activities during the second half of the project to enable this to happen.

28 It was also felt that there is a need to involve local governments at the district, parish and village levels (where activities are taking place) to stimulate sustainability of the project objectives (especially relating to the management and control of invasive plants/IAS) beyond the project's lifetime. More regular meetings with local Government to inform of project progress and priorities should be implemented.

2.2.2 Financial aspects

Project progress against available and spent budgets

29 The Uganda MTR Report highlights project expenditure during the period Q1 2006 to Q4 2007. Planned disbursement of cash during this period totaled USD 434,048, with an actual expenditure of USD 337,682 (78%). Figures presented at the MTR Workshop in June 2008 indicated that a total of USD 422,088 had been received from UNEP/GEF during the first 24 months of the project – representing 42% of the total budget allocation, and of this USD 331,212 had been spent (78%). In addition, a total of USD 229,484 had been received as cash co-funding from the Government of Uganda (GoU) during the first 18 months – this represents 40% of agreed cash co-finance. To date, USD 208,771 (91%) of this co-finance had been spent. During the review period approximately USD 274,525 in-kind GoU contribution had been received (accounting for 46% of original GoU in-kind contribution).

30 Thus, during the review period, both the amount of funds received and their disbursement were deemed to be more-or-less on track. However, there remains an opportunity in the second half of the project to ensure that both UNEP/GEF and GoU cash contributions are received in a timely manner in order to re-adjust the balance between funds received and funds disbursed.

Cost effectiveness of project activities

31 The two largest items on the budget during the review period were Meetings and Conferences (BL 3300) and Reporting Costs (BL 5200), at USD 75,951 and USD 68,906 respectively, accounting for 43% of the total expenditure during the review period. Other large budget expenditures were Non-expendable equipment (BL 4200) at USD 56,772; Sub-contracts for Consultants (BL 2200) at USD 52,460; and, Training (BL 3200) at USD 48,526. In general, actual expenditures for each BL matched the planned costs of each, and there were no major discrepancies in this regard.

32 Although figures for BL 3300 (Meetings and Conferences) appears relatively high, this included a wide range of local and national meetings. The most expensive expenditure under this budget line was BL 3302 (meetings to formulate national IAS strategy, action plan and guidelines) at USD 32,808 over the two year period. This accounted for 68% of the original planned budget for these activities. Relative costs for other activities under BL 3300 were rather low, for example the 2007 expenditure to run “meetings to develop IAS training programs” (BL 3311) was only USD 6,598.

33 For expenditure under BL 5200 (Reporting Costs), there are some (small) concerns over the expenditure for “production of awareness raising radio and television broadcasts” (BL 5203) at USD 40,712 over the two years (55% of original budget); and for “production of awareness raising printed materials” (BL 5204) at USD 24,053 (48% of original budget) over the corresponding period. However, both were within planned budgets for the review period. Overall, the project is deemed to have been relatively cost effective during its first two years of implementation.

Equipment procurement

34 Equipment procurement was not a major budget item or issue in the first half of the project with expenditure under BL 4200 accounting for USD 56,772. The majority of this was taken up with two project vehicles (USD 47,773). A full inventory of other items is provided as an Annex to the Uganda MTR Report, and includes office equipment (printers, computers, HDDs, DVD player, and tables and chairs), field equipment (digital cameras). There is no mention of procurement of GPS units which would have been useful for mapping during the baseline surveys.

35 Equipment procurement in the second half of the project will be significantly lower as most of the necessary items have already been procured.

Disbursement of budget

36 As shown in paragraph 20 above, a total of USD 422,088 had been received from UNEP/GEF during the first 24 months of the project – representing 42% of the total budget allocation. In addition, a total of USD 229,484 had been received as cash co-funding from the Government of Uganda (GoU) during the first 18 months – this represents 40% of agreed cash co-finance. It was noted in the Uganda MTR Report that disbursement of GoU co-finance had decreased with only 40% of the funds budgeted for in financial year 2007/2008 having been received at the time of reporting.

37 No significant delays with disbursement of the UNEP/GEF budget were reported by the Uganda NCU. Only on one occasion was the project account replenished at the end of the quarter, affecting the disbursement of funds in the following quarter.

2.2.3 Technical aspects

Overview of progress against project benchmarks

38 The Country MTR Report of Uganda provides a detailed analysis of the perceived levels of completion of each output in relation to the project benchmarks and these are summarized in the table below. The consolidated MTR Report will highlight some of the main achievements within each component and also highlight gaps that need to be addressed in the second half of the project implementation.

Component	**% completed**	
	As in Country MTR Report	**As assessed by MTR**
1: Strengthening the enabling policy and institutional environment for cross-sectoral prevention and management of invasive plants	55%	55%
2: Utilization of appropriate information on risks, impacts and management of IAS by key stakeholder groups and raising awareness levels	50%	40%
3: Implement strategies for the prevention and management of priority IAS	50%	35%

4: Capacity building for prevention and management of IAS	45%	35%
5: Project management coordination	90%	75%

Component 1: Strengthening the enabling policy and institutional environment for cross-sectoral prevention and management of invasive plants

39 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 1 was estimated at **55%** by the Uganda NCU. The MTR noted that completion of activities to date supports this assessment. Achievements of particular note under Component 1 include the completion of the National IAS Strategy and Action Plan (NISSAP) and development of "Policy Guidelines" for incorporating IAS issues into relevant policy and legislation, all under Output 1.1. The NISSAP has been printed and communicated to some of the relevant stakeholders, but appears to be awaiting "approval" from NEMA before being launched more widely. The inclusion of appropriate stakeholders in development of these documents was also noted by the MTR Team.

40 Progress on the other Outputs (1.2 and 1.3) was not so advanced, and there remain some **major concerns** towards the completion of Component 1 and these will need to be prioritised during the second half of the project. These include a lack of progress noted:

a) in developing a mechanism to coordinate and promote IAS management between the various sectors (the establishment of the so-called "Apex Body") (under Output 1.2),
b) towards achieving final Government approval of the NISSAP (under Output 1.1). Stakeholders agree that approval of the NISSAP is key to moving forward with this component in 2009,
c) towards comprehensive dissemination and communication (promotion) of the NISSAP (under Output 1.1),
d) in incorporating IAS issues in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) (under Output 1.1) (it was noted that the areas of the NBSAP that needed modification had already been identified),
e) in developing and implementing appropriate cost recovery mechanisms to sustain these activities beyond the life of the project (under Output 1.3).

Component 2: Utilisation of appropriate information on risks, impacts and management of IAS by key stakeholder groups and raising awareness levels

41 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 2 was estimated at **50%** by the Uganda NCU and this is probably an over-estimate of progress to date (estimated at **40%** by MTR). Achievements of particular note under Component 2 include the completion of the National Awareness and Communication Strategy (Output 2.1) and some implementation of the Strategy (see below); progress was made on the design, construction, testing and use of a national web-based information system (also under Output 2.2) (although this is yet to be completed); and, a series of awareness raising materials (posters, leaflets, TV and radio messages) were produced and disseminated at mostly the national level (Output 2.2). Tools to monitor the success (or failure) of public awareness activities have also been developed and tested, and results have

revealed that significant increases in public knowledge of IAS issues have been made (although these results were not available t the MTR Team).

42 Progress on other parts of Output 2.2 and the whole of Output 2.3 has been much slower. Communication and sharing of information on a regional level remains a **major gap** in the implementation of RBIPMA in Uganda. In particular, the following areas of **concern** were identified during the MTR:

a) lack of progress on the development and establishment of a national database, and information transfer to regional and global databases on IAS (Output 2.2). Currently the use of the I3N Database was being promoted, but links to a simpler system (e.g., as promoted by AGIS in South Africa) may be more appropriate,
b) lack of integration of the project website (www.invasivespecies.co.ug) into the NARO web site (or other institutional website) (Output 2.2) makes it unsustainable. There is also a need to broaden the website beyond the project to become a national website on IAS;
c) little or no progress on facilitating external communication and information exchange and data transfer with international and regional organisations and neighbouring countries on IAS issues (only one poster on RBIPMA in Uganda presented at an international workshop),
d) Target groups for awareness raising did not include some key groups (e.g., legislators, educationalists, enforcement officers and policy makers), and more emphasis is required to target local stakeholders at the pilot site levels for involvement in awareness raising campaigns. It was noted that some of the materials had been translated into three local languages appropriate for such target audiences.

Component 3: Implementation of strategies for prevention and management of priority invasive plants

43 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 3 was estimated at 50% by the Uganda NCU. However the MTR team notes that this is probably an over-estimate of achievement, and the figure is closer to **35%**. Much of Outputs 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 have not been completed (or started), and although the site management plans under Output 3.4 have been successfully completed, and pilot trials of IAS management and eradication initiated, much work remains to be done on other aspects of Output 3.4.

44 Achievements of particular note under Component 3 do include:

a) Ecosystem management plans for the two pilot sites (Mbarara rangelands and Budongo forest reserve) were developed in a participatory way, together with the local communities and site management committees. Management plans for management and control of *Cymbopogon nardus* and *Eichhornia crassipes* at Mbarara and for *Senna spectabilis* at Budongo forest reserve have been produced. Note however, that these plans cannot be considered as detailed “ecosystem management plans”, but more like species management plans for the IAS concerned.
b) Approval of these plans by the site management committees at both pilot sites has been completed.

c) Implementation of these plans with local involvement (e.g., at Mbarara, local farmers have 'given' up to 1 acre of their land for conducting management trials) is on-going. A recent assessment by CABI shows that these trials are yielding good results.

45 As expected, progress on Outputs 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 has been very slow as most of these activities are only due to be addressed in the third year of the project. However, lack of progress here is a **major concern** for the second half of the project and the following outputs require urgent attention if they are to be achieved within the life time of the project. It is strongly recommended that these are prioritised during the first few months of 2009:

a) No progress on the review of risk analysis procedures and establishment of risk reduction systems such as early detection and rapid response systems (Outputs 3.1 and 3.2). At this stage of the project there appears to have been little involvement of the customs and quarantine officials that would benefit most from these measures, or any attempt to build their capacity to handle these issues. For this activity, the international guidelines and protocols were received late so the activity was started in October 2007. The first report was expected in early July 2008.
b) Little progress on countrywide surveys to analyse the extent of infestation of target IAS (Output 3.3). Although distribution and impact reports on two of the target species have been developed and impact surveys have been conducted with affected communities, mapping of species ranges and development of a national IAS plant list have yet to be completed. A database model 13N has been adopted and populated, and information summaries produced for target species. Some assistance from CABI has been made in 2008 to move this activity along.
c) During project implementation the impact of a non-target IAS, *Lantana camara* has been highlighted as a major problem species by local communities and other local stakeholders. Currently there is no provision to include this species in the Uganda component of the RBIPMA project. Inclusion of some management and control guidance for this species (based upon lessons learned from the measures being taken under the RBIPMA project in Zambia) would be beneficial during the second half of the project. It is further noted that this issue could be covered under the project if comprehensive ecosystem management plans had been produced. It is noted that CABI have provided technical assistance here in 2008.

Component 4: Capacity building for invasive plant management.

46 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 4 was estimated at 45% by the Uganda NCU, and the MTR Team consider this should be assessed closer to **35%.** Progress under Component 4 was largely unsatisfactory, and considering the important nature of capacity building in every GEF project, this needs to be urgently addressed during the early stages of 2009.

47 Although a series of training modules were developed under Output 4.1, very little actual training was conducted during the review period (the notable exception being some training courses at the District level and the sponsorship of a postgraduate student undertake MSc studies in IAS issues in South Africa). Provision of equipment and materials to support customs and quarantine departments (Output 4.2) had been initiated at the time of the MTR, but it appeared as though the supply of equipment and materials were rather stand alone in nature. Some

participation of project stakeholders in international meetings and forums was initiated under Output 4.3, but this could have been enhanced to include non-project staff such as staff at the local levels and from other relevant stakeholders.

48 A **key concern** under Component 4 was the fact that no activities took place under Output 4.4 (formulate programmes for integrating IAS issues into learning institution courses), and problems with local consultant deliverables was cited as the reason for this. The delays associated with implementation of activities under Output 4.4 also had knock on effects to implementation of activities under Output 4.1. It is imperative that both implementation of the training programme (Output 4.1) and integration of IAS issues into learning institution courses (Output 4.4) are fast-tracked during the early stages of part two of project implementation.

2.3 Issues for sustainability and replicability of the Project in Uganda

a) Promoting the NISSAP more widely and embedding IAS issues into other plans and policies: IAS management and prevention issues will continue to be peripheral to the concerns of most Ministries and Departments within Government as long as awareness remains low and the excellent progress made by the RBIPMA project in Uganda are not promoted widely. Without the formation of a coordinating body with jurisdiction over IAS issues in Uganda long term sustainability of the project's objectives are doubtful. Apart from ensuring IAS issues are noted in the NBSAP at a national level, there is an urgent need to embed IAS issues in local (district) development plans, protected area management plans, and other national development plans and initiatives such as the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA), NAADS, Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), and Rangeland Policy, etc (some of these are currently under review and the opportunity to incorporate IAS issues into them should not be lost during the second part of the project.

b) Ensuring that the coordination (Apex) body for IAS issues in Uganda is established and resourced in a timely way: for the project to have lasting impacts there is an urgent need for the establishment of a coordinating body within the second half of the project. Without such a body, it is unlikely that one of the main barriers to the management of invasive plants in Uganda will be removed. It is important that the Apex body for Uganda has the ability to coordinate IAS issues and activities in both the biodiversity and agricultural sectors. Although it has been proposed to place the Apex body in NEMA, it is the opinion of the MTR that it may be more appropriate to place it under NARO due to the agricultural focus of most of the target IAS in Uganda.

c) Continue to strengthen capacity on IAS issues at all levels: One of the primary principles of GEF funding is to establish the needed capacity within the staff of EAs and their partner agencies to enable the continuation of implementing the work program beyond the life of the project. In particular there is always a strong need to strengthen capacity at the local (site) level. Although training and capacity building was a major component during the first half of the project, very little actual training was carried out at any level. For NEMA to adequately take on board the coordinating mechanism for IAS considerable investment in capacity building within NEMA will be necessary to ensure sustainability. Likewise, considering the inherent problems with building capacity in any project, these activities should have been started during the first half of the project and not in the second half.

c) Developing appropriate incentives and mechanisms at the local level to ensure IAS management and eradication outcomes are sustained beyond the life of the project: Some target IAS are perceived as having an economic benefit to local communities (e.g. *Senna spectabilis*) at Budongo forest reserve, and this constraints the sustainability of initiatives to control and manage the species within and along the boundaries of the forest reserve. There is a need for clear guidance on the economic impacts (as well as other impacts) of IAS and development of innovative management solutions with the full participation of local communities during the second part of the project to achieve sustainability here.

d) Developing long-term partnerships through MoUs with local institutes/agencies: This is a mechanism to build sustainability on the ground and to ensure transfer of knowledge and skills to sustain activities after the life of the project. In particular, local agricultural and scientific research institutes, local government and the customs and quarantine departments should be targeted.

2.4 Key requirements to sustain or enhance project approaches in the second half of the project

49 The section on Sustainability and Replicability (above) outlines some of the areas where project approaches need to be amended in the second half of project implementation. An overview of the key requirements to sustain or enhance project approaches during the next two years is provided below:

1. Streamlining the approval process for NISSAP and disseminating the document more widely: although the development of the NISSAP has been a good achievement within the Uganda component of RBIPMA it has not been promoted and disseminated adequately. An opportunity has been missed in this regard and this should be rectified in the next half of the project.
2. Mainstreaming of IAS activities into selected Apex body work programs and budgets: this is a longer term requirement to achieve sustainability at the national and local levels, but should be initiated early in 2009.
3. Ensuring that IAS issues are incorporated into district development planning: IAS should be mainstreamed into district development plans and protected areas general management plans. This means that the district and lower government levels, IAS issues should be incorporated in the environmental and development plans and budgeted accordingly.
4. Specific implementation of the project training program to build capacity at all levels: to meet GEF principles enabling local EAs and stakeholders to sustain implementation of the work program beyond the life of the project.
5. Reducing the reliance on external consultancies and sub-contracts: although it was felt that project implementation could be speeded up by bringing on board national consultants to deliver certain components, in some cases this actually led to delays in delivery where consultants have failed to deliver (particularly under component 4: Capacity Building).
6. Better targeting of awareness campaigns to ensure that all key stakeholders are captured: gaps in the target groups for public awareness raising need to be filled at all levels, but especially at the local levels.
7. Establishing and maintaining linkages between national and global databases: developing an IAS information database for Uganda that is based on the most simple and sustainable

system will be imperative. Linkages to regional data bases such as AGIS will be an advantage in terms of visibility, accessibility, support and information exchange.

8. Promoting RBIPMA results through regional and international forums: publication of more project results, especially those relating to lessons learned and practical management applications at the pilot site level need to be implemented.
9. Improving the monitoring of the implementation process: implementation needs to be based around a cycle of "implementation-evaluation-revision" for site-based activities in particular. Activities need to be "phased" to reduce risks and to facilitate monitoring, evaluation and learning. The phases should be set out in implementation plans including identification of team members and their responsibilities.

2.5 Conclusions: Lessons Learned and Best Practices in Uganda

50 Overall performance of project implementation in Uganda was satisfactory during the period under review. The following areas are singled out for comment as lessons learned and best practices:

1. Impacts of IAS are well understood in the context of economic impacts, but less so for biodiversity impacts: it was apparent that in the minds of local stakeholders the control and management of IAS were more closely related to their impacts on local socio-economics than to biodiversity issues.

   In some cases (e.g., management *S. spectabilis* at Budongo forest reserve), perceived economic benefits appeared in some cases to over-ride the perceived need to manage and control a species (by the forestry staff). Without a strong economic and scientific justification for management agreements and good community participation and awareness, these can a major barrier to project implementation at the local level.

2. Urgent need to develop and implement cost recovery mechanisms to ensure program sustainability: Within every GEF project there is a need to ensure sustainability of the program investment and this should be done through development of economically viable cost recovery mechanisms to sustain activities. No attempt to address this issues has been made in the Uganda component of the RBIPMA project, and this needs to be urgently addressed in early 2009.

3. Development of appropriate communication tools: Translation of communication materials into local languages and use of local newspapers and FM radio stations has proven to be an effective strategy in rural Uganda where literacy levels are relatively low.

2.6 Recommendations – putting the MTR into action in Uganda

51 Section 2.4 provides a list of 9 key requirements to sustain or enhance project approaches and methods during the next phase of project implementation. These, and the specific recommendations presented below, need full consideration during the development of future work plans and budgets:

Recommendation 1: Expedite the formation of an Apex Body responsible for the coordination and promotion of IAS issues in Uganda.

52 An appropriate body to coordinate and promote IAS issues in Uganda needs to be selected. Both NEMA and NARO have been proposed for this. The current focus on IAS in Uganda within agricultural systems (and the fact that the RBIPMA project is housed within NARO), probably makes NARO the better choice. Wherever it is placed, the formation of an IAS "Apex Body" for Uganda needs to be fast-tracked under the project during 2009. The formation of an IAS Apex Body will require significant investment and focus to build capacity within the organisation and for the creation of a permanent IAS co-ordinator position and staffing. The financial implications of this are strongly linked to the need to develop appropriate cost recovery mechanisms under Output 1.3 and need to be carefully assessed.

Responsibility	Task	Time frame	Deliverable
NCU and NSC	Develop proposals for the formation of IAS Apex Body. Invite participation of relevant agencies.	By next NSC meeting	Approval of proposal to establish Apex Body and mechanism to financially support such a body.

Recommendation 2: Expedite the modification of the NBSAP to include IAS management and control issues.

53 NEMA is responsible for the modification and implementation of the NBSAP. Key areas within the NBSAP which need to be modified have already been identified by NCU. An appropriate committee already exists within NEMA for modifying the NBSAP, and this should be the starting point to achieve this activity.

Responsibility	Task	Time frame	Deliverable
NCU / NEMA	Develop strategy and proposal with NEMA for discussion by NBSAP committee.	1Q 2009	1. Strategy on how to move the process forward 2. Present proposal outlining areas for change within NBSAP to committee

Recommendation 3: Ensure that IAS management and prevention issues are embedded within other appropriate policies and plans.

54 IAS issues are relevant to many national and district level policies and plans within Uganda. Stakeholders at the MTR Workshop outlined the importance of the Land Use Policy, the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA), NAADS, the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), the Rangeland Policy and the Trade Policy, amongst others, as potential mechanisms to ensure that IAS issues are part of the national agenda. PMA in particular has a strong component on ensuring sound environmental standards in all farming areas and provides an excellent avenue

for addressing IAS issues. At the local level, IAS should be mainstreamed into District Development Plans and Protected Areas Management Plans. Links to a Sustainable Land Management (SLM) project being developed by UNDP and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries could also provide an appropriate avenue to promote IAS on a wider level.

55 All these opportunities need to be reviewed and strategies developed to address those that are deemed appropriate. For instance, in order to incorporate IAS issues into the Land Use Policy, there is a need to present proposals to the Parliamentary Committee on Natural Resources to start the process of revising the policy.

Responsibility	**Task**	**Time frame**	**Deliverable**
NCU-NARO	Prepare a review of plans and policies and opportunities to promote IAS issues	2Q 2009	1. Review / strategy to be presented to NSC for action
NSC	Initiate links with appropriate agencies / committees	3Q 2009	2. Discussion of IAS issues within relevant agencies / committees and synergy between IAS and them
NCU-NARO	Convene meetings / workshops with relevant agencies	4Q 2009	3. Concrete proposals to embed IAS issues into relevant Policies and Plans

Recommendation 4: Continue to build capacity at all levels to handle IAS management and prevention.

56 Capacity at district and national level to handle IAS issues should be strengthened. As already noted above, the capacity at national level will have to be built to sustain an Apex Body. At the district level, there is a need to train the natural resource coordinators, environment and protected areas officers, educationalists, and policy makers on IAS management and control.

Responsibility	**Task**	**Time frame**	**Deliverable**
Component 4 Task Team	Fast track implementation of agreed training program	To begin by 1Q 2009	1. Targeted training program to run until project completion

Recommendation 5: Improve communications and information sharing on IAS issues

57 Information sharing and communications need to be enhanced regionally. As part of a regional project, the NCU in Uganda should promote information sharing with regional project partners (Ghana, Ethiopia and Zambia), as well as take the opportunity to link with international bodies with a focus on IAS. The development of linkages to the AGIS database in particular warrants special attention in the second half of the project. At the national level, proven

communication strategies using local radio and local language tools should be enhanced and expanded into areas which are not currently the focus of the project, and highlight emerging weed issues that have come to light under the project (e.g., *Lantana camara*).

Responsibility	Task	Time frame	Deliverable
NCU-NARO	Expedite activities under Output 2.3	To begin before 1Q 2009	1. Regular mechanism for external communications 2. Input to AGIS regional database on IAS 3. At least 1 publication in international media / year 4. Increase number of local radio shows and local language leaflets

Recommendation 6: Fast-track development and approval of cost recovery mechanisms for IAS activities in Uganda

58 Cost recovery will need to be established on two levels. At the national level, working budgets for the selected government agency (NARO or NEMA) to act as the coordinating body need to be developed and approved before the end of the project; and at the local level, initiatives to manage and control target IAS by local communities needs to be incentive based. Development of these incentives needs to take place through the site management committees, and need to be sustainable (i.e., not monetary in nature).

Responsibility	Task	Time frame	Deliverable
NCU / NARO	Prepare discussion paper on establishment of and support for IAS Apex Body.	By 2Q 2009	1. Discussion paper for presentation to NSC.
NSC	Recommendation for establishment of the Apex Body	By 3Q 2009	2. Detailed recommendation with ToR and budget
Site Management Committees	Prepare review of appropriate incentives for local participation	By 2Q 2009	3. Review paper for presentation to NSC

59 Other sub-recommendations are highlighted below:

- NCU to initiate contact with appropriate agencies within the customs and quarantine departments and expedite activities under Output 3.1 and 3.2 relating to IAS risk procedures and early detection and rapid response systems.

- Pilot site management committees, with guidance from NCU-NARO should review site management plans and if appropriate expand them to include wider ecosystem considerations.

- Some contingency should be made available for enhancing knowledge on *Lantana camara* in Uganda and sharing lessons learned on its control between RBIPMA project countries.

- Small-scale studies on the socio-economic impact of invasive plants / IAS on community livelihoods should be implemented, and their results used to promote management and control programs.

- The project should establish local linkages (e.g., to agricultural extension offices) to enable better dissemination of information and provide documentation and training for locals IAS management and control.

- The review of relevant curricula and development of IAS information packages for schools and higher education institutions (under Output 4.4) need to be expedited. As such the Ministry of Education, and other relevant training institutions need to be brought on board as soon as possible.

SECTION 3: ETHIOPIA

3.1 Background

60 The Ethiopian component of the RBIPMA, in addition to establishing the national strategy, institutional and legislative framework on the prevention and control of IAS, focuses its project pilots on removing barriers to the management of three invasive plants species – the annual herb *Parthenium hysterophorus*, the aquatic herb *Eichhornia crassipes* (water hyacinth) and the scrubby tree species, *Prosopis juliflora*.

61 The project components mirror those in other RBIPMA project countries, with national components focused on strengthening the enabling policy and institutional environment; increasing information and raising awareness levels and enhancing capacity to deal with the problems. There is also a site based component to implement strategies for the prevention and management of priority IAS. In Ethiopia, demonstration activities are underway at three pilot sites: in Amibara District, the focus is on the management and eradication of *P. juliflora*, which has significantly reduced the productivity of grazing lands and threatens the Awash National Park; in the Awash River Catchment System, and specifically at the Aba Samuel Dam and the Shewa Sugar Estate in Wonji, the project addresses the problem of infestation of waterways by *E. crassipes*; and, in croplands around the Welenchiti area the project addresses the issue of cropland invasion by *P. hysterophorus*.

62 The National Executing Agency (NEA) of the Ethiopian component of the RBIPMA is the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR), under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD), and the National Coordination Unit (NCU) is housed within EIAR (based in Addis Ababa). An overview of the institutional set-up is provided below.

63 A Mid Term Review Report was not available to the MTR Team, due to computer problems at the NCU, and input to the consolidated MTR Report was based upon a presentation of the 4th Semi-annual Report, made at the MTR Workshop by the NPC (Mr. Rezene Fessehaie) on project progress covering the period until December 2007. This, along with visits to the field sites (18 to 19 June 2008), the MTR Workshop (20 to 21 June 2008), the Workshop Report, national reviewer reports, and stakeholder consultation throughout this period, forms the basis for this Review.

3.2 Review of project performance and impact in Ethiopia

3.2.1 Institutional aspects

Overview of the Institutional set-up

64 The National Executing Agency (NEA) of the Ethiopia component of the RBIPMA is the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR) and the National Coordination Unit (NCU) is housed within EIAR (based in Addis Ababa). The NCU has four full time staff, the National Project Coordinator (NPC) (Mr. Rezene Fessehaie), a Project Assistant (Dr. Taye Tessema), a Project Accountant/Administrator (Mr. Abrham Tesfyae) and one Driver. An Advisory Committee (AC) consisting of six members from EIAR, MOARD and EPA assists the NPC in technical and coordination activities. The NCU reports directly to the National Project Director

(NPD) (DG of EIAR, Dr. Solomon Assefa) and also to the National Steering Committee (NSC). The NPC is accountable to CABI-ARC for the delivery of agreed project outputs, maintains regular communication with CABI-ARC and supervises the work of the NCU, which is responsible for the day to day running of the project. To facilitate activities at the pilot sites, the project has established Pilot Site Coordination Committees and two Pilot Site Offices (PSO), with full-time staff appointed. The NCU has also established a formal partnership with the Shewa Sugar Estate in Wonji.

65 The interagency NSC is chaired by the NPD and comprises of senior representatives of relevant government and non-government agencies. The NSC provides guidance to the project, especially in regard to national political and administrative issues and makes decisions on issues related to legislation, regulations and guidelines on IAS management. It also ensures federal level inter-sector integration of IAS-related projects, and oversees the project progress.

66 It is duly noted by the MTR team that the start of the Ethiopian component of RBIPMA was significantly delayed, and as a result, at the time of the MTR, the program had only be running for a little over 1 year. The NPC was officially appointed in March 2007, the Project Accountant/Administrator was recruited in January 2007 and the Assistant NPC and the Project Secretary / Treasurer were only recruited in July 2007 (note that the Project Secretary/Treasurer left the project in December 2007 and the post was vacant at the time of the MTR). This has had significant ramifications on project performance, but it is also noted that in the period of the review great progress has been made on all fronts.

Effectiveness and efficiency of project management and supervision

67 Despite the delayed start to project implementation in Ethiopia, progress on component 5 (project management and coordination) has been relatively effective and efficient. Overall performance (based upon a review of progress under Output 5.1) shows about 75% completion of these activities. Regular progress reports were prepared and submitted on time, regular monitoring and evaluation exercises at field sites were undertaken by the NCU and five meetings with the NSC were held during the period under review.

68 Project M&E system and reporting were used but the MTR Team did not have access to these documents.

69 No **major concerns** in the project institutional set-up, management and coordination were reported for Ethiopia during the MTR. Project performance at the institutional level exceeds the 50% mark and institutional systems appear to be running smoothly. At this stage it is determined that there is no need for any major redirection of implementation in the second half of the project, and the coordination and management of the project should continue under the present secretariat and staff. It was noted that the NCU team in Ethiopia were a strong combination of technical and administrative skills, and in particular, project delivery at the pilot sites was a key skill possessed by both NPC and Assistant NPC. Regular site visits and the establishment of the PSOs have also assisted this. There remains an urgent need to recruit new staff for Secretarial and Treasurer services at the NCU.

70 Site management committees should continue to be supported and empowered by the NCU and these committees should benefit from the full-time presence of PSO staff during the

second half of the project. PSOs need more mobility, and provision of motorbikes to each site coordination office should be considered.

3.2.2 Financial aspects

Project progress against available and spent budgets

71 Planned project expenditure in Ethiopia up to December 2007 was USD 303,558, with actual expenditure recorded at USD 152,162 (approximately 50%). During the review period USD 183,336 had been received from UNEP/GEF and USD 273,416 in cash co-finance from the GoE.

72 Funds disbursement in the second half of the project will have to be greatly accelerated if the project is to spend all the available funds, and it is unlikely that this will be the case.

Cost effectiveness of project activities

73 The three largest items on the budget during the review period were Training (BLs 3200 and 3300) accounting for 32 %, Staff Salaries (BL 1100) 18% and Non-expendable equipment (BL 4200), 16%. Together, these items accounted for 66% of the planned budget. In general, actual expenditures for each BL were below the planned costs of each, and there were no major discrepancies in this regard. Costs in Ethiopia are low (relative to other RBIPMA countries) and as such the project is probably more cost effective than elsewhere.

74 The leveraged "associated co-finance" from the GoE (in cash and in kind contribution) is estimated to have totaled a little over USD 1 million so far and there is also some potential in the second half of the project to attract co-financing from non-Government sources for complimentary activities. For example, FARM Africa has plans to implement a USD 1 million project on *Prosopis* utilization and management at the UNEP-GEF pilot site, which may have some positive impacts for the RBIPMA project.

75 Due to under-spending in 2007 and 1Q 2008, it is expected that some budget revision will be necessary in FY 2009. Funds should be re-allocated between BLs that have been under-utilized and transferred to those with more need. BLs earmarked for project staff, EIA, and M&E planning are excessive. During the MTR it was stressed that budgets for field activities and visits were inappropriate (with DSA rates to cover local travel, accommodation and food set at USD 7.5 only). In the second half of the project a revision of this rate should be made.

Equipment procurement

76 Equipment procurement was not a major budget item or issue in the first half of the project. At the MTR it was stated that procurement of a second project vehicle was underway, and that the first vehicle (a Toyota Hilux 4x4 Double Cab Pickup) had arrived in Addis Ababa in November 2007. This vehicle was used during field visits to the pilot sites during the MTR. Other items procured by the project to date include office equipment (PCs, printers, furniture), GPS units and office rooms and residential houses for the PSOs at Welenchiti and Amibara.

77 Equipment procurement in the second half of the project is likely to be significantly lower as most of the necessary items have already been procured.

Disbursement of budget

78 During the review period, a total of USD 183,336 had been received from UNEP-GEF, of which USD 152,162 had been spent (accounting for 83%).

79 No significant delays with disbursement of the UNEP/GEF budget were reported by the Ethiopia NCU.

3.2.3 Technical aspects

Overview of progress against project benchmarks

80 The Country MTR Report of Ethiopia provides a detailed analysis of the perceived levels of completion of each output in relation to the project benchmarks and these are summarized in the table below. The consolidated MTR Report will highlight some of the main achievements within each component and also highlight gaps that need to be addressed in the second half of the project implementation.

Component	**% completed**	
	As in Country MTR Report	**As assessed by MTR**
1: Strengthening the enabling policy and institutional environment for cross-sectoral prevention and management of invasive plants	25%	20%
2: Utilization of appropriate information on risks, impacts and management of IAS by key stakeholder groups and raising awareness levels	35%	35%
3: Implement strategies for the prevention and management of priority IAS	30%	35%
4: Capacity building for prevention and management of IAS	30%	20%
5: Project management coordination	75%	75%

Component 1: Strengthening the enabling policy and institutional environment for cross-sectoral prevention and management of invasive plants

81 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 1 was estimated at 25% by the Ethiopia NCU, and based on the findings of the MTR this is probably too high. A figure closer to **20%** would be appropriate.

82 There has been little real progress in Component 1 in during the period under review and there remain some **major concerns** towards the completion of this Component that will require substantial effort and priority action during the second half of the project if the goal of removing barriers is to be met. Of particular concern is the lack of progress noted in the following key areas:

a) Development of the National IAS Strategy and Action Plan (NISSAP): a draft of this document was expected by the end of 2Q 2008. An update on progress on this to be confirmed at the ISC Meeting. The MTR Team noted that the lack of a NISSAP has led to a fragmented approach and no overall guidance or strategy for stakeholders in the first half of project.
b) Embedding IAS issues in the NBSAP has been deferred pending development of the NISSAP. Apparently some agreements have been reached on this between relevant stakeholders.
c) Establishment of an Apex Body to coordinate IAS issues: a draft proposal on terms of reference and structure of the Apex Body has been developed and agreed by the NSC (this was not available for review by MTR Team). In the interim period, the NSC will act in this capacity.
d) No real evidence was presented on the development of cost recovery mechanisms, but a review of the national consultant's report on this has been initiated by the NCU (not available for review by MTR Team). The NCU has proposed that a task team (made up of relevant stakeholders) be formed to chart cost recovery strategies for IAS management.
e) Insufficient linkages between NCU and stakeholders responsible for biodiversity protection – during the period under review there was little tangible involvement of the Awash National Park Authority or the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), which is a serious flaw in project approach and constituency building.

83 A **general remark** under Component 1 for Ethiopia is that policy development and linkages appear to be rather weak at this stage of project implementation. Much of the focus for implementation has been on Components 2 and 3 (awareness raising and research components). Support for Policy change will be critical to the ultimate removal of barriers for IAS management and control in Ethiopia and needs urgent attention during the remainder of the project implementation.

Component 2: Utilisation of appropriate information on risks, impacts and management of IAS by key stakeholder groups and raising awareness levels

84 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 2 was estimated at **35%** by the Ethiopia NCU and this is probably an accurate reflection of progress to date.

85 Under Component 2 most project activity has focussed on Output 2.3 (facilitate external communication, information exchange and data transfer with international and regional organisations, neighbouring and partner countries). In particular, project staff and stakeholders have attended training / exchange visits / meetings on i) *Prosopis* management and utilization in Kenya, ii) IAS Prevention Workshop in Tanzania, and, iii) Workshop on drafting legal and institutional frameworks for the management of IAS in Kenya. The Ethiopia NCU have also hosted a regional meeting of RBIPMA partners and a Workshop on economic impact assessment of IAS using *Parthenium* and *Prosopis* as case studies.

86 Despite the lack of a National Awareness and Communication Strategy under Output 2.1 (see below), there has been an impressive program of awareness raising activities organised during the period under review (also under Output 2.3). These have included, i) seminars for stakeholders of pilot site institutions, ii) production and dissemination of 4,000 copies of a leaflet on IAS (in English and Amharic), and translation of this leaflet into two other widely spoken languages (Oromifa and Tigrigna), iii) training manuals on the biology and management of *Parthenium* and *Prosopis* prepared (in Amharic), iv) mass local awareness raising campaigns at Welenchiti pilot site and Addis Ababa and some television coverage these campaigns, and, v) production and dissemination of project posters at various events. The concern of the MTR Team is that without an overall Awareness and Communication Strategy these activities lack impact and focus.

87 Progress on other parts of Component 2 has been much slower and some **key concerns** emerged during the MTR, these include:

a) Little progress on the development of the National Awareness and Communication Strategy (Output 2.1) – a task team and statement of work has been developed only. Although a lot of awareness raising activities were undertaken in 2007 it is important that the development of the Strategy builds on this to quickly provide a framework and focus for awareness and communication in the second half of the project, as well as methods to quantify the impact made. Identification of key stakeholders and opportunities for information exchange and communication need to be urgently identified.
b) No real progress has been made on the development of a stand-alone IAS database. Since the PDF B phase the EIAR website has hosted a project page highlighting IAS issues.
c) No progress has been made on the development and establishment of a national IAS database, and information transfer to regional and global databases on IAS (Output 2.2).
d) Lack of diversification of awareness and communication tools. Beyond the usual posters and leaflets, the project should develop IAS awareness toolkits for local schools and diversify into other media (TV/radio broadcasts and well illustrated posters are particularly effective where literacy rates are low). The project should also tie in with the on-going national curriculum review being undertaken by the Ministry of Education.

Component 3: Implementation of strategies for prevention and management of priority invasive plants

88 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 3 was estimated at 30% by the Ethiopia NCU. However the MTR team notes that this is probably an under-estimate of achievement, and the figure is closer to **35%**.

89 The most significant achievements under Component 3 have been seen at the site management level (Output 3.4) where IAS Action Plans for three species (*Prosopis*, *Parthenium* and Water Hyacinth) have been developed, agreed and published, site management groups have been established and are functioning well, two project site offices have been established, and good local partnerships have been established (with Werer Agricultural Research Center, the Wonji/Shewa Sugar Estate in Wonji and local communities at Welenchiti and Werer in particular). Another feature of success in Output 3.4 has been the amount of research material produced by sponsored MSc students under the RBIPMA project and this work has provided

much of the scientific basis for developing the IAS Action Plans. Monitoring of regeneration after removal of *Parthenium* and *Prosopis* is also on-going.

90 As with other RBIPMA countries, progress on Outputs 3.1and 3.2 (relating review of risk analysis procedures and establishment of risk reduction systems such as early detection and rapid response systems) has been very slow, and which are at the very core of the RBIPMA project towards prevention of IAS. In Ethiopia, national consultant's reports have been drafted (not available for review by MTR Team) and some consultations with relevant authorities made. Other areas of **major concern** which require urgent attention if they are to be achieved within the life time of the project include:

a) Progress on the development of ecosystem management plans for the pilot sites has been slow. The existing IAS Action Plans are largely species driven and have little relevance to the wider ecosystem implications of IAS spread and colonisation. In particular there has been little attempt to quantify the spread of *Parthenium* and *Prosopis* into the Awash National Park, and to assess the potential impacts of such a spread. There has also been little or no focus on the impacts of IAS on biodiversity (other than agricultural plant diversity). Further research on vegetation rehabilitation at sites after IAS removal is also needed (as with all RBIPMA pilot sites). These applied research areas need to be improved in 2009.
b) Little progress has been made on Output 3.3 (conduct surveys at National level to document presence and impact of IAS). Most survey work has focused on and around the pilot sites and is not truly national in its coverage. There is little evidence that information storage and retrieval systems (database) has been established. Further development of this component will be essential to assess the existing baseline and review rates of spread IAS throughout Ethiopia. Opportunities to link with regional databases (AGIS) and others remain. Harmonising national approaches to the management and control of IAS will also benefit from this component.
c) At the moment the project pilot site activities clearly focus on the IAS "hotspots" (areas of intense infestation and high impact), and there is little focus on the "front line" of infestation (areas where infestation may be lower and more easy to contain – such as the spread of *Parthenium* along the main road bisecting Awash National Park and the potential spread of *Prosopis* into the northern parts of the National Park.

Component 4: Capacity building for invasive plant management.

91 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 4 was estimated at 30% by the Ethiopia NCU, although the MTR Team consider this is an over-estimate of progress against the benchmarks, and consider **20%** to be a more accurate reflection. The only tangible progress within Component 4 concerned registration of MSc students (under sub-activity 4.1.3) – see below. Other than that there was a complete lack of strategic approaches to planning for and executing training and capacity building.

92 Although a clear and concise Strategy for Training in IAS issues has yet to be developed in Ethiopia, **one of the major successes** of the RBIPMA project has come from this component within Ethiopia. The Government has committed significant, additional funding to ensure that capacity in IAS issues will be built during the implementation of the project. A total of 16 MSc. Students have been enrolled under the project so far. Five of these are now in their second year

and are undertaking invasive species research projects; 11 are just beginning their first year of course work, with the intention of pursuing research on a variety of invasive species-related topics next year (2009). Six additional MSc students from four beneficiary institutions (MoARD, PPRC, SOPARI and APAR) have also recently been selected under the RBIPMA project and will register during the 2009 academic year. Some project staff have also attended international meeting (e.g., NPC attended CBD COP 8 in Brazil) and promoted RBIPMA project in Ethiopia.

93 Progress under the remainder of Component 4 was largely unsatisfactory, and considering the important nature of capacity building in every GEF project, this needs to be urgently addressed during the early stages of 2009. The NCU has been particularly successful at stimulating academic capacity and study, but far less effective with building capacity at key stakeholders and partner agencies. The following areas are of **particular concern** to the MTR Team:

a) No evidence that a training needs analysis (TNA) had been undertaken, that training modules had been developed, or that training programs had been implemented for selected stakeholders (all under Output 4.1) was presented to the MTR Team. The strategy to build capacity through supporting and guiding MSc students was however very well received.

b) Slow progress on formulating programmes for integrating IAS into learning institution courses was noted (Output 4.4). Although a task team has been proposed to develop strategies and guidelines for this, there was no evidence presented to the MTR Team that this was developing further.

3.3 Issues for sustainability and replicability of the Project in Ethiopia

a) Strategic re-focusing of RBIPMA program components in the next phase of project implementation will be essential. Whilst some successes have been achieved in public awareness raising and building capacity amongst local students, and in development of successful pilot site demonstration activities, there has not been a very strategic approach to project implementation in Ethiopia. Progress on development of the NISSAP and its incorporation into national policy and other plans has been slow, and strategies to guide capacity building and public awareness have also stalled. Without these key documents to guide project implementation, there is a real danger that the RBIPMA in Ethiopia will lack sustainability and replicability.

b) Consensus urgently needed by stakeholders to agree on a unified approach to IAS management and control: The proposed NISSAP has not been developed and as a result there is a fragmented approach to project implementation with no overall strategy driving the process amongst the various stakeholders. Without a fully developed NISSAP it is unlikely that a coordinated and measurable approach will happen in the second half of the project, and beyond.

   At the species level, there is also need for a unified approach (strategy) for management and control of *Prosopis* throughout Ethiopia – conflicting ideas and approaches from NGOs and CBOs has led to much confusion over the years. Management of *Prosopis* through community utilisation is a very contentious issue and needs to be resolved by a consensus

amongst stakeholders. Evidence presented at the MTR Workshop indicated that promoting local utilization was not a sound management option for this particular IAS.

c) Ensuring that the coordination (Apex) body for IAS issues in Ethiopia is established and resourced in a timely way: for the project to have lasting impacts there is an urgent need for the establishment of a coordinating body within the second half of the project. Without such a body, it is unlikely that one of the main barriers to the management of invasive plants in Ethiopia will be removed. Currently, the NSC serves the *ad interim* coordination body on IAS, but this is not sustainable as the NSC will disband at the completion of the project. There remains an urgent need to develop a strategy and mechanism to identify a host organization for the Apex Body, negotiate its position and work towards a cost recovery mechanism to ensure its sustainability.

d) Continue to strengthen capacity on IAS issues at all levels: There is an urgent need for provision of targeted training at all levels within the RBIPMA project in Ethiopia. In particular, national level staff attached to organizations involved in IAS issues and their eventual coordination and local level organizations and stakeholders should benefit. Considering the inherent problems with building capacity in any project, these activities should have been started during the first half of the project and not in the second half.

e) Ensuring the project activities and outputs are mainstreamed and down-streamed into federal and local level agencies: More attention should be given to regional and district (Woreda) agencies, in both the pilot areas and in other areas where IAS are problematic.

3.4 Key requirements to sustain or enhance project approaches in the second half of the project

94 The section on Sustainability and Replicability (above) outlines some of the areas where project approaches need to be amended in the second half of project implementation. An overview of the key requirements to sustain or enhance project approaches during the next two years is provided below:

1. More strategic approaches are needed to meet project goals: development of NISSAP, formation of a coordinating Apex Body for IAS, development of targeted training and communication strategies, and development of ecosystem management plans will be necessary in 2009.

2. Mainstreaming of IAS activities into Government work programs and budgets: this is related to the need to identify the host organization for the Apex Body for IAS and work towards establishing it.

3. Continuing to demonstrate cost-effective management and control measures for IAS at the local (pilot site) level: success of the demonstration activities at pilot sites and support for local initiatives to implement on a wider scale need to be built into the program.

4. Developing better synergy and co-operation with existing projects and programs on IAS: The RBIPMA project presents clear opportunities for synergy with other projects and programs in Ethiopia working on IAS issues. In particular, EIAR (IPM/CRSP) – east and

southern Africa bio-control measures; FARM Africa – sustainable management of pastoral lands in the Afar Region; CARE Ethiopia – Awash Conservation and Development Project, and the sub-regional FAO project working on *Prosopis* management in other East African countries.

5. Specific implementation of the project training program to build capacity at all levels: to meet GEF principles enabling local EAs and stakeholders to sustain implementation of the work program beyond the life of the project.

6. Fast-tracking local consultancies and sub-contracts to expedite progress on slow components: There is an urgent need to get Task Teams and consultants moving on components mentioned in point 1 above.

7. Establishing and maintaining linkages between national and global databases: developing an IAS information database for Ethiopia that is based on the most simple and sustainable system will be imperative. Linkages to regional data bases such as AGIS will be an advantage in terms of visibility, accessibility, support and information exchange.

8. Improving the monitoring of the implementation process: implementation needs to be based around a cycle of "implementation-evaluation-revision" for site-based activities in particular. Activities need to be "phased" to reduce risks and to facilitate monitoring, evaluation and learning. The phases should be set out in implementation plans including identification of team members and their responsibilities.

3.5 Conclusions: Lessons Learned and Best Practices in Ethiopia

95 Considering delays in project implementation of over one year, the overall performance of the project in Ethiopia during the period under review was fairly satisfactory. The following areas are singled out for comment as lessons learned and best practices:

1. Tangible results on the ground are necessary to stimulate stakeholder participation and longer term commitment: In Ethiopia, pilot site demonstration activities for the removal of IAS and restoration of the land are critical to facilitate long term support and ownership of the project at the local level. The local communities at the pilot areas have been very hard hit (socially and economically) by IAS infestations, and are more-or-less unable to cope with the severity of the impacts. Within the review period, the project has effectively established local management committees and mobilized local community support, and through this has managed to demonstrate some clear and practical ways to deal with IAS. Whilst this can be considered a project success in Ethiopia, it remains critical that the lessons learned are absorbed into policy and legislation and into Regional (District) planning.

2. The impacts of IAS on human populations in Ethiopia are extremely severe and local communities are suffering greatly: Discussions about biodiversity protection and conservation in the face of human tragedy are difficult. Local communities want solutions to their problems and are not too worried about losses to National Parks and biodiversity. There is little understanding that healthy ecosystems promote healthier lives.

Severely impacted communities need urgent assistance to control (and possibly eradicate) IAS from their lands. The project can assist directly in this, through expansion of successful demonstrations (on-going) and through controlled release of suitable bio-control agents. On the other hand, the project needs to develop a strategy of "containment of spread" to prevent further spread of IAS into neighbouring lands. It is very clear that the RBIPMA project needs to form strategic partnerships with other agencies to work towards solutions for severe IAS infestations. Agencies such as the Office of Pastoralist, Agriculture and Rural Development (OPARD), and NGOs such as FARM Africa and CARE Ethiopia are all involved in different aspects of *Prosopis* management and would be potential partners.

3.6 Recommendations – putting the MTR into action in Ethiopia

96 Section 3.4 provides a list of eight key requirements to sustain or enhance project approaches and methods during the next phase of project implementation. These, and the specific recommendations presented below, need full consideration during the development of future work plans and budgets:

Recommendation 1: Urgent and strategic re-focusing of RBIPMA program components is needed in Ethiopia.

97 The NCU must fast-track the processes of development of the NISSAP and a strategic review of its policy implications at both the national and local level. Likewise, NCU must speed up the development of a Communication and Awareness Strategy in Component 2 and a Training Strategy in Component 4 – both are essential elements to guide project implementation in these areas and create the mechanisms for sustainability.

Responsibility	Task	Time frame	Deliverable
NCU	Hold workshop for NISSAP development	By 4Q 2008	1. Framework for NISSAP agreed
NCU	Fast-track development of NISSAP and review its policy implications (appoint and manage a Task Team or consultant)	By 2Q 2009	2. Draft NISSAP
NSC	NSC meeting to review and approve NISSAP	By next NSC meeting	3. Approved NISSAP disseminated
NCU	Appoint Task Team or consultant to lead development of Communication and Awareness Strategy. Monitor development and set deadlines	By 4Q 2008	4. Task Team or consultant contracted with clear ToR 5. Draft C&A Strategy for review
NCU	Appoint Task Team or consultant to lead development of Training Strategy. Monitor development and set deadlines	By 4Q 2008	6. Task Team or consultant contracted with clear ToR 7. Draft Training Strategy for review

Recommendation 2: Build consensus to enable a unified approach for the management and control of *Prosopis juliflora* in Ethiopia.

99 The issue of how to manage *Prosopis juliflora,* and some other IAS, in Ethiopia is highly contentious. Some sectors are calling for total eradication, others for control of spread and still others want to develop ways for impacted communities to utilize the plant. Ironically, all of these parties (including the RBIPMA project) have a similar goal – to improve the environmental and socio-economic situation in areas where IASs occurs.

100 The next stage of the project implementation provides an opportunity to reach some common consensus on this to enable a unified approach for its management and control to be initiated by all. The project can kick-start this process by organising a series of round-tables on this issue and invite all relevant stakeholders to take part (linked to Recommendation 3 below). With informed debate and scientific facts, including technical advice from CABI and IUCN (and other international players), the round-table should attempt to reach consensus on a way forward and prepare an overview paper for agreement by all the parties. The RBIPMA "management plan for *Prosopis* spp at Amibara District Pilot Sites, Ethiopia" could be a good starting point for discussion.

Responsibility	Task	Time frame	Deliverable
NCU	Organize series of round-tables or workshops and invite relevant parties. Appoint Task Team on this.	By 2Q 2009	1. Series of round tables or workshops on *Prosopis* management strategies
CABI / IUCN	Support NCU with scientific and technical data and information from regional / international examples	By 2Q 2009	2. Overview paper on *Prosopis* management issues regionally and internationally
NCU	Prepare overview paper for further discussion and develop Unified Strategy	By 3Q 2009	3. Overview paper and Unified Strategy disseminated
NCU	Launch unified approach to *Prosopis* management with partner agencies	By 4Q 2009	4. Unified Strategy on *Prosopis*

Recommendation 4: Develop more effective partnerships with other initiatives / agencies to tackle IAS issues.

101 Coordination with other initiatives, nationally, regionally and locally (especially at the project pilot sites) provides an opportunity for developing synergy and partnerships on IAS issues and optimizing resource allocation and use.

102 Recognizing that the different agencies, projects and NGOs will have different agendas for dealing with IAS issues, it is proposed that the RBIPMA project start to initiate more partnerships with the following initiatives and agencies:

a) Office of Pastoralist, Agriculture and Rural Development (OPARD): This agency has an initiative to rehabilitate *Prosopis* affected areas back to crop- and pasture-land.
b) FARM Africa: NGO that has already completed a one pilot project and is launching another four year project on management and utilization of *Prosopis* at shared pilot site at Amibara District.
c) CARE Ethiopia: NGO that is also undertaking some activity related to *Prosopis* management and control.

103 There will be opportunities to coordinate RBIPMA activities with these initiatives and find out more about their goals, objectives and proposed activities (and budgets) and determine where synergy can be created. This recommendation is closely linked to Recommendation 2, but partnerships with other initiatives, involving other IASs should be investigated also.

Responsibility	**Task**	**Time frame**	**Deliverable**
NCU	Review complimentary initiatives (especially those listed here) and develop ways to cooperate. Communicate with others.	By 4Q 2008	1. List of opportunities for cooperation.
NCU	Where appropriate develop unified approaches and partnerships (joint activities / MoUs)	By 1Q 2009	2. Signed MoUs on partnerships 3. Joint activities at pilot sites
CABI / IUCN	Support NCU with scientific and technical data. Join discussion and joint activities.	By 1Q 2009	4. Technical assistance to joint activities.

Recommendation 5: Expedite the formation of an Apex Body responsible for the coordination and promotion of IAS issues in Ethiopia.

104 The current situation where the NSC acts as an *ad interim* coordinating body is not sustainable. The NSC needs to review which agency is the appropriate body to coordinate and promote IAS issues in Ethiopia and they need to fast-track this activity under the project during 2009. The EIAR is perhaps the most suitable candidate, but other agencies need to be assessed. The formation of an IAS Apex Body will require significant investment and focus to build capacity within the selected agency and for the creation of a permanent IAS co-ordinator position and staffing. The financial implications of this are strongly linked to the need to develop appropriate cost recovery mechanisms under Output 1.3 and need to be carefully assessed.

Responsibility	**Task**	**Time frame**	**Deliverable**

NCU and NSC	Review suitability of relevant agencies and develop proposal to create Apex Body of IAS issues in Ethiopia	By next NSC meeting, latest by mid-2009	Approval of proposal to establish Apex Body and mechanism to financially support such a body.

105 Other sub-recommendations are highlighted below:

- NCU to initiate contact with appropriate agencies within the customs and quarantine departments and expedite activities under Output 3.1 and 3.2 relating to IAS risk procedures and early detection and rapid response systems.

- Fast-track implementation of the yet to be drafted Training Strategy as soon as it is approved by NSC. The project should make better use of existing support structures and extension programs within Ethiopia to build capacity and create more awareness of IAS issues at the local level. The Farmers' Training Centre program was highlighted as a possible partner for this during the MTR.

- Pilot site management committees, with guidance from NCU should review site management plans and if appropriate expand them to include wider ecosystem considerations.

- More studies on the impact of invasive plants / IAS on ecosystem and species biodiversity should be implemented, and their results used to promote management and control programs amongst protected areas staff.

- The project should establish better links with the management and staff of the Awash National Park and implement more activities to train staff and involve them in IAS management issues.

SECTION 4: GHANA

4.1 Background

106 The Ghana component of the RBIPMA, in addition to establishing the national strategy, institutional and legislative framework on the prevention and control of IAS, focuses its project pilots on removing barriers to the management of two invasive plants species – the tree *Broussonetia papyrifera* (pulp mulberry), and the aquatic herb *Eichhornia crassipes* (water hyacinth).

107 The project components mirror those in other RBIPMA project countries, with national components focused on strengthening the enabling policy and institutional environment; increasing information and raising awareness levels and enhancing capacity to deal with the problems. There is also a site based component to implement strategies for the prevention and management of priority IAS. In Ghana, pilot demonstration activities are underway within the Afram Headwaters Forest reserve, where the focus is on the management and control of *B. papyrifera*, which was originally introduced to the area in the late 1960s and is now spreading rapidly throughout the area and having significant impacts on farmland and the forest reserve itself; and in the Oti Arm of Lake Volta the project addresses the problem of infestation of waterways by *E. crassipes*.

108 The National Executing Agency (NEA) of the Ghana component of the RBIPMA is the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), originally under the Ministry of Environment Science and Technology (MEST), but recently transferred to the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment (MLGRDE). The National Coordination Unit (NCU) is housed within CSIR (based in Accra). At project start up the CBD Focal Point was also within MEST, but this has changed twice in the lifetime of the project. First it was switched to the Ministry of Environment and Science (MES) and more recently to the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (MoESS). An overview of the institutional set-up is provided below.

109 A comprehensive draft Mid Term Review Report was presented to the MTR Team during the MTR Workshop. This, along with visits to the field sites (23 to 24 June 2008), the MTR Workshop (25 to 26 June 2008), national reviewer reports, and stakeholder consultation throughout this period, forms the basis for this Review.

4.2 Review of project performance and impact in Ghana

4.2.1 Institutional aspects

Overview of the Institutional set-up

110 The National Executing Agency (NEA) of the Ghana component of the RBIPMA is the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the National Coordination Unit (NCU) is housed within CSIR (based in Accra). The NCU has six full time staff, the National Project Coordinator (NPC) (Mr. K.A.A deGraft-Johnson), an Assistant National Project Coordinator (Mr. F.J. Akpabey), a Project Accountant/Administrator (E. Brakoh), and a National Project Administrative Assistant (E. Awudi). The NCU also has two Project Drivers. The NCU reports directly to the National Project Director (NPD) (DG of CSIR, Prof. E. Owusu-Bennoah) and also

to the National Steering Committee (NSC). The NPD is accountable to CABI-ARC for the delivery of agreed project outputs, maintains regular communication with CABI-ARC and supervises the work of the NCU, which is responsible for the day to day running of the project. To facilitate activities at the pilot sites, the project has established two pilot site coordination units (the Afram Headwaters Forest Reserve Co-ordination Unit, under Forest Research Institute of Ghana (FORIG), and the Oti Arm of the Volta Lake Co-ordination Unit, under Volta River Authority (VRA). These coordination units are further supported by Pilot Site Coordination Committees.

111 The 12-man, interagency NSC is chaired by the NPD and comprises of senior representatives of relevant government and non-government agencies. The NSC provides guidance to the project, especially in regard to national political and administrative issues and makes decisions on issues related to legislation, regulations and guidelines on IAS management. It also ensures federal level inter-sector integration of IAS-related projects. The NSC has met 6 times during the review period.

Effectiveness and efficiency of project management and supervision

112 Overall performance (based upon a review of progress under Output 5.1) shows about 75% completion of these activities. The MTR Report indicates that regular (quarterly) progress reports were prepared and submitted on time to CABI, regular monitoring and evaluation exercises at field sites were undertaken by the NCU and six regular (quarterly) consultative meetings with the NSC were held during the period under review. Audited accounts for the FY 2006 and FY 2007 were also submitted to CABI.

113 Project M&E system and reporting were used. Between January 2006 and June 2007 six (6) financial reports were delivered to the PCU and between January 2006 and December 2007 four (4) progress reports were submitted to the PCU.

114 Project management and coordination appear to be on course. However, more co-ordination meetings of the NCU, Pilot site coordinators and pilot site management committee members are recommended.

115 Some **major concerns** in the project institutional set-up, management and coordination were reported for Ghana during the MTR. These are listed below:

a) The apparent inability of the NSC and the NPD to levy the GoG co-financing. It is understood that radical Ministerial changes have taken place during the life of the project, but no real attempts have been made to solve this problem. A new, recently appointed NPD should prioritize this need.
b) Despite the establishment of pilot site management committees and two pilot site coordination units, communication and cooperation between the NCU and the sites needs to be strengthened. Harmonization of project objectives and goals between CSIR and FORIG, for instance, would enhance implementation at the site level.
c) Concerns were also raised during the MTR about the ability of the project to work at the community level (especially at the Afram Headwaters site). A strong case was made for the need to work with District Chief Executives (DCE) and the Environmental and Publicity

Sub-committees of the Assemblies, with the ultimate objective of anchoring the project in the district assembly framework, and this needs further review.

4.2.2 Financial aspects

116 The Ghana MTR Report highlights project expenditure during the period Q1 2006 to Q4 2007. Planned disbursement of cash during this period totaled USD 566,336, with an actual expenditure of USD 226,986 (40%). Figures presented at the MTR Workshop in June 2008 indicated that cash co-funding from the Government of Ghana (GoG) was well below agreed totals. No co-funds were received in FY 2006, and only USD 85,858 of the agreed USD 125,000 for FY 2007 was received (i.e., only 69% of the annual agreed cash co-finance). No further GoG co-funds have been received and it seems unlikely that any will be. If this remains the case, the GoG will only have delivered on 17% of total agreed cash co-finance for the life of the project.

117 Disbursement of funds to support project implementation appears to be slow and this has been compounded by uncertainties over GoG agreed co-financing, and the NSC and NPDs inability to solve this problem. It will be critical for UNEP-GEF to see GoG agreed co-finance honored in a timely way during the second part of the project. A serious flaw in procedures for procurement of the project vehicles was noted, whereby a supplier failed to deliver the vehicle after accepting the USD 33,500 of UNEP/GEF funds (GoG later compensated for this loss).

Cost effectiveness of project activities

118 A full breakdown of cost effectiveness of project activities was not possible as the Draft MTR Country report for Ghana contained incomplete budget sheets. It is suggested that this matter be raised for clarification during the ISC Meeting in early October 2008.

Equipment procurement

119 Procurement of Non-expendable Equipment (BL 4200) accounted for USD 61,992 (or about 27% of the total expenditure) in the first half of the project. The majority of this was taken up with two project vehicles (USD 49,477). A full inventory of other items is provided as an Annex to the Uganda MTR Report, and includes office equipment (printers, computers, HDDs, projector, DVD player, photocopy machine, and tables and chairs), field equipment (GPS units and chain saws).

120 Equipment procurement in the second half of the project will be significantly lower as most of the necessary items have already been procured.

Disbursement of budget

121 Figures presented by the NPC during the MTR Workshop indicated that a total of USD 312,799 had been received from UNEP/GEF up to December 2007. As such, no significant delays with disbursement of the UNEP/GEF budget were reported by the Ghana NCU and this is assumed to be running smoothly.

122 There has been a serious shortfall of Government of Ghana agreed co-financing commitment. Cash co-financing totaling USD 125,000 / year for 4 years was agreed in the Project

Document, which stated that five government agencies under the Ministry of Science and Technology (MST) would each contribute USD 25,000 a year for the project period. Problems have arisen with this arrangement as the MST has now become the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment (MLGRDE) and the CBD focal point is now part of another Ministry. To date however, only USD 85,859 has been received by the NCU – this accounts for only 69% of the agreed co-finance for FY 2007.

123 USD 5,000 as also been received as part of the AfDB project on "Management and Utilization of *Broussonetia* in the Afram Headwaters"

4.2.3 Technical aspects

Overview of progress against project benchmarks

124 The Country MTR Report of Ghana provides a detailed analysis of the perceived levels of completion of each output in relation to the project benchmarks and these are summarized in the table below. The consolidated MTR Report will highlight some of the main achievements within each component and also highlight gaps that need to be addressed in the second half of the project implementation.

Component	**% completed**	
	As in Country MTR Report	**As assessed by MTR**
1: Strengthening the enabling policy and institutional environment for cross-sectoral prevention and management of invasive plants	30%	30%
2: Utilization of appropriate information on risks, impacts and management of IAS by key stakeholder groups and raising awareness levels	45%	35%
3: Implement strategies for the prevention and management of priority IAS	30%	40%
4: Capacity building for prevention and management of IAS	10%	10%
5: Project management coordination	75%	75%

Component 1: Strengthening the enabling policy and institutional environment for cross-sectoral prevention and management of invasive plants

125 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 1 was estimated at **30%** by the Ghana NCU, and based on the findings of the MTR this is probably about right.

126 There has been some tangible progress in Component 1 during the period under review with the NCU of Ghana producing a Draft NISSAP in December 2006. However, senseless delays since that point in promoting and implementing the NISSAP have held back Component 1.

The NCU needs to get the NISSAP back on track as soon as possible, with full consultation and input from key stakeholders for a second draft and technical input from CABI and IUCN.

127 Other outputs within Component 1 have been slow to develop, and there will be a need to expedite these early in the next phase of the project. In particular, through further discussion on the NISSAP, coordination of IAS and cost recovery mechanisms, there is an opportunity to engage the high level Parliamentary Sub-committee on the Environment, and the Ministry of Environment and Science (MES), to look into establishment of the Apex Body to coordinate IAS issues. Although, based upon current progress it seems unlikely that the GoG would support such a body, and the lobbying power of the CBD Focal Point and the project remains too low.

128 There remain some **major concerns** towards the completion of this Component that will require substantial effort and priority action during the second half of the project if the goal of removing barriers is to be met. Of particular concern is the lack of progress noted in the following key areas:

a) Establishment of an Apex Body to coordinate IAS issues: some discussion with the CBD Focal Point has taken place, but this needs to be taken to a higher level within GoG.
b) No progress has been made on the development of cost recovery mechanisms. NCU has cited problems with engaging a consultant for this activity.

Component 2: Utilisation of appropriate information on risks, impacts and management of IAS by key stakeholder groups and raising awareness levels

129 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 2 was estimated at 45% by the Ghana NCU, but this is probably closer to **35%** as some of the tasks slated for completion in Year 1 and 2 had yet to be initiated.

130 Component 2 appears to be on track to meet its benchmarks at the end of the project. Achievements include the drafting of a National Awareness and Communication Strategy under Output 2.1 (not yet reviewed by CABI). A wide range of awareness raising materials (brochures, posters, flyers on target IAS) has already been developed and awareness campaigns have taken place at the community level. Substantial effort has also been made to communicate and exchange project information with external organizations through participation in symposia and international workshops (Output 2.3).

131 Progress on other parts of Component 2 has been much slower and the following **gaps** emerged during the MTR:

a) No real progress has been made on the development of an IAS web site (Output 2.2). Software compatibility problems with the CSIR website are cited as the reasons for this delay.

b) No progress has been made on the development and establishment of a national IAS database, and information transfer to regional and global databases on IAS (Output 2.2)

c) No progress made with establishing an awareness impact monitoring tool and program, which has to be an integral part of the national awareness strategy.

Component 3: Implementation of strategies for prevention and management of priority invasive plants

132 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 3 was estimated at 30% by the Ghana NCU. However the MTR team notes that this is probably an under-estimate of achievement, and the figure is closer to **40%**.

133 The most significant achievements under Component 3 have been seen at the site management level (Output 3.4) where IAS Action Plans for two species (*Broussonetia* and Water Hyacinth) have been developed, agreed and published, site management groups have been established and are functioning well, and two pilot site coordination units have been established. Field trials for management and control of both target IAS are progressing well, although there are some concerns about the scientific basis for some of the trials at the Afram Headwaters Forest Reserve (these have been reviewed by CABI and NCU needs to ensure that some changes are made in the second half of the project). The communities at Oti arm of Volta Lake are highly motivated and they are leading activities for the removal of water hyacinth – results show that removal programs appear to be highly successful. At the Afram Headwaters Forest Reserve community participation appears to be rather superficial at this stage, and the project is open to relatively few farmers. That may increase if and when farmers start to see some tangible benefits from being involved.

134 As with other RBIPMA countries, progress on Outputs 3.1and 3.2 (relating review of risk analysis procedures and establishment of risk reduction systems such as early detection and rapid response systems) has been very slow in Ghana – this is a major concern for all RBIPMA countries and it is unlikely that tangible outcomes will be possible unless one project country shows the way and/or CABI puts additional resources to this end. Other areas of **major concern** which require urgent attention if they are to be achieved within the life time of the project include:

a) Not much progress has been made on Output 3.3 (conduct surveys at National level to document presence and impact of IAS). Most survey work has focused on and around the pilot sites and is not truly national in its coverage. The project has shown some initiative to collaborate with existing projects and programs on this (notably ECOWAS and VRA weed control projects and AfDB *Broussonetia* project at Afram Headwaters Forest Reserve), but no Nation-wide mapping has taken place. A relatively simple survey and mapping project to show extent of spread by *Broussonetia* could be initiated, and it is recommended that this be undertaken by MSc or MPhil students.

Component 4: Capacity building for invasive plant management.

135 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 4 was estimated at only **10%** by the Ghana NCU. Progress has been slow, or in cases non-existent, and this is deemed an accurate reflection of progress in Component 4. Some progress has been made under Output 4.1 (training programme) where one PhD student has been registered and is currently undertaking research on IAS (this is in-fact the Assistant NPC), and two post-graduate students are currently awaiting approval to start their research. In addition, it is reported that more than 100 community

member and up to 15 policy makers have received "some training" on IAS issues (it was unclear exactly what the training consisted of).

136 Progress under the remainder of Component 4 was very unsatisfactory, and considering the important nature of capacity building in every GEF project, this needs to be urgently addressed during the early stages of 2009. The following areas are of **particular concern** to the MTR Team:

a) No evidence that a training needs analysis (TNA) had been undertaken, that IAS training modules had been developed, or that targeted training programs had been implemented for selected stakeholders (all under Output 4.1) was presented to the MTR Team.
b) Provision of equipment and material support to National Quarantine and Customs Departments, National Border Control and IAS control teams has completely stalled. No positive response regarding equipment needs was received from the agencies concerned.
c) Slow progress on formulating programmes for integrating IAS into learning institution courses was noted (Output 4.4). Two consultants had been engaged to undertake this work but both had dropped out. No new consultants had been identified at the time of the MTR.

4.3 Issues for sustainability and replicability of the Project in Ghana

a) Securing agreed co-finances from the GoG for the remainder of the project: This issue needs to be resolved quickly, and if necessary a strong statement form the ISC and / or UNEP-GEF to the GoG should be made.
b) Ensuring that the coordination (Apex) body for IAS issues in Ghana is established and resourced in a timely way: as with all RBIPMA countries this is a major issue for sustainability of IAS interventions and needs to be resolved.
c) Continue to strengthen capacity on IAS issues at all levels: As with other RBIPMA countries there is an urgent need to provide targeted training at all levels within Ghana. In particular, national level staff attached to organizations involved in IAS issues and their eventual coordination and local level organizations and stakeholders should benefit.
d) Embed IAS management within targeted district assembly development plans: such a mechanism could pave the way for the support of IAS control and management activities by local governments after the project term.

4.4 Key requirements to sustain or enhance project approaches in the second half of the project

137 The section on Sustainability and Replicability (above) outlines some of the areas where project approaches need to be amended in the second half of project implementation. An overview of the key requirements to sustain or enhance project approaches during the next two years is provided below:

1. Securing commitment from the Government of Ghana towards meeting its obligations for co-financing and support for IAS control and management within the country: Without honoring these agreed commitments there is little likelihood that the GoG will support IAS control and management after the termination of the project. Important benchmarks such as establishment of an IAS coordinating body will not be achieved and future IAS activities in Ghana are likely to be donor driven.

2. Fast-tracking local consultancies and sub-contracts to expedite progress on slow components: There is an urgent need to bring appropriate consultants or Task Teams on board to enable components that have stalled to be implemented. This relates specifically to Output 1.3 (cost recovery mechanisms), Output 4.1 (training program and module development), and Output 4.4 (including IAS in curricula development). The NCU needs to arrange monthly progress meetings for all consultants and project partners to review progress and set targets.

3. Developing clear mechanisms to institutionalize IAS issues in Ghana: The formation of the Apex coordinating body as stated in the project document is not enough. What is critical is the hosting and long term support for the management of IAS. In this regard a four point strategy is proposed: (i) Continue to raise awareness of the environmental, socio-economic and health impacts of IAS; (ii) continue to build capacity to monitor and manage at the grassroots level; (iii) anchor management within District Assembly Development Program, and, (iv) establish a functional coordinating body hosted by relevant institution that could access budgetary support from the central government.

4.5 Conclusions: Lessons Learned and Best Practices in Ghana

a) Need for a good baseline: throughout all the RBIPMA project country pilot sites, the quality of baseline data is variable – from non-existent to fairly good. In Ghana, especially at the Afram Headwaters Forest Reserve pilot site there is almost no baseline information on the plant and animal species (biodiversity) present within the FR, no analysis of historical remote sensing imagery, almost no information on the basic ecology of the target species (*Broussonetia*), and a clear opportunity to record baseline data within the experimental plots was missed. Demonstrating change and positive impacts of IAS management will be more difficult as a result.

4.6 Recommendations – putting the MTR into action in Ghana

138 Section 4.4 provides a list of three key requirements to sustain or enhance project approaches and methods during the next phase of project implementation. These, and the specific recommendations presented below, need full consideration during the development of future work plans and budgets:

Recommendation 1: Seek high level Government intervention to solve co-financing stalemate.

139 The NSC needs to convene and agree on a mechanism to approach the appropriate Government officials to solve the co-financing stalemate. It was suggested at the MTR that the most appropriate course of action would be for the NPD and / or other NSC member to seek an official appointment with the Secretary to the Cabinet. UNEP-GEF to provide supporting letters and information regarding the agreed co-financing and UNEP-GEF rules and regulations on such matters.

Responsibility	Task	Time frame	Deliverable
NPD / NSC	Convene NSC with specific task to tackle this problem	By 4Q 2008	1. Appointment with relevant official(s)
UNEP-GEF	Provide appropriate support	By 4Q 2008	2. Supporting letter / documentation

Recommendation 2: Urgent need to promote Draft NISSAP and use it to enhance awareness of IAS issues at the highest levels.

140 CABI and IUCN to provide NCU with immediate feedback on Draft NISSAP of December 2006. NCU initiates process of additional review and stakeholder inputs and endorsements prior to finalizing document. NISSAP is officially launched by Minister concerned and NCU develops a strategy to implement the NISSAP and win support for its continued implementation.

Responsibility	Task	Time frame	Deliverable
CABI / IUCN	Provide technical guidance on Draft NISSAP	By 4Q 2008	1. Review to strengthen NISSAP
NCU	Hold consultations for further NISSAP development	By 1Q 2009	2. Final NISSAP agreed by stakeholders
NCU	Official launch of NISSAP and review its policy implications (appoint and manage a Task Team or consultant)	By 2Q 2009	3. Launch and publicity 4. Mechanism to embed NISSAP in existing structures

Recommendation 3: Move to implement the National Communication and Public Awareness Strategy developed under Component 2.

141 The Strategy forms an excellent basis to move forward on these issues. NCU should fast-track appointment of an IT / Database specialist with responsibility for finalising and up-loading web-based content on IAS and for coordinating development of Database with regional partners. Database should be simple and easily accessible, and preferably linked to regional databases such as AGIS. The Strategy should be further used to promote IAS at the local levels through the use of local language tools, existing structures such as agricultural extension agencies, and target key decision makers such as District Assemblies. At the national level, implementation of the Strategy should target government officials such as members of the Parliament Select Committee on the Environment (amongst others).

Responsibility	Task	Time frame	Deliverable
NCU	Launch and promote	By 2Q 2009	1. Launch and publicity

	NCPA Strategy		
NCU	Fast-track appointment of IT / Data Base specialist	By 4Q 2008	2. Web site uploaded
			3. Data Base developed and populated – linked regionally.
CABI / IUCN	Support IT / Data Base specialist	By 4Q 2008	4. Online support and direction
NCU	Engage Task Team to implement NCPA Strategy	By 2Q 2009	5. Awareness programs developed under Strategy

Recommendation 4: Develop strategies and partnerships to speed up progress with capacity building under Component 4.

142 Almost no progress has been recorded for key training and capacity building outputs under Component 4. These delays have been attributed to a lack of capacity with local consultants and task teams. If this is the case, the NCU needs to take more initiative to develop alternative strategies to meet these outputs. This could be achieved through development of more partnerships with local training agencies (such as agricultural extension agencies and forestry schools) and through developing better links to the Education Ministry and the responsible agency for curricula development. NCU needs to develop a strategy to move this component forward, for approval by NSC

Responsibility	**Task**	**Time frame**	**Deliverable**
NCU	Develop strategies for increasing local partnerships on training and education	By 1Q 2009	1. Clear strategy for approval by NSC.
NCU	Contract out activities and monitor progress	By 2Q 2009	2. Targeted deliverables (TNA, training modules/program, curricula, etc).

143 Other sub-recommendations are highlighted below:

- NCU to initiate contact with appropriate agencies within the customs and quarantine departments and expedite activities under Output 3.1 and 3.2 relating to IAS risk procedures and early detection and rapid response systems. This may also support Recommendation 1, towards more co-finance delivery through better partnership with other national stakeholder agencies.

- More studies on the impact of invasive plants / IAS on ecosystem and species biodiversity should be implemented, and their results used to promote management and control programs amongst protected areas staff. Specific research topics on *Broussonetia* could include: basic ecology of the species, rates of spread from points of origin, impacts of *Broussonetia* on biodiversity.

- In line with the recommendation for more basic research, budgets can be re-allocated to ensure adequate provision for this. Move funds away from under-performing components to support better information and awareness.

- Websites should be national IAS information portals and not RBIPMA project specific.

- Local incentives to improve community participation should not be in terms of direct cash incentives. It was proposed during the MTR that pilot site management committee members and community members involved in IAS management should be advised or assisted (if possible) to register for the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) as an incentive.

- Risk analysis is a key prerequisite in IAS management. The process evaluates biological, economic and socio-cultural evidence to determine whether management is called for. The NCU should expedite the award of contract for this activity.

SECTION 5: ZAMBIA

5.1 Background

144 The Zambia component of the RBIPMA, in addition to establishing the national strategy, institutional and legislative framework on the prevention and control of IAS, focuses its project pilots on removing barriers to the management of three invasive plants species – the shrub *Lantana camara*, the aquatic herb *Eichhornia crassipes* (water hyacinth), and the shrub *Mimosa pigra* (giant mimosa).

145 The project components mirror those in other RBIPMA project countries, with national components focused on strengthening the enabling policy and institutional environment; increasing information and raising awareness levels and enhancing capacity to deal with the problems. There is also a site based component to implement strategies for the prevention and management of priority IAS. In Zambia, demonstration activities are underway at two pilot sites: at the Victoria Falls / Mosi Oa Tunya National Park (including the Maramba River), the project focus is on the management and control of *L. camara* (especially in the gorges and 'rain' forest around the falls themselves), and *E. crassipes* (principally along the Maramba River which is regularly infested). The second pilot site is within the Lochinvar National Park where the project addresses the problem of infestation of Chunga Lagoon on the Kafue Flats (and its impacts on the biodiversity of the floodplain ecosystem) by *M. pigra.*

146 The National Executing Agency (NEA) of the Zambia component of the RBIPMA is the Environmental Council of Zambia (ECZ), under the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Natural Resources (MTENR). The National Coordination Unit (NCU) is housed within ECZ (based in Lusaka). An overview of the institutional set-up is provided below.

147 A comprehensive draft Mid Term Review Report was presented to the MTR Team during the MTR Workshop. This, along with visits to the field sites (29 to 30 June 2008), the MTR Workshop (1 to 2 July 2008) and its report, national reviewer reports, and stakeholder consultation throughout this period, forms the basis for this Review.

5.2 Review of project performance and impact in Zambia

5.2.1 Institutional aspects

Overview of the Institutional set-up

148 The National Executing Agency (NEA) of the Zambia component of the RBIPMA is the Environmental Council of Zambia (ECZ), under the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Natural Resources (MTENR). The National Coordination Unit (NCU) is housed within ECZ (based in Lusaka). The NCU has six full time staff based in Lusaka, the National Project Coordinator (NPC) (Mr. Brian Nkandu), an Assistant National Project Coordinator (Mr. Rodwell Chandipo), a Project Accountant (Ms. Eva Mulyata), a Project Secretary (Ms. Edah Chileka Mwale), an Office Assistant, and two Project Drivers. The NCU reports directly to the National Project Director (NPD) (acting DG of ECZ, Mrs. Victoria Mupwaya). The NCU also reports regularly to the 14-man National Steering Committee (NSC). The NPD is accountable to CABI-ARC for the delivery of agreed project outputs, maintains regular communication with CABI-

ARC and supervises the work of the NCU, which is responsible for the day to day running of the project. To facilitate activities at the pilot sites, the project has employed two full-time Pilot Site Coordinators, Mr. Griffin Shanungu based at Monze (for the Lochinvar NP) and Mr. Michael Nangalelwa based at Livingstone (for the VF/MOT). In addition two Pilot Site Management Committees have been established on-site.

149 The 14-man, interagency NSC is chaired by the NPD and comprises of senior representatives of relevant government and non-government agencies. The NSC provides guidance to the project, especially in regard to national political and administrative issues and makes decisions on issues related to legislation, regulations and guidelines on IAS management. It also ensures federal level inter-sector integration of IAS-related projects. The NSC has met seven times during the review period.

Effectiveness and efficiency of project management and supervision

150 Overall performance (based upon a review of progress under Output 5.1) shows about 82.5% rate of completion of project establishment and implementation activities (under Component 5). Realistically this is probably about **75%**. In all areas under review it was obvious to the MTR Team that the Zambia component of the RBIPMA project was progressing very well. Capacity at the NCU was high, good management practices were in place, and most activities had been strategically and systematically planned prior to implementation. This was in stark contrast to other participating countries where national strategies and plans were somewhat incomplete and had often not been put into operation. The Zambia NCU, and the supportive Environmental Council of Zambia (ECZ), is to be congratulated on a job well done.

151 The MTR Report indicates that regular (semi-annual) progress reports were prepared and submitted on time to CABI, regular quarterly financial reports had been submitted to UNEP in a timely manner and five review reports on stakeholder consultation had been produced. Six regular (quarterly) consultative meetings (and one extra-ordinary meeting) with the NSC were held during the period under review. A comprehensive system of project M&E reporting was established.

152 The NCU contracted national consultants to lead tasks and assignments, and during the first half of the project eight contracts were awarded. There were some minor problems reported during the MTR with non-responsive consultants, but overall the management of consultants and their deliverables was on-track. No major concerns on the project institutional set-up, management and coordination were reported for Zambia during the MTR.

5.2.2 Financial aspects

153 The Zambia MTR Report highlights project expenditure during the period Q1 2006 to Q4 2007 and an update on this was presented at the MTR Workshop. Planned disbursement of cash during this period totaled USD 353,599, with an actual expenditure of USD 300,239 (85%). Figures presented at the MTR Workshop in July 2008 indicated that a total of USD 363,441 had been received from UNEP/GEF during the first 24 months of the project, and of this USD 297,003 had been disbursed (82%). An additional USD 59,673 was received from UNEP/GEF for the 1Q 2008.

154 In addition, a total of USD 323,325 had been received as cash co-funding from the Government of Zambia (GRZ) during the same period – this exceeds the originally agreed cash co-finance. To date, USD 148,778 (46%) of this co-finance had been disbursed. During the review period approximately USD 115,254 in-kind GRZ contribution had been received (accounting for 18 % of original GRZ in-kind contribution). In early 2008, the GRZ approved additional cash co-finance to the RBIPMA in Zambia. An allocation of USD 625,560 was made for *Mimosa pigra* control and eradication. Thus the agreed GRZ budget for co-financing has been met with 100% cash co-finance at the half way stage of the project. The GRZ and the ECZ are to be commended for their positive response to the need for resources to tackle *M. pigra* in Zambia and to recognize the ability of the RBIMPA project to manage these funds and their associated activities.

155 In conclusion, the Zambia component of RBIPMA has far exceeded expectations with regard to GRZ support and co-finance. Both, external UNEP/GEF funds and GRZ funds received and their disbursement are shown to be very well on track.

Cost effectiveness of project activities

156 The two largest items on the budget during the review period were Non-expendable Equipment (BL 4200) and Meetings and Conferences (BL 3300), at USD 66,738 and USD 59,783 respectively, accounting for 42% of the total expenditure during the review period. Other large budget expenditures were Admin Support (BL 1300) at USD 33,747; Group Training (BL 3200) at USD 33,048; and Expendable Equipment (BL 4100) at USD 31,597.

157 In general, actual expenditures for each BL more-or-less matched the planned costs of each. An exception was BL 4200 (Non-expendable Equipment) where actual expenditure of USD 66,738 against planned expenditure of USD 9,454 was a major discrepancy. However, this difference was accounted for by the use of GRZ cash co-finance to purchase equipment necessary for clearance of IAS at the pilot sites, and in this regard it was not an issue. BL 3300 (Meetings and Conferences) was considerably under spent, with only about 50% of the planned expenditure being used in 2006-2007.

Equipment procurement

158 Procurement of Non-expendable Equipment (BL 4200) accounted for USD 66,738 (or about 22% of the total expenditure) in the first half of the project. The majority of this was taken up with two project vehicles (USD 42,961). Procurement of Expendable Equipment (< USD 1,500) (BL 4100) was considered fairly high at USD 31,597, but much of this was basic field equipment for manual clearance operations for IAS at the pilot sites.

159 A full inventory of other items is provided as an Annex to the Uganda MTR Report, and includes office equipment (printers, computers, HDDs, cameras, projector, DVD player, photocopy machine, and tables and chairs), field equipment (GPS units).

160 Equipment procurement in the second half of the project is likely to remain fairly high as much of the USD 625,560 cash co-finance contribution by GRZ will be used for field operations for *M. pigra* control and eradication at Lochinvar NP. This may involve significant further investment in heavy machinery such as brush cutters.

Disbursement of budget

161 There was some concern on delays experienced in the disbursement of UNEP/GEF funds during some quarters. In these cases, GRZ cash co-finance was been used to off-set expenditure on certain budget lines. At the MTR Workshop, the Acting Director of ECZ clarified that project activities were being streamlined into mainstream ECZ accounting procedures and that this synergy would eventually improve on the financial operations of the project.

162 Delays in disbursement of UNEP/GEF funds were mainly attributed to delays in meeting reporting & delivery by consultants and other outputs as reviewed by CABI, and in part to delays in financial reporting by other RBIPMA participating countries. Whilst this cannot be easily resolved under UNEP rules, for a project of regional nature, the NCU was advised to anticipate delays when submitting Quarterly Advance Request by planning for a 4-month period and building in surplus requirements to avoid budgetary shortfalls. In Zambia this issues is less of a problem due to the high levels of GRZ cash co-finance already secured and available for disbursement.

163 Another concern regarding delays in disbursement of budget was the expected exchange losses due to a strengthening Zambian Kwacha against the major currencies. This may lead to budgetary losses for the project associated with foreign exchange losses, making budgeted activities more expensive than initially estimated, and ultimately affecting overall project performance.

5.2.3 Technical aspects

Overview of progress against project benchmarks

164 The Country MTR Report of Zambia provides a detailed analysis of the perceived levels of completion of each output in relation to the project benchmarks and these are summarized in the table below. The consolidated MTR Report will highlight some of the main achievements within each component and also highlight gaps that need to be addressed in the second half of the project implementation.

Component	**% completed**	
	As in Country MTR Report	**As assessed by MTR**
1: Strengthening the enabling policy and institutional environment for cross-sectoral prevention and management of invasive plants	50%	60%
2: Utilization of appropriate information on risks, impacts and management of IAS by key stakeholder groups and raising awareness levels	55%	55%
3: Implement strategies for the prevention and management of priority IAS	65%	65%
4: Capacity building for prevention and management of IAS	50%	50%

5: Project management coordination	82.5%	75%

Component 1: Strengthening the enabling policy and institutional environment for cross-sectoral prevention and management of invasive plants

165 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 1 was estimated at 50% by the Zambia NCU, thus at the half way point, the component is half completed. MTR noted that completion of activities to date would probably support a more optimistic assessment of **60%**.

166 The major achievement under Component 1 in Zambia has been the positive support generated by the National IAS Strategy and Action Plan (NISSAP) (under Output 1.1). Since its completion and promotion the GRZ has made provision to include IAS issues in Zambia's Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) and the National Energy Policy. In addition, the development of a mechanism to coordinate and promote IAS management between the various sectors (the establishment of the so-called "Apex Body") (under Output 1.2), is also at an advanced stage. The ECZ has made provision for IAS within its Strategic & Business Plan for 2006 – 2011 and negotiations are on-gong for establishment of the Apex Body as a unit within ECZ. Perhaps the one criticism here is that the NISSAP does not clearly state the roles and responsibility of an Apex Body for IAS.

167 No **major concerns** towards the completion of Component 1 emerged during the MTR and although there is a lot of work to do before Zambia has its own IAS coordinating body with financial sustainability and high capacity staff, the RBIPMA project has already significantly contributed to this goal.

Component 2: Utilisation of appropriate information on risks, impacts and management of IAS by key stakeholder groups and raising awareness levels

168 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 2 was estimated at **55%** by the Zambia NCU and this is probably an accurate reflection of progress to date.

169 Major achievements under Component 2 include and comprehensive review of existing communication strategies in Zambia and the development of the National Public Awareness and Communication Strategy for IAS, and based upon this, the production and dissemination of a wide range of information leaflets, posters, etc and promotion of IAS through radio and TV events and other print media (all under Output 2.1) – there was however some criticism at the MTR Workshop that public awareness campaigns could be more strategically targeted (include ornamental plant nurseries in Livingstone) and better coordinated (perhaps by developing ECZ as a one-stop resource centre on IAS issues). Good progress had also been made towards monitoring the impacts of public awareness campaigns, with pre-appraisals completed prior to the airing of 26 local radio events, and follow up surveys planned for 2009 (see Activity 2.2.5).

170 Most other aspects of Component 2 were on track (and will not be detailed here). Perhaps the only point of concern was the development and establishment of a national IAS database, and information transfer to regional and global databases on IAS (Output 2.2). A national database

(using the I3N format) was being housed at ECZ (using GRZ co-financing) and had been set up to collate information on all IAS in Zambia. The use of I3N formats and the ability to share this information regionally and internationally is a concern, and the Zambia NCU is encouraged to explore other, simpler, database options as proposed by CABI. A project website had been developed and was currently hosted by ECZ (www.necz.org.zm/invasiveplant/), in the second half of the project this should be further developed and promote wider IAS issues and not just the RBIPMA project.

Component 3: Implementation of strategies for prevention and management of priority invasive plants

171 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 3 was estimated at **65%** by the Zambia NCU. The MTR Team notes that this is probably an accurate estimate of achievement to date, as Component 3 in Zambia has made significantly more progress on development of risk analysis procedures and rapid response systems under Outputs 3.1 and 3.2) than other RBIPMA participating countries.

172 The most significant achievements under Component 3 have been seen at the site management level (Output 3.4) where draft Ecosystem Management Plans (EMP) for both pilot sites have been developed. These differ from what has been produced in other RBIPMA participating countries as they take a wider, ecosystem perspective to management and do not focus on the management and control of the target IAS alone. In parallel with these, detailed EIA procedure were undertaken at each pilot site prior to commencement of active management of IAS – this has enabled a much more detailed understanding of the ecosystem issues to develop amongst stakeholders. Results of IAS management or control activities at both pilot sites have shown encouraging results and operations, particularly at VF/MOT and Lochinvar NP are due to expand significantly in the second half of the project.

173 Other achievements include the co-operation achieved with Zimbabwean agencies involved in IAS control and participation in bi-national planning workshops on the management of natural resources in the Victoria Falls area; and, economic impact studies for *M. pigra*.

174 Areas under Component 3 that will require significantly more work in the second half of the project include:

a) During the MTR some concerns were raised about the sustainability of IAS management operations (especially regarding *L.* camara at VF/MOT and *E. crassipes* along the Maramba River). The costs of clearance operations are very high, and there appears to be no plans for rehabilitation and management of native vegetation following removal of IAS (for *L. camara*) or for dealing with nutrient loading in the Maramba River. These issues must be addressed in the second half of the project, and CABI and IUCN should provide more technical guidance on these issues.
b) Nationwide surveys and mapping of IAS (Output 3.3) – an expansion of the aerial surveys of the Kafue Flats to identify extent of *M. pigra* infestations would be a good start. CABI could also offer some simple training in survey methods and the use of GPS for mapping. This activity can be expanded to provide greater education / awareness through involvement of other groups such as District Agricultural Extension Officers within the Department of Agriculture, protected areas staff, schools and local NGOs/CBOs.

c) Broadening of participatory control methods to include other partners as well as encourage volunteerism (especially amongst the private tourism sector at VF/MOT). The current method of participatory control is too expensive and slow to be effective or sustainable in the long term.

Component 4: Capacity building for invasive plant management

175 Progress towards achieving the benchmarks under Component 4 was estimated at **50%** by the Zambia NCU, and this is deemed an accurate reflection of progress to date.

176 The major achievements under Component 4 included the preparation of a draft National Training Strategy (titled: Implementation of Capacity Building Strategies for Prevention and Management of IAS in Zambia), and development of draft training modules to facilitate its implementation and extension (under Output 4.1). The initiation of some training programs for local community members was also noted by the MTR Team. Progress had also been made on registering two MSc students (with another proposed) for IAS research and project staff had attended numerous training opportunities, both nationally and within other RBIPMA participating countries.

177 Another achievement in Zambia was the preparation of Guidelines for the Integration of IAS into the Learning Institution Curricula (Output 4.4). To meet this aim the project has been actively working through the Curriculum Development Center to start the process of including IAS into school and tertiary institution science curricula (50% completed).

178 Areas where Component 4 needs to be improved during the second half of project implementation include:

a) The need to build capacity in partner organizations especially in project management at pilot site level to ensure sustainability,
b) Generation of more research opportunities for MSc (and other) students through developing direct links to research institutes and promoting ideas for research (e.g., the impacts of IAS on biodiversity, socio-economic impacts of IAS, long-term monitoring of IAS impacts, etc). A proposed mechanism for this is for the project to allocate small research grants to the best proposals submitted.

179 It was noted during the MTR that activities under Output 4.2 (procurement of equipment for quarantine and control agencies) had been cancelled.

5.3 Issues for sustainability and replicability of the Project in Zambia

a) Continuing with the excellent progress made on institutionalizing IAS into government structures: It seems likely that if the current rate of progress is maintained, by the end of the project the ECZ will be responsible for coordinating IAS issues in Zambia and have sufficient GRZ support to sustain such a body.

b) Continue to strengthen capacity on IAS issues at all levels: As with other RBIPMA countries there is an urgent need to provide targeted training at all levels within Zambia.

c) Develop mechanisms to up-scale management and control of IAS: current levels of effort to eradicate the target IAS at VF/MOT and Lochinvar NP need to be significantly increased (and sustained) in the long term, and overall costs need to be reduced too. There will be a need to involve more local communities and provide incentives for their participation; the need to develop innovative ways to achieve this; the need to set annual work targets; and, the need to implement appropriate bio-control methods to slow the rates of spread. Management of cleared areas to prevent re-infestation will also be an important consideration.

d) Develop mechanisms for integrated ecosystem management: Pilot site management plans should include provision for aspects such as i) vegetation re-habilitation after clearance of IAS, ii) prevention of water eutrophication, iii) hydrological management of surface waters, etc.

e) Ensure that key stakeholders (and especially site management authorities) include IAS management within their planning processes: communicating the need for constant management effort with respect to IAS and land management issues is critical. Gains made over many years can be wiped out with one year of inactivity. Protected area management authorities (ZWA and NHCC) and resource management authorities (e.g., ZESCO) need more tools, more information and more support to achieve this.

5.4 Key requirements to sustain or enhance project approaches in the second half of the project

180 The section on Sustainability and Replicability (above) outlines some of the areas where project approaches need to be amended in the second half of project implementation. An overview of the key requirements to sustain or enhance project approaches during the next two years is provided below:

1. Continuing support and commitment of the GRZ towards meeting the challenges of IAS control and management in Zambia: Government support for the project in its first phase has been exemplary, and continued good communication between the NCU, NPD and NSC with all Government stakeholders will be important to maintain this. Continued promotion of IAS issues at the highest levels to promote better understanding of the severity and magnitude of the problems will be an important strategy to maintain this momentum.

2. Ensuring that public awareness messages are effectively communicated: There was some criticism of the delivery of awareness campaigns in Zambia during the MTR – with lack of coordination of the communication strategy cited as the main reason. Sustaining a targeted and constant stream of IAS information will be important to sustain the positive impacts of the project.

3. Demonstrating that IAS control and management are having positive impacts: Throughout all the participating RBIPMA countries this has been a challenge as baseline assessments have not always been completed. In Zambia, there are opportunities to show the positive impacts on biodiversity (and tourism economies) following large-scale removal of *M. pigra* at Lochinvar NP. At VF/MOT direct benefits to tourism operators could also be used as a positive awareness tool.

4. Maintaining the position of Pilot-site Coordinators after the project: the role of the Pilot-site Coordinator is essential to ensure that IAS issues are integrated into annual work programs. At Lochinvar NP, the resident Park Ecologist has been seconded to the project as the Pilot-site Coordinator, it is essential that such an arrangement is formalized between ECZ and ZAWA prior to the end of the project. Likewise, a similar agreement could be negotiated with the NHCC at VF/MOT.

5.5 Conclusions: Lessons Learned and Best Practices in Zambia

a) The importance of "championing" the IAS cause: In Zambia, when the popular mass media drew people's attention to the issue of giant mimosa invasion and the subsequent loss of tourism revenue at Lochinvar NP, key Government staff (especially the Minister responsible for tourism and the environment) took note. Lobbying by the RBIPMA project increased the knowledge base of these decision-makers and significant financial support was made available to tackle the issue. Before that event, few Zambians were aware of what an Invasive Plant was and what its impact was. This situation provided a unique opportunity, through the RBIPMA, to get IAS issues fully recognized and planned for in Zambia.

b) IAS issues are cross-cutting and require multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approaches: By their very nature, invasive species rapidly colonize new areas and rapidly have negative impacts on human communities, biodiversity and natural resources. No one sector can tackle the control and management of their spread alone. In Zambia, it has taken the combined mobilization of multiple stakeholders, from environment agencies such as ECZ, biodiversity and National Parks protection agencies (ZAWA and NHCC), environmental and social NGOs, local communities, the Energy sector (ZESCO) and private companies (tourism lodge owners at VF/MOT) to begin to increase awareness of the issues and mobilize mechanisms to deal with IAS in the country.

5.6 Recommendations – putting the MTR into action in Zambia

181 Section 5.4 provides a list of three key requirements to sustain or enhance project approaches and methods during the next phase of project implementation. These, and the specific recommendations presented below, need full consideration during the development of future work plans and budgets:

Recommendation 1: Expedite the formal establishment of ECZ as the coordinating body for IAS issues in Zambia.

182 Good progress has been made towards finalising the structure, financing and placement of the Apex Body for Zambia. ECZ are proposed as the coordinating agency, supported by the MTENR, and responsible for facilitating and Inter-institutional Forum, various Cross-cutting working Teams, Executing Agencies, Communities and NGO/CBOs. The project NCU at ECZ continues to be absorbed into ECZ work programmes and operating procedure. These activities need to continue and proposals for financial sustainability of the IAS coordinating body need to be finalised and agreed by the MTENR.

Responsibility	Task	Time frame	Deliverable
NCU - ECZ	Continue to embed RBIPMA project into ECZ work program	On-going	ECZ becomes AIS coordinating body for Zambia
NCU and MTENR	Develop proposals for financial sustainability of IAS coordinating body within ECZ	By next NSC meeting	Approval of mechanism to financially support such a body.

Recommendation 2: Enhance local partnerships to scale-up IAS control and management.

183 During the first half of the project, pilot site activities for the management and control of IAS were deliberately small-scale demonstrations of what could be achieved. In phase 2, these pilots will need to be scaled up and be firmly embedded in the work programs of local stakeholders. This will need to be achieved on two levels. Firstly, within the biodiversity and protected area sector, the Zambian Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) and National Heritage Conservation Commission (NHCC) in particular need to ensure that IAS issues are given some prominence in their protected area work programs. In this regard it may be worthwhile for the project to take some protected area management staff to South Africa to learn about planning and budgeting for IAS control and management in National Parks and Game Reserves. Secondly, there are opportunities for the project to expand its network of private sector stakeholders within the area of Livingstone and around the VF/MOT pilot site. This may extend to providing more opportunities for private sector lodge and resort owners to come on board, and / or the development of a local volunteer network to assist with site management.

Responsibility	Task	Time frame	Deliverable
NCU	Formulate study tour opportunities for protected area management staff	2Q 2009	1. Two to four management staff from VF/MOT and LNP sent to South Africa for experience of IAS control in Game Reserves
CABI / IUCN	To facilitate best options	2Q 2009	2. Study tour program
NCU / Pilot Site Coordinator	Promote private sector networks in Livingstone	2Q 2009	3. Local meetings 4. Opportunities for volunteerism (open days, work programs, etc) 5. Opportunities to build IAS management costs into tourism revenues

Recommendation 3: Fast-track National-level surveys to determine the presence and impact of IAS in Zambia

184 As the project moves into its second stage, having vital information on potential problem plant species, their current ranges and rates of spread, and their potential impacts, will be essential tools in promoting IAS control and management at the highest level. A comprehensive IAS survey and mapping program on a national scale is required to start this process. This will also provide opportunities to test draft impact criteria and promote awareness of IAS though local involvement in surveys and wide-scale media campaigns.

185 As part of this initiative, aerial surveys of Lochinvar NP to determine and map the extent of infestation by giant mimosa (*M. pigra*) should be expanded to include all areas within the National Park at risk of infestation. Aerial surveys can be further expanded to cover the whole of the Kafue Flats and adjacent floodplain ecosystems and protected areas in particular.

Responsibility	Task	Time frame	Deliverable
NCU	Appoint Task Team to fully develop methodology for defining impacts and schedule for national mapping survey	1Q 2009	1. Methodology for defining IAS impacts 2. Schedule and methodology for surveys
Task Team	Implement survey and mapping program	2Q 2009	3. GIS based maps with species distributions and impact indicators
NCU / Pilot Site Coordinator	Develop and implement schedule for aerial survey at Kafue Flats	2Q 2009	4. Baseline maps of extent of *Mimosa pigra* infestation within Kafue Flats

Recommendation 4: Improve communications and information sharing on IAS issues

186 The National Public Awareness and Communication Strategy for IAS has already been completed and public awareness and communication events have been organized based upon this strategy. Continued implementation of this strategy throughout the second half of the project will be necessary to reach as many targets as possible. Use of local language media and local radio in particular are proven communication means.

187 There is also room for improvement in information sharing and communications regionally. As part of a regional project, the NCU in Zambia should promote information sharing with regional project partners (in Ghana, Ethiopia and Uganda), as well as take the opportunity to link with international bodies with a focus on IAS. The development of linkages to the AGIS database in particular warrants special attention in the second half of the project.

Responsibility	Task	Time frame	Deliverable

NCU	Expedite activities under Output 2.3	To begin before 1Q 2009	1. Regular mechanism for external communications 2. Input to AGIS regional database on IAS 3. At least 1 publication in international media / year 4. Increase number of local radio shows and local language leaflets

188 Other sub-recommendations are highlighted below:

- Significant improvements in integrated habitat management are necessary at the pilot sites. In particular, where appropriate, demonstrations of vegetation rehabilitation with indigenous species, establishment of shade cover, control of water euthrophication, as well as experiments to find the optimal modes of habitat management to reduce re-occurrence of IAS.

- NCU to initiate contact with appropriate agencies within the customs and quarantine departments and expedite activities under Output 3.1 and 3.2 relating to IAS risk procedures and early detection and rapid response systems.

- More studies on the impact of invasive plants / IAS on ecosystem and species biodiversity should be implemented, and their results used to promote management and control programs amongst protected areas staff.

- Promote awareness of national and local by-laws on IAS. For instance, the by-law against selling or planting *L. camara* in Livingstone, and the Noxious Weeds Act, nationwide.

- In line with the recommendation for more basic research, budgets can be re-allocated to ensure adequate provision for this. Move funds away from under-performing components to support better information and awareness.

- Websites should be national IAS information portals and not RBIPMA project specific.

- Local incentives to improve community participation should not be in terms of direct cash incentives. Fostering a culture of CSR amongst private sector tourism operators in Livingstone might be one approach. Controlled access to better grazing for local herders could be an incentive in Lochinvar NP.

SECTION 6: MID TERM REVIEW CRITERIA & RATINGS

6.1 Mid Term Review Criteria and Ratings: Uganda

Criterion	Reviewer's Summary Comments	Rating
A) Attainment of project objectives and results (overall rating) **Sub criteria (below)**	In Uganda progress towards achieving project objectives and results at the MTR are satisfactory. All Components are underway and MTR performance ratings of components 1 - 4 range from 35% to 55%	S
Effectiveness	NCU has been effective in implementing project activities at all levels.	S
Relevance	The results of all components are relevant to the Ugandan situation. There remains some concerns about community perceptions of IAS impacts (especially where IAS are utilized).	S
Efficiency	Project implementation has been efficient and cost effective. There is no cost overruns and most of the resources committed are for the purpose they are earmarked	S
B) Sustainability of Project outcomes (overall rating) **Sub criteria (below)**	Strategic approaches are being taken to sustain project outcomes through policy development at the national level. Need to develop a non-financial incentive basis for sustainability of community participation.	ML
Financial	Support from the GoU in cash and in-kind are falling (only 40% of FY 2007/08 co-finance received). No cost recovery mechanisms developed as yet.	ML
Socio Political	Good partnerships have been created within multiple sectors at the national level. Need to embed pilot site activities into District Plans.	ML
Institutional framework and governance	IAS issues have yet to be mainstreamed into appropriate agency plans / budgets. IAS not yet integrated into NBSAP	ML
Ecological	Conflicts between utilization and eradication of some of the IAS may lead to re-invasion.	ML
Achievement of outputs and activities	At MTR, performance ratings against outputs are more-or-less matching benchmark targets at the halfway stage (at 35 – 55%). It is reasonable to assume that the project will achieve most of its outputs and activities.	ML
C) Monitoring and Evaluation (overall rating) **Sub criteria (below)**		S
M&E Design	Project log-frame and benchmarks are good. No benchmarks available for MTR. Regular progress reporting	S
M&E Plan Implementation (use for adaptive management)	Project M&E reporting regularly, but delays with completing baseline data on indicators and establishing a routine monitoring program, as well as quantifying matters.	MS
Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities	There is sufficient budget for M&E.	HS
Catalytic Role	Project has been a catalyst for multi-sector involvement in NISSAP and for raising awareness of IAS issues in Uganda	S

Criterion	Reviewer's Summary Comments	Rating
Country ownership / driveness	Project is clearly a NARO initiative	MS
Stakeholders involvement	Effective site management committees, and multi-sector Government support.	S
Financial planning	Sound financial planning with 78% of planned budget disbursed in review period.	HS
UNEP Supervision and backstopping	UN operational procedures in place. CABI / IUCN providing regular technical support. More guidance welcomed.	MS
Overall Rating		**S**

6.2 Mid Term Review Criteria and Ratings: Ethiopia

Criterion	Reviewer's Summary Comments	Rating
A) Attainment of project objectives and results (overall rating) **Sub criteria (below)**	Considering the late project start up in Ethiopia, progress towards achieving project objectives and results at the MTR are quite satisfactory. Although much remains to be done on Components 1, 2 and 4; the outputs of the pilot site activities under Component 3 are satisfactory. MTR performance ratings of components 1 -4 range from 20% to 35%	MS
Effectiveness	The NCU has been effective in getting the project kick-started after a 1 year delay. The results of stakeholder participation and pilot site activities have been satisfactory.	S
Relevance	The results of all components are relevant to the Ethiopian situation. The impacts of IAS on communities and socio-economics is perhaps more relevant than looking at IAS impacts on biodiversity.	MS
Efficiency	Project implementation has been efficient and cost effective. There is no cost overrun and most of the resources committed are for the purpose they are earmarked	MS
B) Sustainability of Project outcomes (overall rating) **Sub criteria (below)**	A more strategic approach to ensuring project sustainability is necessary in Ethiopia. Of particular concern is the lack of progress on NISSAP and its policy applications. GoE support is good and NEA has capacity.	ML
Financial	Cost recovery mechanisms have yet to be developed or tested. But GoE support has been high. Some opportunities for synergy with other projects	ML
Socio Political	Stakeholder participation at the pilot site level is high. Good partnerships created.	ML
Institutional framework and governance	IAS issues have yet to be mainstreamed into appropriate agency plans / budgets. IAS not integrated into NBSAP	MU
Ecological	Pilot site demonstrations are focused on sites with severe IAS infestations. A more sustainable approach would be to	ML

Criterion	Reviewer's Summary Comments	Rating
	tackle invasion fronts.	
Achievement of outputs and activities	At MTR, performance ratings against outputs are currently well below benchmark targets, (only 20 – 35%) but indications are that achievements will increase during 2008/09. There is a need for the project to develop the non-academic aspects and increase partnerships. It is reasonable to assume that the project will not achieve some of its outputs and activities.	MU
C) Monitoring and Evaluation (overall rating) **Sub criteria (below)**	.	S
M&E Design	Project log-frame and benchmarks are good. No benchmarks available for MTR. Regular progress reporting	S
M&E Plan Implementation (use for adaptive management)	Project M&E reporting regularly, but delays with completing baseline data on indicators and establishing a routine monitoring program, as well as quantifying matters.	MS
Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities	There is sufficient budget for M&E.	HS
Catalytic Role	At the local level the project has played a catalytic role to facilitate stakeholder participation within communities and the private sector. Nationally awareness of IAS has increased substantially.	S
Country ownership / driveness	IAS issues in Ethiopia are severe and rural development / poverty alleviation are driving forces behind ownership.	HS
Stakeholders involvement	Effective site management committees, private sector buy in and GoE support.	S
Financial planning	Only 11.5% of budget for 4Q 2006 to 4Q 2007 was spent. Tighter planning needed.	U
UNEP Supervision and backstopping	UN operational procedures in place. CABI / IUCN providing regular technical support. More guidance welcomed.	MS
Overall Rating		**MS**

6.3 Mid Term Review Criteria and Ratings: Ghana

Criterion	Reviewer's Summary Comments	Rating
A) Attainment of project objectives and results (overall rating) **Sub criteria (below)**	In Ghana progress towards achieving project objectives and results at the MTR are less than satisfactory. Components 1 and 4 in particular are moving extremely slowly. MTR performance ratings of these components range from 10% to 40%	MU
Effectiveness	Concerns over effectiveness of project management and implementation. Task teams and consultants under-performing	MS

Criterion	Reviewer's Summary Comments	Rating
Relevance	IAS management (of water hyacinth) has a long history in Ghana. Pilot site work in Oti Arm of Lake Volta very relevant. Afram Head Waters Forest not relevant from a biodiversity impact perspective and hard to see the relevance of this site selection.	MS
Efficiency	Slow progress on Components 1 and 4 has slowed down efficiency. Funds disbursement in review period only 40% of planned.	MU
B) Sustainability of Project outcomes (overall rating) Sub criteria (below)	Strategic approach has stalled with NISSAP not being used to sustain project outcomes through policy development at the national level. Financial sustainability a major problem.	U
Financial	A major problem with no support from GoG since early days of implementation. Currently project is donor driven.	U
Socio Political	Ministerial restructuring continues in Ghana and has impacts on sustainability of IAS initiatives	MU
Institutional framework and governance	NISSAP not utilized, policy reform yet to be initiated and lack of GoG support	U
Ecological	Pilot site activities demonstrating some useful management methods. Water hyacinth control highly successful, *Broussonetia* trials less easy to determine at this stage.	ML
Achievement of outputs and activities	At MTR, performance ratings against outputs are well below benchmark targets at the halfway stage (at only 10 - 40%). It is possible that the project will not achieve some of its outputs and activities.	MU
C) Monitoring and Evaluation (overall rating) Sub criteria (below)		
M&E Design	Project log-frame and benchmarks are good. No benchmarks available for MTR. Regular progress reporting	S
M&E Plan Implementation (use for adaptive management)	Project M&E reporting regularly, but delays with completing baseline data on indicators and establishing a routine monitoring program, as well as quantifying matters.	MS
Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities	There is sufficient budget for M&E.	HS
Catalytic Role	Project has been a catalyst for multi-sector involvement in NISSAP and for raising awareness of IAS issues in Ghana	S
Country ownership / driveness	Project is clearly donor driven at this stage. GoG has defaulted on agreed cash co-financing	MU
Stakeholders involvement	Effective site management committees, especially at Oti Arm of Lake Volta.	S
Financial planning	Financial planning unclear, but only 40% of planned budget disbursed in review period. Transparency of equipment procurement needs to be improved.	MU
UNEP Supervision and backstopping	UN operational procedures in place. CABI providing regular technical support. No evidence of IUC support here. More guidance is necessary w.r.t. Afram Headwaters Forest Reserve activities.	MU

Criterion	Reviewer's Summary Comments	Rating
Overall Rating		**MU**

6.4 Mid Term Review Criteria and Ratings: Zambia

Criterion	Reviewer's Summary Comments	Rating
A) Attainment of project objectives and results (overall rating) **Sub criteria (below)**	In Zambia progress towards achieving project objectives and results at the MTR are highly satisfactory. All Components are underway and MTR performance ratings of components range from 50% and 82%	HS
Effectiveness	NCU has been effective in implementing project activities at all levels and effective in lobbying GRZ for additional resources.	S
Relevance	The results of all components are relevant to the Zambian situation. Direct relevance of target IAS and pilot sites to globally significant biodiversity.	HS
Efficiency	Project implementation has been efficient and cost effective. There is no cost overruns and most of the resources committed are for the purpose they are earmarked	S
B) Sustainability of Project outcomes (overall rating) **Sub criteria (below)**	Zambia is at a more advanced stage in achieving sustainability of project outcomes. The ECZ has a strategic approach to policy development at the national level and towards establishing a coordinating body on IAS for Zambia. Sustainability of community participation less secure.	ML
Financial	Support from the GRZ in cash and in-kind have increased with an additional USD 625,000 committed to control *M. pigra* at Lochinvar NP. Cost recovery mechanisms under discussion and development.	L
Socio Political	Excellent partnerships have been created within multiple sectors at the national level. Good GRZ support.	ML
Institutional framework and governance	IAS issues have yet to be mainstreamed into appropriate agency plans / budgets. NISSAP not yet integrated into NBSAP	ML
Ecological	Constant effort will be required to control target IAS. Early results from all sites encouraging.	ML
Achievement of outputs and activities	At MTR, performance ratings against outputs are at or above benchmark targets at the halfway stage (at 50 – 65%). It is reasonable to assume that the project will achieve most of its outputs and activities.	ML
C) Monitoring and Evaluation (overall rating) **Sub criteria (below)**		S
M&E Design	Project log-frame and benchmarks are good. No benchmarks available for MTR. Regular progress reporting	S

Criterion	Reviewer's Summary Comments	Rating
M&E Plan Implementation (use for adaptive management)	Project M&E reporting regularly, but delays with completing baseline data on indicators and establishing a routine monitoring program, as well as quantifying matters.	MS
Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities	There is sufficient budget for M&E.	HS
Catalytic Role	Project has been a catalyst for multi-sector involvement, increased GRZ awareness of the problems and subsequent significant budget support.	HS
Country ownership / driveness	GRZ is clearly leading this initiative.	S
Stakeholders involvement	Effective site management committees, and multi-sector Government support.	S
Financial planning	Sound financial planning with 85% of planned budget disbursed in review period.	HS
UNEP Supervision and backstopping	UN operational procedures in place. CABI / IUCN providing regular technical support.	MS
Overall Rating		**HS**

6.5 General Recommendations, applicable to all participating countries

189 Many of the recommendations captured in the country sections are applicable to more than one country, and there are some more general recommendations that the ISC should consider in their deliberations. These are outlined thematically below:

Project management and coordination

1. IUCN and CABI are tasked with providing technical support during project implementation. All RBIPMA participating countries requested additional technical advice during the MTR, and this was especially so at the pilot sites. It is recommended that IUCN and CABI have more regular and / or prolonged pilot site visits, and provide the necessary technical support via regular information updates and e-mailing lists.

2. The ISC should seriously consider the need to request UNEP/GEF for a moderate project extension. Most of the RBIPMA participating countries are significantly behind schedule on important components that will ensure sustainability of the project outcomes. In most countries, establishment and support for coordinating bodies and ensuring that IAS issues are embedded in national policy and legislation will take more time. At current rates of fund disbursement and spending, there will be sufficient project budget to sustain an extension, and it is recommended that a 6 to 8 month project extension be requested (delaying project termination until the end of 2Q or 3Q 2010).

Enabling policy and institutional environment

3. Establishment of coordinating bodies for IAS (so-called Apex Bodies) need to be fast-tracked in all RBIPMA participating countries. Lessons can be learned from the Zambia situation where ECZ is close to finalizing arrangements for this.

4. All RBIPMA participating countries need to speed up development of cost recovery mechanisms for IAS control and management. Most NCUs have had problems with this activity and lessons should be shared between project participating countries. Some more guidance (and examples of cost recovery mechanisms elsewhere) from CABI / IUCN would be desirable.

5. RBIPMA participating countries which have already developed a NISSAP need to ensure that this important tool is used to promote awareness of IAS and ensure that IAS issues are embedded in the most appropriate policies and plans. In some cases (e.g., Ghana) the NISSAP has been developed but activities have stalled since late 2006.

Information and awareness

6. Progress on the development of National IAS databases using the I3N format has been variable, due to unfamiliarity with the system, a complicated set up and low priority for this activity. During the MTR it was suggested that RBIPMA countries should use a simpler and easier to access system. The existing AGIS web-linked database was suggested as one possible option. It is recommended that CABI make a technical review of this and other potentially useful database systems and organizes a short training course to familiarize the responsible NCU staff / partner agency staff in each country with the system.

7. Databases and websites should be national IAS sites and databases, and not stand alone RBIPMA project sites.

8. A system for increased and regular sharing of project documents (both drafts and final copies) between the NCUs, CABI/IUCN and UNEP is needed in the second half of the project. NCUs need to ensure that they follow up with CABI / IUCN for technical inputs. CABI / IUCN need to ensure that soft copies of technical documents (strategies, activity reports, etc) as well as information materials (posters, leaflets, etc) are forwarded to UNEP for their information.

9. Simple protocols for nationwide survey and mapping should be developed and linked to information needs for database development. CABI should be tasked with developing these protocols and providing technical advice on their use to RBIPMA participating countries.

Strategies for the prevention and management of priority IAS

10. Examples of successful and on-going regional approaches to IAS issues in Africa (and if not available, for other regions) need to be promoted amongst RBIPMA participating countries. CABI, in particular should be the focal point for disseminating this information to the project NCUs on a regular basis.

11. All RBIPMA participating countries are struggling with outputs concerning IAS risk assessment guidelines and rapid response mechanisms. More technical guidance from CABI / IUCN and examples of international best practice should be disseminated to NCUs. There may be a need for a short-term consultancy to meet this need.

12. Ecosystem Management Plans produced by all RBIPMA participating countries need to be expanded to include wider biodiversity aspects that are currently lacking (perhaps with the exception of Zambia).

13. All RBIPMA participating countries have struggling to define a realistic baseline, especially in terms of social and environmental (biodiversity) terms. Whilst it is too late in the project to expect baseline surveys to be conducted, more research projects that will help to determine the impacts of IAS and monitor the results of the project outcomes are needed.

14. In all RBIPMA participating countries more research on the impacts of IAS are needed. Countries should look at the example of Ethiopia, where considerable government support has been put into supporting MSc research students. This lesson could be replicated elsewhere, and project budget could be transferred from under-performing components to support more student scholarships.

15. A re-occurring theme throughout the MTR was the need to develop strategies for rehabilitation of ecosystems following control and management of IAS. None of the RBIPMA participating countries currently have such a strategy and it is recommended that all consider this.

16. The project logframe defines the benchmark for Output 3.7 as “rate of spread decreased by 80%” for target IAS. This needs amendment, as there are no data on rates of spread for any of the target species. Based on existing data for most pilot sites, this benchmark should be based on a “decreasing area of coverage” rather than “decreasing the rate of spread”.

Capacity building

17. Training and capacity building are important aspects of GEF projects. Training Needs Analysis is a useful tool in targeting training programs. Some countries have already completed TNA and developed specific training program modules, other have yet to do this. Completed TNAs and training modules should be shared between RBIPMA participating countries to enable rapid development of tools in countries which are lagging behind in this component.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Terms of Reference: International Mid Term Review Team Leader

1. Background

According to the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) Invasive Alien Species (IAS) are a major cause of biodiversity loss and in response to this threat, Article 8(h) of the CBD calls on parties to "prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats and species". In order to address Article 8(h) of the CBD in four sub-Saharan African countries, Ethiopia, Ghana, Uganda and Zambia, a UNEP/GEF project was developed entitled, "Removing Barriers to Invasive Plant Management in Africa". The main goals of the project are:

- Strengthening the enabling policy environment for IAS management;
- Provision and exchange of critical information amongst key stakeholders in IAS management;
- Implementation of IAS control and prevention programmes;
- Building capacity for sustainable IAS management.

The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) is the Implementing Agency (IA), with responsibility for project management, overview, monitoring, and liaison with, and reporting, to GEF. International project coordination is undertaken by CABI and the World Conservation Union (IUCN). The National Executing Agencies (NEA) in each of the four countries are:

132 Ethiopian Agricultural Research Organization (Ethiopia)
133 Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (Ghana)
134 National Agricultural Research Organization (Uganda)
135 Environmental Council of Zambia (Zambia)

In view of the inherent scale and complexity of this project it has been decided to review the project mid-way through its duration; thus allowing UNEP to determine what progress has been made to date in achieving the various indicators as defined in the project document. This approach will provide the opportunity to learn from what has been achieved during the first two years, and what can or needs to be done to ensure that all project objectives are achieved by the end of the project. The project period under evaluation will be from its launch in December 2005 to the end of the First Quarter of 2008.

The indicators for the project are reflected in the project and national logframes (see Annex B of Project Document), subject to establishment of baseline conditions for a number of indicators at the start of the project. The activities in the first two years have been monitored regularly, and outputs will be evaluated against the indicators during the Mid Term Review (MTR) (Year 3). MTR workshops will identify the lessons to be learned from experience during the first two years activities, for the consideration of project management. The International Project Steering Committee will review the results of these workshops as well as the recommendations for possible inclusion in activities outlined for Year 3 and 4. Full details are found in the formally endorsed UNEP GEF Project Document, which is an integral part of this MTR consultancy.

2. Scope of the Consultancy

The revised GEF procedures necessitate the execution of a project MTR on all Full Sized Projects. The MTR has as a main goal the fine-tuning of workplans for the second half of the project, improving project approaches and optimizing implementation arrangements, based on a review of progress on execution as well as the achievement of project outcomes as specified in the Project Document. MTRs are considered an integral part of GEF projects and the responsibility of the project executing agencies and should be based on an extensive and transparent consultation process with all key stakeholder groups. MTR findings and recommendations will be reviewed and endorsed by the International Steering Committee (ISC) and be adopted by National Executing Agencies (NEAs) and staff followed by a summary of key decisions indicating target dates, and key responsible agencies/officers for meeting these recommendations.

The MTR is composed of (i) country MTR workshops; (ii) the process facilitation and project review by a small team of MTR consultants visiting a selection of field sites, meeting key stakeholder groups, reviewing outputs & deliverables, and attending a number of the country MTR workshops; (iii) preparation of Country MTR Reports and Consolidated MTR Report; (iv) ISC meeting on formal endorsement of the MTR findings, recommendations and action schedule.

The MTR team consists of a Team Leader, National Reviewer for each country (4), and a MTR Workshop Facilitator for each country (4).

Key review objectives
The MTR has as a main goal the evaluation of progress to date using the indicators as a benchmark for project progress, rating project performance based on standardized criteria, possible fine-tuning of workplans for the second half of the project, improving project approaches and optimizing implementation arrangements, based on a review of progress on execution as well as the achievement of project indicators as specified in the Project Document.

The review will assess, amongst other things:

1. The effectiveness and efficiency of project management and supervision of project activities;
2. The production of planned outputs and milestones, in terms of quantity, quality, usefulness and timeliness;
3. Project performance in achieving project objectives and outcomes;
4. Project performance against quantified criteria;
5. Project progress against available and spent budget (GEF & co-finance);
6. Sustainability and replicablility of project achievement towards outputs and outcomes to date.

Based on this:
- The Consultant and his/her team shall make recommendation on how to continue and improve project implementation during the second half of the project;
- Confirm and/or recommend any specific redirecting of program activities;
- Confirm or change activity benchmarks;
- Advise on project institutional arrangements;

- Advise on project approaches towards stakeholder groups and other beneficiaries;
- Any needed approaches to better achieve project objectives and/or outcomes.

The Consultant, supported by his/her team of a National Reviewer and Workshop Facilitator, shall compile, capture and evaluate project information and prepare a consolidated MTR Review Report for review and endorsement by the ISC, which is scheduled to meet in 2008.

It shall also provide a summary review of the approach and methods used during the first years towards achieving the project objectives and outcomes.

The review shall also highlight lessons learned and/or best practice features for expansion, the replication elsewhere and strengthening of the GEF project portfolio, in particular. The review of sustainability and replicability of the project will be an integral part of this.

3. Statement of Services

The Consultant is responsible for leading the MTR team conducting a review of project implementation to date, and for submitting to UNEP and the International Steering Committee the summarized results in a Consolidated MTR Report.

Specific tasks are as follows:

1. Lead and supervise the MTR team of National Reviewers and Workshop Facilitators;
2. Ensure a consultative review process is used in the countries;
3. In close consultation with the PCU and the UNEP DGEF Task Manager, prepare a workplan during the first week of assignment;
4. Use the project logframe tracking form to assess project progress and impact as against indicators;
5. Review the country Mid Term Reports submitted by NCUs;
6. Review all available project documents, outputs and other deliverables for the project countries. It is primarily the responsibility of the National Reviewers to do this under the direction of the Team Leader, and before the country MTR Workshops;
7. Review the GEF SO2- Tracking Tools, baseline and midterm.
8. Compile and review co-finance delivery, as against the project plan (draft through National Reviewer)
9. Review progress, expenditure to date, as against the cashflow prediction in the project document;
10. Attend the country Workshops together with other team members and review the workshop reports;
11. Participate in field visits to the project pilot sites (at least one pilot site each country, in three of the four countries).
12. Consult with key persons, stakeholder groups and organizations through meetings, interviews, e-mail or phone, on project progress and performance;
13. Determine level of stakeholders' participation in site management planning, implementation and project benefits generated;
14. Assess the sustainability of current outputs and the anticipated situation after completion of the project (continued delivery of services and benefits; long-term institutional capacity; support from key stakeholders; financial sustainability);

15. Determine the level of replicability of current outputs and the anticipated situation after completion of the project;
16. Capture issues and draft possible mitigation measures on: project implementation, approach, institutional aspects, stakeholder issues, financing, sustainability and replicability of project impacts;
17. Focus on key project issues and problems and prepare recommendations for implementation;
18. Capture lessons and best practices;
19. Assess overall performance, progress, and impact of the project to date; using the standardized criteria and rating (See **Annex III**)
20. Provide a summary review of the approach and methods used to date in achieving the project objectives and outcomes. Recommend any modifications or changes;
21. Prepare the Consolidated MTR Report, including Summary Recommendations and Action Plan for the remainder of the project (with input from the National Reviewers);
22. Present key findings and recommendations at the International Steering Committee (ISC) for endorsement;
23. Coordinate with, report to, and be responsible to the UNEP DGEF Task Manager.

This consultancy is one component of the overall MTR process and must be integrated with the other activities described in the main ToR on the MTR (see also Annex I).

Location

The Consultant will be based out of his/her own office, but will visit the PCU in Nairobi and the four project countries for the MTR workshops and field visits, as well as conducting other fact finding activities, together with National Reviewers.

4. Deliverables and Verifiable Indicators

1. Workplan prepared and approved by UNEP and PCU.
2. Field visits conducted to at least three of the four countries.
3. Attendance at all four country MTR Workshops.
4. Presentation of results to the International Steering Committee meeting in October 2008.
5. Consultancy completion report (max 3 pages) to be submitted to UNEP and PCU.
6. Consolidated Mid Term Review Report, including Recommendations and Action Plan for implementation. Final draft ready by 20 September 2008 for review by countries, PCU and UNEP; and final version to be submitted for endorsement by the International Steering Committee meeting by 1 October 2008

5. Schedule

The consultancy should take place between 15 June and 30 July 2008 (MTR workplan, country workshops, field visits, project review and preparation of final draft MTR Report); and during September-October 2008 (for completing the final Consolidated MTR Report; and attending the ISC in Nairobi). Adjustments can be made in this schedule pending the workplan of the Consultant.

During this period the consultant may bill up to but not to exceed a total of 2.5 pm or 65 work days. This would consist of approximately 10 days preparation, 30 days travel, 15 days writing up & incorporating comments, and 10 days for preparation and participation in the ISC, and final reporting.

6. Supervision

The MTR Team Leader will be responsible to the UNEP GEF Task Manager, with copies of correspondence to the PCU.

7. Reporting

The Consolidated MTR report, the format will be provided, should be clear and concise. It must present evidence-based findings, quantified ratings, consequent conclusions, recommendations and lessons.

The report shall be written in English, be of no more than 50 pages (excluding annexes), use numbered paragraphs and include:

i) **Executive summary**
ii) **Introduction and background:** A brief overview of the project, and scope and methods of review.
iii) **Project performance and impact to date – Organized per country:** This section should include technical, financial and institutional aspects.
iv) **Conclusions and ratings** of project implementation success giving the evaluator's concluding assessments and ratings of the project against given evaluation criteria and standards of performance. The conclusions should provide answers to questions about whether the project is considered good or bad, and whether the results are considered positive or negative (see **Annex III**);
v) **Issues of sustainability and replicability – organized per country:** A brief account on what has been found and what should be improved with regard to these aspects
vi) **Key requirements to sustain or enhance the project over the next 2 years:** What is required to sustain or enhance project approaches and methods, activities and workplans, as well as implementation arrangements.
vii) **Lessons learned and best practices**
viii) **Recommendations and Action Plan:** These should include timelines, key responsibilities and deliverables
ix) **Annexes** include ToR, list of interviewees, itinerary, etc

The draft report shall be submitted to UNEP DGEF by 20 September 2008. Based on the review and recommendations (to be available to the Consultant latest by 27 September 2008) the final report shall be made available to UNEP by 1 October 2008.

A consultancy completion report (max 3 pages) is to be submitted to UNEP and PCU containing the following information:

1. Services performed
2. Deliverables completed
3. Any significant problems encountered
4. Recommendations

5. Other comments

8. Schedule of Payment

The consultant shall select one of the following two contract options.

Lump-Sum Option
The evaluator will receive an initial payment of 30% of the total amount due upon signature of the contract. A further 30% will be paid upon submission of the draft report. A final payment of 40% will be made upon satisfactory completion of work. The fee is payable under the individual Special Service Agreement (SSA) of the Reviewer and IS inclusive of all expenses such as international travel, accommodation and incidental expenses.

Fee-only Option
The evaluator will receive an initial payment of 40% of the total amount due upon signature of the contract. Final payment of 60% will be made upon satisfactory completion of work. The fee is payable under the individual SSAs of the evaluator and is NOT inclusive of all expenses such as international travel, accommodation and incidental expenses. Ticket and DSA will be paid separately.

The consultant's choice of payment option will be specified in the signed contract with UNEP

In case, the evaluator cannot provide the products in accordance with the TORs, the timeframe agreed, or his products are substandard, the payment to the evaluator could be withheld, until such a time the products are modified to meet UNEP's standard. In case the evaluator fails to submit a satisfactory final product to UNEP, the product prepared by the evaluator may not constitute the evaluation report.

NOTE: Local travel in the countries related to mid term workshops and field site visits will be paid through the country project budgets and are not part of the consultant SSA, both options.

9. Administrative and Logistical Support

UNEP DGEF will provide the following administrative and logical support to the Consultant:

- Support on international travel to project countries OR consultant can opt for a LS payment and arrange for travel him/her self;
- Backstopping on all matters related to this ToR

The National Coordination Units and/or PCU will provide the following administrative and logistical support to the Consultant:

- Official letter of introduction and support to apply for visas
- Full cooperation regarding staff availability for the discussion of project implementation and progress
- Unrestricted access to all documents, outputs and other project deliverables as required and as available
- Assistance in contacting national provincial and site staff, consultants, subcontractors and stakeholders
- Making arrangements for site visit(s), and associated accommodation
- Assistance in booking accommodation and local transport to attend the MTR Workshop

- Country MTR Reports and MTR Workshop report as soon as they are available

10. Consultant Qualifications

The consultant should have the following qualifications, experience and skills:

Education:

- Degree in natural sciences; with subjects related to biodiversity conservation, invasive species, or any relevant combination
- Training in project management, project cycle, project evaluation (optional)

Experience:

- A minimum of 15 years working experience in biodiversity conservation, invasive species management or related field
- Demonstrated experience of over 7 years in project management, monitoring and evaluation
- At least 5 years experience in developing countries (required), preferably in Africa
- Professional experience of invasive species issues

Skills and attributes:

- Excellent communication and inter-personal skills
- Strong team builder
- Excellent analytical, evaluation and report-writing skills
- Computer literate – especially in use of MS Office programmes
- Good spoken and written English

Three professional references are required.

Annex 2: Procedures and guidelines for Mid Term Review – UNDP/DGEF RBIPMA Project

1. Background

The revised GEF procedures necessitate the execution of a project Mid Term Review (MTR) as an integral part of GEF projects, and as a responsibility of the project executing agencies. MTR findings and recommendations will be reviewed and endorsed by the International Steering Committee (ISC) and be adopted by National Executing Agencies (NEAs), with responsibilities for acting on the recommendations.

The MTR will comprise of:

(i) country MTR workshops
(ii) visits to a selection of the project pilot sites
(iii) meetings and interviews with key stakeholders
(iv) reviewing outputs & deliverables
(v) preparation of country MTR reports and a consolidated MTR report
(vi) ISC meeting for formal endorsement of the MTR findings, recommendations and action schedule.

The external MTR team to be contracted will comprise an International Team Leader, a National Reviewer in each country and a Workshop Facilitator in each country. Project executing agencies and stakeholders will be fully involved in the MTR.

2. Objectives

The goal of the MTR is to improve project implementation and performance during its second half, based on a review of progress and achievements. The MTR is thus not merely a commentary on the project, but rather a process through which the project partners and stakeholders can learn from experience to date and develop consensus on how the project can be improved.

The review will assess:

- The effectiveness and efficiency of project management and supervision of project activities;
- The production of planned outputs and milestones, in terms of quantity, quality, usefulness and timeliness;
- Project performance in achieving project objectives and outcomes;
- Project progress against available and spent budget;
- Sustainability and replicablility of project outputs and outcomes to date.

Based on this the review team will:

- Confirm and/or recommend any specific changes to project activities;
- Confirm or change benchmarks, as adopted previously in the M&E plan;
- Advise on project institutional arrangements;
- Advise on project approaches towards stakeholder groups and other beneficiaries;

- Recommend approaches to better achieve project objectives and outcomes;
- Highlight lessons learned and/or best practices for application elsewhere in the GEF project portfolio. The review of sustainability and replicability of the project will be an integral part of this.

3. Review Team

The review team will comprise of:

1. Team Leader (international)
2. National Reviewers (one per country)
3. Workshop Facilitators (one per country)
4. National Coordination Units
5. Project Coordination Unit (CABI & IUCN)
6. UNEP DGEF Task Manager

Position 1 will be funded by UNEP DGEF, except for costs of local travel in countries, which is part of the project budget allocation. Positions 2 and 3 will be funded from the respective country budgets, and the 2008 budgets have been re-phased to include this. Positions 4 and 5 are already funded under project coordination, and position 6 under the UNEP Task Manager's supervision budget.

The responsibilities of the team are summarised in the following table. Detailed terms of reference for positions 1, 2 and 3 are provided in Annex II.

	Position	**Input**	**Summary responsibility and key deliverables**
1.	Team Leader	2.5pm	• Supervise the MTR team • Establish a fully consultative review process • Participate in each country Workshop • Visit and review one pilot site each in at least three of the four project countries • Coordinate National Reviewers and Facilitators • Review key project outputs and deliverables • Review project GEF SO2 -Tracking Tools, including • Assess execution performance, delivery on outputs, and project impacts • Capture issues and draft mitigation measures on: project implementation, approach, institutional aspects, stakeholder issues, financing (GEF & co-financing) • Capture lessons and best practices • Consolidated MTR Report, including Summary, Recommendations and Action Plan • Present findings to ISC
2.	National Reviewers (4)	2pm	• Compilation & review of documents and outputs,

			specifically those in local language • Review key project outputs and deliverables and report to TL • Focus on key project issues and problems and advise the TL accordingly • Conduct field visits, minimum one for each country • Assess execution performance, delivery on outputs and project impacts • Capture issues and draft mitigation measures on: project implementation, approach, institutional aspects, stakeholder issues; financing; etc • Capture lessons and best practices • Takes minutes and prepare MTR Workshop report in English • Report on overall findings to TL and NCU
3.	Workshop Facilitators (4)	2-3 weeks	• Design and implement a representative, transparent and consultative workshop • Facilitate plenary discussions and work groups to ensure all stakeholders' views are heard.
4.	NCUs	n.a	• Compile all relevant project documentation, outputs and deliverables prior to fielding of the MTR team • Preparation and distribution of Country MTR reports prior to workshops • Organize pilot site visits, including itinerary and transport for TL • Organize workshop • Workshop presentations • Contracting of Workshop Facilitator
5.	PCU	n.a	• Drafting of ToRs (jointly with UNEP) • Preparation of reporting formats (jointly with UNEP). • Communicating the ToR and program of the MTR to the countries • Assist compiling relevant project documentation, outputs and deliverables • Preparation of MTR PCU Report • Complete and compile GEF SO2- Tracking Tools at midterm • Selection and contracting of National Reviewers • Participate in country MTR Workshops • Coordinate and Supervising the overall MTR program, specifically the country activities • Organization of ISC meeting

6.	UNEP DGEF	n.a	• Drafting of ToRs (jointly with PCU) • Preparation of reporting formats (jointly with PCU) • Selection and contracting of Team Leader • Review and endorsement of Final Consolidated MTR Report

4. Methods

The project will be evaluated through:

- Desk review of project documents, outputs, national and international Steering Committee minutes, half-yearly progress reports, annual Project Implementation Reports (PIR), GEF, consultant and sub-contractors reports and deliverables and the Project Document;
- Review of GEF Strategic Objective 2 - tracking tools, including the tools completed at midterm;
- Expenditures reports against expected cashflow, including on co-finance delivery;
- Review of public communication activities, publications, media support, websites, etc;
- Review of Country and RCU MTR Reports;
- Review of major sub-contracts
- Field visits to some of the field pilot sites and programs;
- MTR Workshops
- Face-to-face and e-mail/phone interviews of selected project implementers and stakeholders including:
  - Project Coordination Unit (PCU)
  - UNEP DGEF
  - National Steering Committees
  - NCUs
  - Site managers
  - Site management committees
  - Other organizations and individuals involved in the project

→ Evaluations will be quantified and summarized in the Consolidated MTR Report, following UNEP GEF evaluation criteria as given in **Annex III**.

5. National Stakeholder Workshops

Objectives

The goal of the Country MTR workshops is to assess the project implementation outputs, successes and any flaws, through a transparent and consultative process between project management teams, stakeholders, associated country partners active in similar fields of work, as well as related programs. The National MTR Reports will form the basis for the presentations and discussions at the workshop.

A systematic overview will be obtained on project impact and execution performance through focused discussion of project results, as well as achievement on project objectives and outcomes, as against the indicators set in the Project M&E Plan.

NCUs will be required to present the results of a critical program implementation self-assessment including on key issues affecting the performance of the project, which has as main goal the drafting of effective mitigation measures for the remainder of the project. The Country MTR Reports will form the basis for these presentations and discussions.

Each country workshop will take 2 days and be facilitated by a national Facilitator who is responsible for proper use of communications, stakeholder participation, analysis and synthesis of findings, and ownership by target stakeholders. Furthermore the workshop facilitation will highlight lessons learned, both positive and negative.

Indicative the programme could be as follows:
Day 1: Presentations
Day 2: Stakeholder consultations / breakout groups & Reporting; Conclusions

It is advocated to use small breakout groups based on the main cluster of issues identified during the short summary presentations on Phase I project implementation, and brainstorm on how to address them.

Format and Programme

To allow for cross-country review and standardized reporting, workshops should contain the following components:

- A formal opening ceremony, including VIP and media
- Presentations by the NCU covering progress against workplan and benchmarks, outputs, implementation challenges and problems (HR, financial, logistic, operational), plans
- Plenary discussions and workgroups for stakeholders to:
  evaluate the projects, progress and plans; identify lessons learned and best practice; discuss problems, constraints and possible solutions; assess sustainability
- Summary session to confirm the key findings

The detailed programme should be approved by the Team Leader, and be designed to deliver a report with the contents as below (subject to confirmation by the Team leader when appointed).

Participation

There should be about 30 workshop participants, (apart from project staff) drawn from a variety of stakeholders directly involved in the project, as well as those working in similar fields. Suggested groups:

- High ranking government official associated with the project (e.g. Minister of Environment) to open the workshop
- The media (TV, radio, newspapers) – for the opening session
- NCU
- Selected members of the Steering Committee
- Selected representatives of pilot site management committees
- Representatives of the private sector
- Project staff and consultants

- Representatives of other government or non-governmental organizations as appropriate, and relevant to the themes covered by the project (IAS, BD conservation, trade, science, community-participatory NRM programs, etc)

Proposed participants lists should be shared with the RCU before proceeding with the organisation of the workshop.

6. Field Visits

The National Reviewers should visit a minimum of one pilot site in their country of concern. Team Leader will accompany the National Reviewers to at least one field site each, in at least three of the four project countries. It is required to schedule the visits in combination with the Workshops to make most efficient use of the time of the Team Leader. At the site there should be an opportunity to meet with the site management committee, and to view ongoing activities. Detailed programmes for the visits by the Team Leader will be prepared taking into account budgetary and practical constraints.

7. Reporting

The MTR will generate 5 categories of report, *all in English*:

Country MTR Reports. Each NCU of the four project countries is required to prepare a standardized Country Mid Term Report. They should be completed and distributed in advance to the TL and participants of the country Mid Term Workshops. UNEP and the PCU will prepare the template for this report. The most important sections to be included concern:

- Execution performance of management and supervision; reporting; review meetings such as NSC meetings
- Delivery and quality of outputs (including those of sub-contractors & consultants)
- Midterm - GEF Tracking Tools completed
- Achievement of benchmarks (see M&E Plan)
- Expenditures against expected cash flow; co-finance delivery and activities supported
- Lessons learned & best practices
- Issues & problems
- Recommendations & suggested action (what, who, when)

PCU Mid Term Report. The PCU will prepare a Regional Mid Term Report on cross-country project activities, similar to the country reports. The summary will be distributed in advance to the TL, NCUs and participants at the country Workshops.

Workshop Reports. National Reviewers, in consultation with the NCUs and TL will produce a report of the four country Workshops, within one month of the workshop. Contents of the workshop reports include:

- Workshop programme, date and venue
- List of participants with full contact details
- Summary of the main findings and issues/problems
- A summary of recommendations and proposed action, including target date for completion and by who/what agency;
- Suggested changes to the project plans, institutional arrangements and other aspects
- Additional information obtained

- Summary of media coverage

National Reviewers' Reports. The National Reviewer for each country will submit their independent report to the Team Leader, its contents to be established in consultation with the TL.

Consolidated MTR Report. The Team Leader will prepare the Consolidated MTR Report based on the country reports, combined with the outcomes of the country workshops as well as the team's findings from desk studies, field visits and meetings. The report, after a round of stakeholder reviews on the accuracy of the basic assumptions and data used, will be discussed and the action plan on recommendations formally endorsed through a special meeting of the International Steering Committee.

8. Budget

Each country has made allocation for the national costs of the Mid Term Review. The preliminary 2008 national budget estimate includes:

- Workshop Costs (Meeting room; Equipment; Meals; Accommodations for participants; Travel for participants; Materials)
- Workshop Facilitators (1 per country) - Fees for 2-3 weeks; DSA & travel costs for attending meeting
- National Reviewers (1 per country) - Fees for 2 months; DSAs; Travel costs to field site(s)
- All field visit costs
- Reporting and media coverage
- In-country travel costs for Team leader.

Fees and DSA for the Team Leader are paid by UNEP out of their overheads.

Costs of participating RCU members are paid from the 2008 RCU budget.

9. Summary workplan for MTR

The draft workplan indicates a total of 30 weeks for the MTR process. Starting in mid-June 2008, it can be completed by mid-October 2008.

Annex 3: MTR Mission itinerary for Team Leader

Date (2008)	Day	Location / Main work activities
June		
14	Sat	Travel to Nairobi, **Kenya**, via Doha
15	Sun	Nairobi meet Arne Witt (CABI). Travel to Kampala, Uganda
16	Mon	**Uganda**: MTR Workshop Day 1 (Kampala)
17	Tues	**Uganda**: MTR Workshop Day 2 (Kampala)
18	Wed	Travel to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
19	Thurs	**Ethiopia**: Pilot site visit – Wonji and Welenchiti
20	Fri	**Ethiopia**: Pilot site visit – Awash NP and Werer Agricultural Station
21	Sat	**Ethiopia**: MTR Workshop Day 1 (Addis Ababa)
22	Sun	**Ethiopia**: MTR Workshop Day 2 (Addis Ababa). Travel to Accra, Ghana
23	Mon	**Ghana:** Pilot site visit – Kumasi / Afram Headwaters Forest Reserve
24	Tues	**Ghana:** Pilot site visit – Afram Headwaters Forest Reserve
25	Wed	**Ghana:** MTR Workshop Day 1 (Accra)
26	Thurs	**Ghana:** MTR Workshop Day 2 (Accra)
27	Fri	Travel to Nairobi, **Kenya**. Visit CABI offices.
28	Sat	Travel to Lusaka, Zambia. Travel to Livingstone.
29	Sun	**Zambia**: Pilot site visit – Victoria Falls/Mosi-Oa-Tufti
30	Mon	**Zambia**: Pilot site visit – Lochinvar NP. Travel to Lusaka.
July		
1	Tues	**Zambia**: MTR Workshop Day 1 (Lusaka)
2	Wed	**Zambia**: MTR Workshop Day 2 (Lusaka)
3	Thurs	**Kenya**: Nairobi
4	Fri	Travel to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, via Doha
5	Sat	Arrive in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Oct		
1	Wed	**Kenya**: International Steering Committee Meeting (Nairobi)
2	Thurs	**Kenya**: International Steering Committee Meeting (Nairobi)
3	Fri	**Kenya**: International Steering Committee Meeting (Nairobi)
4	Sat	**Kenya**: Nairobi
5	Sun	Travel to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, via Doha

Annex 4: List of persons met / interviewees / attendees at MTR Workshop

4A: List of stakeholders met during MTR Mission to Uganda

Name	Organisation	Contact	e-mail
Alum Dorcas	Lira District Production Department	0772578193	akellodorcus@yahoo.com
Anying Pamela	UWA	0772572777	Pamela.anying@uwa.or.ug anyingp@yahoo.com
Ayoma J. Bamuru	DPC - Arua	0772828199	-
Birija Steven	Masindi District Chairperson	0392947266	-
Biryetega Simon	Masindi District	0772394129	biryetegadfpd@yahoo.com
Byabakama Blasio	Masindi Local government DPO	#67 Masindi	Bblasto2005@yahoo.com
Byarugaba Beatrice	DPO Mbarara	0772592050	byarubeatrice@yahoo.com
Byenkya Steven	NARO-Mbarara	0772499121	byenkya@yahoo.com
Eilu Gerald	MUK	0772642640	eilu@forest.muk.ac.ug
Esegu J. F. O.	NAFORRI	0772470764	naforridiv@infocom.co.ug
Hafashimana David	NFRI/NARO	0782964358	Davidhaf2000@yahoo.com
Irumba Deziderius	Project site - Masindi National Forestry Authority (NFA)	NFA - Masindi #173 Masindi	deziirumba@yahoo.com
Kakooza Joseph	Local Council (LC) V Mubende	0702258177	-
Kalungi Deo K	Sembabule District Chairperson	0772904904	-
Kamanyire Stevens	c/o Mbarara LC 5 Vice Chairperson	0772528650 #1 Mbarara	-
Kasigwa Howard	NARO - Mbarara	0772668532	hkasigwa@yahoo.co.uk
Kasiisi Balaam	MBADIFA	# 558 MBRA 0772461717	mbadifa@uffouline.co.ug
Kawooya K. Emmanuel	DPO Sembabule	0772351701	Ekawooya2005@yahoo.com
Kimuli Vincent	DPO Mubende Local Government	#93 Mubende 0772626859	Vkimuli2006@yahoo.com
Kisakye Richard	Member-Masindi	0772335978	richardkisakye@yahoo.co.uk
Kyetere Denis T.	NARO	0414320512	dpuaro@infocom.co.ug
Magyembe Japheth	NAROSEC	0772980274	cgs@naro.go.ug

Malowa Charles	District Vice Chairperson, Busia	0772835628	-
Mugerwa Swidiq	Production co-ordinator Nakasongola	0782660295	swidiqm@yahoo.com
Mununuzi David	NFA - Budongo	0772466499	davidmenfa.org.ug
Musenero Eva	DPO-Tororo	0772517866	-
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4B: List of stakeholders met during MTR Mission to Ghana

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6. Peter Ankomah	Daily Dispatch	024 4807474
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9. Nana Atamusung Aba I	PSMC chairman, Bladjai	020 6446842
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11. Kofi Tigiri	PSMC Kitare	024 5253678
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13. J. Nkrumah Mills	Director, Health Services, VRA	024 4316589
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31. James Moari	Nkwanta North District Assembly	024 6407253
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33. Kwaku Boateng	Ministry of Energy	027 7403288
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4C: List of stakeholders met during MTR Mission to Ethiopia

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4D: List of stakeholders met during MTR Mission to Zambia

Not yet available

Annex 5. Review Criteria & Ratings and Definitions

A) RATING OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS

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

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

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

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

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

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

Please note: Relevance and effectiveness will be considered as critical criteria. The overall rating of the project for achievement of objectives and results **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.

B) RATINGS ON SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability will be understood as the probability of continued long-term outcomes and impacts after the GEF project funding ends. The Terminal evaluation will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to contribute or undermine the persistence of benefits after the project ends. Some of these factors might be outcomes of the project, i.e. stronger institutional capacities, legal frameworks, socio-economic incentives /or public awareness. Other factors will include contextual circumstances or developments that are not outcomes of the project but that are relevant to the sustainability of outcomes..

Rating system for sustainability sub-criteria
On each of the dimensions of sustainability of the project outcomes will be rated as follows.

Likely (L): There are no risks affecting this dimension of sustainability.

Moderately Likely (ML). There are moderate risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.

Moderately Unlikely (MU): There are significant risks that affect this dimension of sustainability

Unlikely (U): There are severe risks that affect this dimension of sustainability.

All the risk dimensions of sustainability are critical. Therefore, overall rating for sustainability will not be higher than the rating of the dimension with lowest ratings. For example, if a project has an Unlikely rating in either of the dimensions then its overall rating cannot be higher than

Unlikely, regardless of whether higher ratings in other dimensions of sustainability produce a higher average.

C) RATINGS OF PROJECT M&E

Monitoring is a continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing project with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds. Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, its design, implementation and results. Project evaluation may involve the definition of appropriate standards, the examination of performance against those standards, and an assessment of actual and expected results.

The Project monitoring and evaluation system will be rated on 'M&E Design', 'M&E Plan Implementation' and 'Budgeting and Funding for M&E activities' as follows:

Highly Satisfactory (HS): There were no shortcomings in the project M&E system.

Satisfactory(S): There were minor shortcomings in the project M&E system.

Moderately Satisfactory (MS): There were moderate shortcomings in the project M&E system.

Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): There were significant shortcomings in the project M&E system.

Unsatisfactory (U): There were major shortcomings in the project M&E system.

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The Project had no M&E system.

"M&E plan implementation" will be considered a critical parameter for the overall assessment of the M&E system. The overall rating for the M&E systems will not be higher than the rating on "M&E plan implementation."

ALL OTHER RATINGS, e.g. ''catalytic role'' etc will be on the GEF six point scale.

GEF Performance Description		Alternative description on the same scale
HS	= Highly Satisfactory	Excellent
S	= Satisfactory	Well above average
MS	= Moderately Satisfactory	Average
MU	= Moderately Unsatisfactory	Below Average
U	= Unsatisfactory	Poor
HU	= Highly Unsatisfactory	Very poor (Appalling)