



Management Response

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| Evaluation Title: | Strengthening cooperation on hydrology and environment between Tajikistan and Afghanistan in the upper Amu Darya River basin (Pyanj River) | | |
| Period of Review: | Sep 2015 – December 2018 | | |
| Date of Evaluation Report: | 21 December, 2018 | | |
| Approved by: | Chief, Programme Management Unit Ms. Catherine Haswell | Date 18.04.2019 | Signature |
| Cleared by: | Director of Division Marco Keiner, Director of Environment Division | 18.4.2019 | |
| Prepared by: | Manager of the evaluation Batyr Hajiyev, Economic Affairs Officer | 18/04/2019 | |

Recommendation 1: Future UNECE projects on strengthening cooperation between Afghanistan and Tajikistan on hydrology and environment, if any, should address further development of political dialogue (by means of supporting high-level and expert meetings, capacity building events, joint expeditions along the Pyanj River) and technical dialogue. This can include transboundary climate change adaptation strategy which however requires more funding.

Management Response: UNECE partially accepts this recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities: The Environment Division of ECE will hold discussions with the governments to identify if these recommendations are of interest for the countries. Based on the outcomes the recommended areas will be discussed with the donor to seek its consent to implement them. Project Manager, March-May 2019

Recommendation 2: For any future UNECE activities in this area, the UNECE could support increasing the number of specific meetings between the representatives of Badakhshan Province of Afghanistan and GBAO of Tajikistan. Communications/events/meetings with video conferences (by means of Skype, WhatsApp, Viber etc.) during the year would be a positive addition to keep the discussion going. The UNECE may wish to design future projects taking into consideration the limited local IT capacities.

Management Response: UNECE does not accept this recommendation

Follow up actions and responsibilities: The recommendation cannot be accepted. First, as mentioned there are limited local IT capacities in the countries. Second, there is a language barrier.

Recommendation 3: The UNECE should give preference to local sub-contractors over the international ones, where possible and appropriate, to potentially enhance the efficiency. The Investments (furniture & equipment) budget line can be regarded as not appropriate for similar projects.

Management Response: UNECE accepts this recommendation

Follow up actions and responsibilities: Efforts will be made to involve local organizations and consultants as much as possible in all similar projects in the future. The recommendation on furniture and equipment is also accepted. Project Manager, 2019

Recommendation 4: The UNECE should continue supporting the political and technical dialogue between Tajikistan and Afghanistan, with regular financial and organizational assistance to arrange meetings, capacity building events and expeditions on Pyanj which have become a good practice.

Management Response: UNECE partially accepts this recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities: The Environment Division of ECE will hold discussions with the governments to identify if these recommendations are of interest for the countries. Based on the outcomes the recommended areas will be discussed with the donor to seek its consent to implement them. – Project Manager, March-May, 2019

Recommendation 5: Approval of the environmental MoU may significantly increase the impact of the Project, though this factor is currently beyond the direct control of the UNECE and can be subject to monitoring only.

Management Response: UNECE partially accepts this recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities: Approval of the MoU by countries is beyond UNECE control. However, the Environment Division of ECE will follow up with the governments on the status of MoU clearance and signing. Project Manager, March – December 2019.

Recommendation 6: It is recommended to the UNECE to continue exploring cooperation opportunities with the WB, USAID and other international development banks, agencies and governments for increased synergetic impact.

Management Response: UNECE accepts this recommendation

Follow up actions and responsibilities: UNECE will hold discussions with the WB and ADB and other organizations to explore collaboration opportunities for an increased synergy. Project Manager, March – August 2019.

Recommendation 7: For future projects, the UNECE may consider adding to the meeting invitations a specific call to the participating organisations to include female experts in the Project. Additional focus on involving groups of female students, educated women, e.g. from the University of Central Asia, and activists from women empowerment organisations in Tajikistan and Afghanistan would be a positive addition. These groups can be invited to attend Project events and expeditions (there is interest to this in Dushanbe).

Management Response: UNECE partially accepts this recommendation

Follow up actions and responsibilities: UNECE has no control over meeting participants' nominations. However, UNECE will encourage participating organizations to include more female participants in the project's activities. Project Manager, March – December 2019

Recommendation 8: Further advancement could include meetings with local women in villages, encouraging them to discuss problems and assisting development of women-led community projects on the Pyanj River.

Management Response: UNECE accepts this recommendation

Follow up actions and responsibilities: UNECE will give a due consideration of this recommendation during the development of future projects on strengthening local communities on the Pyanj River. Project Manager will follow up in 2020 with potential donors.