



2014

Project Implementation Review (PIR)

of

PIMS 4347



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

Integrated natural resource management in the Baikal Basin transboundary ecosystem.

Table of Contents

A. Basic Project and Finance Data	2
B. Project Summary	2
C. Project Evaluation	2
D. Adjustments.....	3
E. Progress toward Development Objective	4
F. Progress in Implementation	13
G. Ratings and Comments on Project Progress	14
H. Communications and Knowledge Management.....	18
I. Partnerships	20
J. Progress toward Gender Equality	21
K. Environmental \ Social Grievances.....	21
L. Project Contacts and Links	21
M. Annex 1 - Ratings Definitions	25

A. Basic Project and Finance Data

Executing Agency:	United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
GEF Focal Area:	Multiple Focal Area
Country(ies)	(MON) Mongolia(RUS) Russian Federation
Project Start Date:	06-May-2011
Planned Project Closing Date:	-
Revised Planned Closing Date:	
Dates of Project Steering Committee/Board meetings during reporting period:	July 2014
Overall Risk rating	Low
Overall DO rating	Highly Satisfactory
Overall IP rating	Highly Satisfactory
GEF grant amount disbursed so far	\$ 2,684,012.43

B. Project Summary

Lake Baikal, situated in eastern Siberia on the Russian border with Mongolia, is the world's oldest (>25 million years old) and deepest lake (1,637 m). It contains 20 percent of the Earth's fresh surface water and supports a diverse and highly endemic flora and fauna. Although the lake is in Russia, the catchment around this vast freshwater reservoir (Baikal Lake Basin) is a transboundary resource extending over a 500,000 km² area shared between Russia and Mongolia, with over 300 rivers and streams. Ongoing pressure to expand the economy in both countries is driving the largely uncontrolled expansion of industrial, agricultural and urban developments within the watershed on both sides of the lake. These developments have increased the number and types of inputs and the release of nutrients and persistent toxic substances. While the lake waters remain relatively clean (due to mixing and the sheer volume of the lake) localized contamination and eutrophication events have reportedly increased, particularly within certain heavily impacted areas. Continuation of this pressure on the watershed has serious implications for the local indigenous population and the wildlife supported by this once pristine lacustrine ecosystem. In recognition of their shared responsibility for this preservation of this globally important ecosystem, the countries have attempted to establish joint monitoring and management programmes. The intention of the proposed Project is to assist the countries to revitalize these agreements, harmonize policies and facilitate the establishment of an effective transboundary integrated water resource management regime to reduce land-based sources of contamination and ensure the sustainable use of this vast, ancient and unique fresh water reservoir for the benefit of future generations.

C. Project Evaluation

With respect to relevance, the project is considered relevant / highly satisfactory for strengthening integrated natural resource management and supporting sustainable in the Baikal basin. Project efficiency is rated highly satisfactory. Project implementation is considered satisfactory, while project execution (i.e. project management) is assessed as highly satisfactory. The project is well on-track with financial delivery, with 54.9% of the total GEF financing disbursed by the end of 2013, and greater than 95% annual budget delivery in 2012 and 2013. The Baikal basin project is well on-track to make important progress toward the overall project objective, and to achieve the supporting three outcomes. Following the initial slow start (the six-month "inception phase"), the project is making good progress on the activities in its agreed workplans. Project results thus far are rated satisfactory, and project effectiveness is also rated satisfactory.

Key results achieved with project support thus far include:

- Completion of the draft TDA by April 2013;
- Progress toward enhanced transboundary cooperation through submission to the Russian and Mongolian governments of a draft revised and updated transboundary agreement for the management of natural resources;
- Increased understanding and knowledge of ecosystem dynamics in the Baikal basin through multiple high quality technical studies and reports on various aspects of the Baikal watershed, including the water quality study for the Selenga delta, groundwater assessment, pollution transport model, and pollution hotspot assessment, as well as the forthcoming Baikal Atlas;
- Strengthened foundational elements of transboundary water resource management through significant progress on water monitoring harmonization;
- Enhanced capacity for effective integrate natural resource management through development of four river sub-basin management plans, with progress toward implementation of these plans;
- Good progress on the pilot and demonstration activities in Russia, including biodiversity-responsible mining practices, and development of ecotourism plans and infrastructure; and
- Increased information sharing and dissemination through development of the Baikal Information Center web portal.

- Another highly notable development is the Russian government's decision to close the Irkutsk paper mill on the south shore of Lake Baikal in early 2014; the mill had been identified as the single most significant point source of pollution to the lake. This action was not the direct result of project activities funded with GEF resources, though the Russian government's work to improve many aspects of environmental quality in the Baikal basin is clearly within the framework of the project.

Key issues and areas for attention for the Baikal project in the 2nd half of implementation include:

- Development of an SAP that is adequately concrete and specific, but that can also gain political support from both Russia and Mongolia;
- The need to make significant progress toward concluding bilateral agreement on a revised transboundary water and environment agreement, including consensus on an enhanced joint institutional mechanism to implement the agreement;
- Further progress toward implementation of river basin management plans that have been developed; and
- Capacity strengthening support for River Basin Administrations and River Basin Management Councils in Mongolia.

There are 17 recommendations from this mid-term evaluation. The "key" recommendations – those deemed most critical – are listed below.

Recommendation 1 : The SAP development process should include consultations with sub-national government stakeholders.

Recommendation 2: The project should explore the possibility of providing further immediate support to the government of Mongolia for reviewing and analyzing the draft revised transboundary agreement with Russia.

Recommendation 3: The project exit strategy should be developed by the end of 2014, for approval by relevant stakeholders in early 2015.

Recommendation 4: It is recommended that the project explore all potential opportunities to undertake additional demonstration or pilot activities in Mongolia related to INRM.

Recommendation 5: The Baikal project should explore the option of collaborating with the GEF SGP in Mongolia to activate the Baikal NGO network, and potentially undertake some biodiversity-related pilot activities in Mongolia supporting IWRM management. [PMU, UNDP Mongolia Country Office, GEF SGP in Mongolia]

Recommendation 6: The project should consider a variety of approaches to increase the chances of the two countries moving toward accepting the revised and updated transboundary water and environment management agreement.

Recommendation 7: In Mongolia the project should seek opportunities to develop the capacity of Mongolia's watershed management institutions, i.e. River Basin Management Authorities and River Basin Councils.

D. Adjustments

Project Planning				
Key project milestone	Status	Original Planned Date (Month/Year)	Actual or Expected Date (Month/Year)	Comments, including reasons for delays and their implications
Inception Workshop	delayed/completed	June - 2011	November - 2011	It was an initial slow start (the six-month "inception phase").
Mid-term Review		5 - 2014	5 - 2014	
Terminal Evaluation		September - 2015	September - 2015	

Critical Risk Management

Critical Risks Type(s)	2014
------------------------	------

General comments:

E. Progress toward Development Objective

Description	Description of Indicator	Baseline Level	Target Level at end of project	Level at 30 June 2009	Level at 30 June 2010	Level at 30 June 2011	Level at 30 June 2012	Level at 30 June 2013	Level at 30 June 2014
To spearhead integrated natural resource management of the Lake Baikal / Selenga River Basin (including Lake Hövsgöl in Mongolia), ensuring ecosystem resilience and reduced water quality threats in the context of sustainable economic development.		Not completed, approved or adopted.	Completed, approved, and adopted by EoP (end of project)					The preliminary TDA has been revised. Updated TDA additionally includes specific studies like climate change assessment, groundwater pollution risks and ground / surface water intermixing, Selenga Delta study and etc.SAP team will be formed at the end of 2013. SAP will be prepared based on the TDA in 2014 and will be analyzed and endorsed in 2015.	SAP team has been formed at the beginning of 2014. Draft SAP has been prepared based on the TDA in June 2014 and will be considered and endorsed in 2015.
		Zero hectares in these three sub-basins have watershed management plans mainstreamed with biodiversity conservation objectives.	Target: 11,047,790 hectares Russia: Tugnuy-Sukhara basin (4,640,000 ha) Mongolia: Ider River basin (2,275,730 ha) Egiin River basin 4,132,060 ha					Two sub-basin management plans for Russia (Tugnuy-Sukhara and Khilok) have been completed and endorsed by government. Russia: Tugnuy-Sukhara basin (4,640,000 ha) Three sub-basin management plans for Mongolia (Ider, Eg and Orkhon) are ready on 50% and will be finished by the end of 2013.	Ider and Eg sub-basin management plans for Mongolia have been prepared. Orkhon sub-basin management plan for Mongolia has been updated.
		Mercury, other mining	Reduction of at least 20%					Hot spot assessment	The project has

		pollutants at elevated levels in hot spot areas. Specific levels TBD at inception.	in target areas by EoP.					has been made for Russia and Mongolia. Pollution levels have been detected.	<p>relatively few on-the-ground demonstration or pilot activities, and the project strategy is long-term, primarily focused on increasing knowledge and understanding of the Baikal watershed ecosystem(s), strengthening environmental management institutions and mechanisms, and developing the SAP to undertake future activities and efforts for improving the integrated watershed management in the Baikal basin.</p> <p>Once the environmentally friendly mining demonstration activities are completed there may be some site-level impacts that could be documented and attributed to the project. The closing of the Irkutsk paper mill plant will certainly have positive impact level results, though this was primarily an initiative of the Russian government, without significant contribution from the project.</p>
		SRP: 0.5-2; Chl-a: 0.2-1 16-20 meters	Targets: SRP & Chl-a: No					This indicator has been removed on the Second Steering Committee Meeting	This indicator has been removed on the Second Steering Committee Meeting

		TBD first summer season of project.	<p>upward change;</p> <p>Secchi depth: no reduction.</p> <p>Abundance and age structure: maintained at baseline levels.</p>					because of absence of any annual monitoring programs.	because of absence of any annual monitoring programs.
		Zero	<p>By EoP a total of 10 policies or regulations modified to incorporate measures to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism: Revised and enhanced tourism plans adopted/not adopted by three target PA in Russia. - Mining: At least 2 policies modified in each country, for total of four. - Sport fishing: At least 1 regulation or policy modified by 2 protected areas in Russia. - Watershed management planning: at least one watershed management planning policy modified in each country. 					<p>4 policies or regulations have been modified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism: two tourism plans adopted and endorsed in two PA in Russia (Baikal State Nature Biosphere Reserve and Zabaikalsky National Park) - Watershed management planning: 2 watershed management plans have been prepared and endorsed. 	<p>15 policies or regulations have been modified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism: two tourism plans adopted and endorsed in two PA in Russia (Baikal State Nature Biosphere Reserve and Zabaikalsky National Park) - Mining: three pilot projects in mining sites has been implemented. Policy modification recommendations have been developed. - Sport fishing: Sport fishing program has been developed and tested in 2 protected areas in Russia. - Watershed management planning: 5 watershed management plans have been prepared and endorsed. - Fishing: Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) research and fish stock assessment have been made and

									recommendations have been provided.
		Zero	At least 5 mining companies in Russia by EOP. At least 5 tourism companies in Russia by EoP					Two tourism plans have been revised and adopted for two protected areas in Russia Two workshop on tourism development in protected natural areas of Buryatia was held The International Ecological Tourism Forum \"Ecotourism in Baikal 20\" was organized 10 tourism companies in Russia have been involved in ecotourism sector with PA.	3 mining companies were involed into pilot projects implementation. 10 tourism companies in Russia have been involved in ecotourism sector with PA.
		Trend is stable at healthy population levels in strongholds. Egiin River Taimen: 19 individuals/km Trend is downward or stable at low population levels in troubled areas.	No change in health population dynamic. i.e.: Egiin River: at least 19 individuals/km No deterioration or upward trend of at least 10% improvement.					No change in health population dynamic.	No change in health population dynamic. Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) research has been made and EFH maps have been prepared. Additionally fish stock assessment and recommendations have ben provided.
Stakeholders Elaborate and Adopt a strategic Policy and Planning Framework.		Preliminary TDA during project PPG	Agreed and jointly implemented TDA/SAP providing road map for ecosystem protection, and addressing epidemiological concerns, groundwater pollution issues and attention to high risk industrial hot spots.					The TDA has been completed.	The TDA has been completed. The draft SAP has been prepared.
		Biodiversity mentioned in reports but little analysis of potential impacts and no alternative steps proposed in 90% of EIA.	At least 50% of the EIA reports show measurable improvement in treatment of primary and secondary impact considerations for					EIA approaches have been analyzed and recommendations for their enhancement have been developed.	Developed EIA approaches have been considered and discussed on specific forums, conferences

		No concepts developed.	mining and tourism development projects.						and events organized by the project.
		Some data available on industrial pollution hot spots and on groundwater, but with significant gaps and not linked to .	[not given]					The groundwater assessment has been completed. Policy recommendations for sustainable, integrated management of transboundary groundwater and surface water resources into country National Water Master Plan have been developed.	The hotspot assessment has been completed. The groundwater assessment has been completed. Policy recommendations for sustainable, integrated management of transboundary groundwater and surface water resources into country National Water Master Plan have been developed.
		No such basin-wide methodology exists or adopted.	Adopted by year 2.					Baikal Basin-Wide Pollution Hot Spot Analysis and Reporting Methodology is preparing.	Baikal Basin-Wide Pollution Hot Spot Analysis and Reporting Methodology has been prepared.
		No such policies exist.	Approved by end of year 3.					Policy recommendations for sustainable, integrated management of transboundary groundwater and surface water resources into country National Water Master Plan have been developed.	Policy recommendations for sustainable, integrated management of transboundary groundwater and surface water resources into country National Water Master Plan have been developed.
		No EFH.	At least 12 EFH by year 3 of the project.					n/a	EFH have been described and EFH maps have been prepared. Additionally fish stock assessment and recommendations have been provided.
		None.	At least 2 by end of year 4.					2 sub-basin management plans for Russia (Tugnuy-Sukhara and Khilok) have been completed	2 sub-basin management plans for Russia (Tugnuy-Sukhara and Khilok) and 2 sub-basin management

								and endorsed by government.	plans for Mongolia (Ider and Eg) have been completed and endorsed by government. Orkhon sub-basin management plan for Mongolia has been updated.
Institutional strengthening for IWRM.		Joint Russian-Mongolian Task Force on Transboundary Waters Use is not a legal entity.	Legal status obtained under Russian and Mongolian law by end of year 3.					Concept paper and road map for the process of developing and enhancing the legal and institutional framework of bilateral transboundary water cooperation have been developed. During Second Steering Committee Meeting the decision of preparation of new bilateral agreement with Joint Commission structure has been made.	A draft new revised bilateral agreement on transboundary water cooperation including a new institutional structure has been developed. During the Third Steering Committee Meeting a new bilateral agreement will be reviewed.
		No full time director of Joint Task Force.	Appointed by year 4.					No full time director of Joint Task Force.	No full time director of Joint Task Force.
		1 – the Baikal Commission in Russia.	2 additional by EoP: - A Selenga Working Group or Commission in Mongolia; - A Selenga Delta/Baikal Working Group in Buryatia					5 – the Baikal Commission in Russia, the Plenipotentiaries working group in Russia, the Plenipotentiaries working group in Mongolia, the joint Russian-Mongolian commission on environmental protection “Cooperation in Environment Conservation” and the National Water Committee in	5 – the Baikal Commission in Russia, the Plenipotentiaries working group in Russia, the Plenipotentiaries working group in Mongolia, the joint Russian-Mongolian commission on environmental protection “Cooperation in Environment Conservation” and the National Water Committee in Mongolia (it was established in 2012)

								Mongolia (it was established in 2012)	
		Knowledge level TBD at beginning of each training by brief test;	At least 30% improvement for all trainees. - Baikalkumvod: At least 20 people trained. - Buryat regional authorities: at least 30 people. - PA of Russian Baikal: at least 30 people from 3 PA. - Water Authority of Mongolia; at least 20 people; - Ministry of Nature Environment and Tourism (Mongolia): at least 30 people. In total at least 130 people trained by EoP.					- Buryat regional authorities: 10 people. - PA of Russian Baikal: 30 people from 5 PA. - Ministry of Nature Resources (Russia): 20 people. In total 60 people trained.	- Buryat regional authorities: 40 people. - Mongolia local authorities (Eg and Ider): 20 people. - PA of Russian Baikal: 50 people from 5 PA. - Ministry of Natural Resources (Russia): 40 people. - Ministry of Environment and Green Development - 20 people. - Hydrochemical laboratory (Mongolia) - 4 people. - School teacher - 50 people. In total 224 people trained.
		Joint Commission has no legal status or authority/capacity to do anything.	Legal status granted by Russia/ Mongolia, with first-ever executive director employed.					New agreement has not been developed and signed. New Joint Commission has not been established.	New agreement has been developed and sent to Russian and Mongolian.
		Zero	At least 6 by year 3.					The Harmonized water quality monitoring program for the Baikal Basin has been developed. At list 13 of data parameters jointly monitored by the two countries across the Baikal Basin. About 30 parameters have been	The Harmonized water quality monitoring program for the Baikal Basin has been developed. First phase of an intercalibration of analytical procedures for analytes included into the harmonized program has been made. At list 13 of data

								harmonized.	parameters jointly monitored by the two countries across the Baikal Basin. About 30 parameters have been harmonized.
Demonstrating technologies for water quality and biodiversity mainstreaming.		Baseline to be set during yr 1.	At least 30% by end of year 4.					3 pilot project in different mining sites were started in 2013.	3 pilot projects in different mining sites have been completed. 1 pilot project started in 2014.
		8 in 2009.	0 by end of project.					The Strategy for (dead) livestock disposal has been developed. 0 cases in 2010,2011,2012.	The Strategy for (dead) livestock disposal has been developed. Two new pilot cattle mortalities have been constructed in Barguzinski and Kurumkanski district of Buryatiya Republic. 0 cases in 2010,2011,2012,2013.
		Zero	At least 3 in Russian portion of Baikal Basin by EoP. At least 3 Aimag-level SAP pilot concepts in Mongolian portion by EoP.					2 eco-tourism plans approved in Russian portion of Baikal Basin	2 eco-tourism plans approved in Russian portion of Baikal Basin. 2 eco-tourism plans started developing in 2014. SAP pilot projects prepared and documented for Mongolia.
		2010 fiscal year will be the Baseline to be confirmed at project inception.	At least an increase in US\$10 million by end of Project over baseline levels.					In 2012 The State Baikal Biosphere Reserve has got 37 700 000 RUB ~ \$1 216 129.03 USD In 2013: - Tunkinski National Park - 32 100 000 RUB ~ \$1 035 483.87 USD - Zabaikalski National Park 3 900 000 RUB ~ \$125 806.45 USD - State Baikal Biosphere Reserve - 52 300 000 RUB - \$1 687	In 2013 - The State Baikal Biosphere Reserve 90 000 000 RUB ~ \$2 500 000.00 USD - Tunkinski National Park - 32 100 000 RUB ~ \$891 666.00 USD - Other PA - 16 300 000 RUB ~ \$525 806.45 USD In 2014 - Tunkinski National Park - 90 000 000 RUB ~ \$2 500 000.00 USD

								096.77 USD - Baikal-Lenski Reserve 8 100 000 RUB ~ \$261 290.32 USD Additionally for eco-tourism development for different PA: 2012 - 13 400 000 RUB ~ \$432 258.06 USD 2013 - 16 300 000 RUB ~ \$525 806.45 USD	
		Zero	Increasing levels during years 2-4 of the project of at least 10% year over year.					Baikal Information Center website has been established. http://bic.iwlearn.org	Baikal Information Center website has been launched and maintained. http://bic.iwlearn.org
		2010 fiscal year will be the Baseline to be confirmed at project inception.	Published by EoY 4. At least 90 distributed to 30 institutions by EOP; At least 20 downloads of PDF file by country per year.					Report does not yet exist.	Report started preparing in 2014 and will be developed and published by the end of 2014.
		0 0	50 by EoP 20 by EoP					35 km 50 media sources	70 km 110 media sources

F. Progress in Implementation

Outcome 1	Stakeholders Elaborate and Adopt a strategic Policy and Planning Framework.
Outputs Reported	The critical result in the first half of the project is the TDA which was completed and accepted by the PSC in the 2nd quarter of 2013. The fact that the TDA was completed this quickly is impressive, particularly since it is a comprehensive document, and the TDA appears to have the acceptance and buy-in of all project stakeholders. An international consultant, as “editor”, coordinated production of the TDA, but the inputs came directly from the technical experts involved on each of the respective fields or issues (i.e. hydrology, biodiversity, etc.). The TDA identifies the priority issues for integrated water resource management in the Baikal basin. Updated TDA additionally includes specific studies like climate change assessment, groundwater pollution risks and ground / surface water intermixing, Selenga Delta study and etc. The Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis was printed in Russian, Mongolian and English.
Outputs Reported	Another major technical output was the study on the Selenga Delta water quality issues, which was completed by the Baikal Institute of Nature Management. The Selenga delta is a critical component of the overall Baikal basin ecosystem, serving as a kind of giant filter for a majority of the inflow to Lake Baikal, which comes from the Selenga river. This study analyzes data from 11 monitoring stations maintained in the delta by Russia to assess changes in key water quality parameters over time between 2003 and the present. This study highlights the important linkages between some climate change impacts and water quality issues, because typically as water quantity in the Selenga river decreases, concentrations of pollution increase. This study was planned as Output 1.2 of the project.
Outputs Reported	The project’s results from the partnership with UNESCO (under their International Hydrological Programme) on groundwater also fall under Outcome 1, as Output 1.3, which was expected to be an “assessment of transboundary problems in integrated surface and ground water resources management of the Baikal Basin and corresponding pollution threats, focusing on: stress on ground and surface water resources; deterioration of water quality in both surface and ground waters of the Basin; and vulnerability of groundwater dependent ecosystems.” Three workshops were held under this activity (November 20, 2012; March 20, 2013, and July 12, 2013), which also served as an input to the TDA. Altogether the outputs of this activity are a thematic report, surface and ground water resources qualitative and quantitative assessment, transboundary sampling sites identification, pilot demonstration of isotopic monitoring methods, and development of policy recommendations. Another notable output from the UNESCO partnership is the “Review and ranking of upgrade needs for Mongolian municipalities in the Selenge River basin, including the identification of ongoing and planned water and sanitation projects, focusing on Kharaa River Basin pollution assessment.”
Outputs Reported	The project has also supported development of river basin management plans in both Russia and Mongolia. In Russia this has been done for the Tugny-Sukhara and Khilok sub-basin watershed management plans, and in Mongolia it has been done for the Ider, Khovsgol Lake-Eg river, and Orkhon sub-basin management plans. Baselines on socio-economic and ecological conditions were documented, and the draft plans were prepared. The plans include detailed thematic maps and other data. In Mongolia the plans were completed by the NGO Mongolia Water Forum. The plans are in various stages of endorsement by the relevant authorities. In Russia endorsement has been received for the Khilok plan, and in Mongolia the Orkhon plan was endorsed, and implementation has begun through the Orkhon River Basin Management Authority. One of the important areas for continue project attention is to ensure that progress continues on actual implementation of the sub-basin management plans that have been produced, and that these do not just become irrelevant documents. In addition, particularly the Ider and Eg river plans in Mongolia highlight the need for increased capacity of the River Basin Management Authorities,
Outcome 2	Institutional strengthening for IWRM.
Outputs Reported	The draft revised agreement was completed in November 2013. The draft was submitted to the MNRE in Russia, and according to the PMU, received positive feedback and willingness to move forward with discussions with Mongolia. The draft was submitted to the MNGD in Mongolia in early March 2014 (by letter directly to the minister), and as of April 2014 a response had not been provided to the project. According to Mongolian government stakeholders interviewed for the mid-term evaluation, the government is reviewing the draft and it is under consideration. The Mongolian government may require more support to thoroughly review this potentially highly important bilateral policy document, and this evaluation recommends that the project propose to provide the Mongolian government with additional support for the legal review.
Outputs Reported	Another key activity under Outcome 2 was work on harmonizing water quality monitoring between Russia and Mongolia. As stated in the project document, “Monitoring systems and data analysis methodologies are not consistent across the region and there is considerable variation in monitoring capabilities, equipment and activity.” The project contracted out work on the water quality monitoring harmonization to the relevant organizations in Russia and Mongolia, and the results of this work are presented in the report on the harmonized water quality monitoring program. The report identifies suggestions for harmonizing monitoring programs in the Baikal basin, and presents an action plan to move toward harmonization. In Russia there are 26 government maintained Selenga watershed monitoring stations included in the program, while in Mongolia there are 19. The report identifies monitoring indicators measured by both sides that do, and do not, require further harmonization.
Outputs Reported	Also under Outcome 2 is the project’s work on capacity development through various training programs. Training needs assessments were carried out in both Russia and Mongolia. Training programs carried out have included topics related to the “Green Economy”, and persistent toxic substances and persistent organic pollutants.
Outputs Reported	Also under Outcome 2 was the major technical study performed by Moscow State University on setting up a pollution transport model within the Baikal basin. The team produced a database for modeling and simulation of pollution transport, and developed the pollution transport model, applying the HEC-RAS 1D (i.e. one dimensional) modeling software.
Outcome 3	Demonstrating technologies for water quality and biodiversity mainstreaming.
Outputs Reported	In Russia the project supported three demonstration projects for biodiversity-friendly mining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of technological solutions for minimization of anthropogenic impact of adit mine waters of Kholodninsky polymetal deposit on water ecosystems • Development of optimal technological solutions for safe storage, retreatment, neutralization and utilization of toxic substances, contained in waste products of inoperative mining enterprise “Dzhidinsky” • Development of technological solutions for minimization of anthropogenic impact of ore gold mining and processing enterprises on environment
Outputs Reported	Also in the Barguzin valley, the project is working with local communities to address human health considerations. The issue of anthrax outbreaks was raised during the project development phase, and to address this the project planned to support the construction of

technically compliant mortuaries for the disposal of dead livestock or other animals that test positive for anthrax.

Two mortuaries have been constructed at two locations in the Barguzin valley.

Outputs Reported The project is working with protected areas in Russia to support strengthening of ecotourism opportunities. One of the assets for integrated watershed management in the Baikal basin is the protected area estate, which covers 17% of the Baikal basin.

The project supported development of an environmentally responsible recreational tourism plan for Zabaikalsky National Park, which is on the eastern shore of Lake Baikal. The plan was developed by Irkutsk State Technical University. Contemporary methods of reduction tourism influence on protected areas were studied, and a conceptual paper for recreational use in Zabaikalsky National Park was developed. A feasibility study of impacts of tourism on different ecosystems of Zabaikalsky National Park (protected area, buffer zone, transport corridors) was completed. Under a separate activity in Zabaikalsky National Park the project is supporting construction of an eco-path to the viewing area of for the Baikal seal.

The project also supported enhancement of another eco-path, in Baikal State Nature Biosphere Reserve, another national-level protected area on the southeast corner of Lake Baikal. This included production of informational boards (see Figure 9). Additional support to the protected area included wastewater treatment infrastructure.

One of the innovative activities supported by the project has been the partnership developed with the Barguzin Datsan, or monastery, in the Barguzin valley, which is a key sub-basin on the eastern shore of Lake Baikal. The monastery territory includes a pilgrimage site that is visited by tens of thousands of people each year. The project worked with the monastery to improve the walking path into the forest to the pilgrimage site, and provided nature-related information boards highlighting the unique biodiversity and helping raise awareness about environmental issues in the region.

Outputs Reported The development of a major public knowledge platform on the Baikal basin is underway with project support. The "Baikal Information Centre" (BIC) is envisioned as an online portal for accessing a large body of data and other types of information about the Baikal basin. The BIC web address is <http://bic.iwlearn.org/>.

Teams in both Russia and Mongolia are working together to produce a trilingual web portal that will contain a range of resources with data about the Baikal basin, which will be available to the general public. It is anticipated that the BIC will be leveraged as a resource for inputs to the planned bilateral, biennial State of Environment in the Baikal Basin report. The BIC is one of the specific project outputs that needs to be included in the project exit strategy, with clear designation of stakeholder roles and responsibilities in terms of maintenance and updating after project completion.

The project also produced a very professional and comprehensive documentary, called "Baikal Without Boundaries", that is available to view online (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_axjCkbhDY). This is a valuable public relations and awareness raising tool that was cited by multiple project stakeholders as something that truly emphasizes the transboundary nature of the Baikal watershed, building in both Russia and Mongolia a joint sense of responsibility for conserving the ecological resources of the Baikal basin.

One of the on-the-ground activities that have been done in Mongolia is the community shoreline clean-up at Lake Khovsgol. The Khatgal soum government declared October 4, 2013 as the clean-up campaign day, and community members participated in collecting solid waste one the shores of Lake Khovsgol. Similar clean-up campaign days were also carried out on the shores of Lake Baikal in Russia.

General comments:

G. Ratings and Comments on Project Progress

Progress toward Development Objectives	
Project Manager/Coordinator	Satisfactory
<p>The Mid-Term Review of the project which took place in the reporting period confirms that the project is well on-track to make important progress toward the overall project objective, and to achieve the supporting three outcomes. The current rating is substantiated by the MTR opinion that the Baikal project has achieved its annual major global environmental objectives and yield substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings.</p> <p>The extensive review and updating of the preliminary Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis of 2008 was finalized in 2013. The groundwater resource assessment including surface water - groundwater interactions and groundwater dependent ecosystem in the Baikal Basin was conducted. Water quality of the Selenga Delta was monitored. Kharaa River Basin pollution assessment was organized. Biodiversity conservation standards and biodiversity management objectives for tourism and mining were developed. Sub-basin Essential Fish Habitat Model was developed. Four sub-basin watershed management plans were prepared.</p> <p>In 2013 the Project supported existing institutional transboundary structures (the institute of Plenipotentiaries and their working groups) formed by 1995 bilateral agreement "Protection and Use of Transboundary Waters". Additionally the concept paper and the road map for the process of developing and enhancing the legal and institutional framework of bilateral transboundary water cooperation were developed. The concept paper and the road map were presented on different levels particularly on the Second Steering Committee Meeting, in the Russian State Duma, Mongolia government, Buryatia government and different workshops and conferences. According to decision of the Steering Committee a draft of revised bilateral agreement on transboundary water cooperation, including a new institutional structure was developed. The first phase of the intercalibration of analytical procedures for analyses, included into harmonized program of hydrochemical</p>	

<p>monitoring for Selenga river basin was conducted. Different trainings on IWRM, green economy issues, "self-assessment" methodology aspects, questions of POP/PTS problems were organized. The model of pollutants transport and water balance in the Baikal Basin was developed.</p> <p>Three pilot projects in mining were implemented. Two cattle mortuaries in Kurumkansky and Barguzinsky district of the Republic of Buryatia, Russia were constructed. Biodiversity compatible recreational tourism plans with eco-trail construction were made for Zabaikalsky National Park and the Baikal State Nature Biosphere Reserve. The EUROPARC integration of these protected areas was supported. Baikal Information Center (BIC) web portal was launched. Information support for the BIC web portal was provided in English, Russian and Mongolian. GIS hardware was purchased for both countries. BIC information data exchange protocol for Mongolia based on conception and informational structure of BIC was developed. Protocol was distributed between stakeholders and approved. Endorsement letters from relevant stakeholders were received. Based on approved data exchange protocol basin data were collected and uploaded into BIC portal. Shoreline clean-up campaigns were organized. The documentary "Baikal without boundaries" was produced.</p> <p>The MTR report states that "the project is at a critical phase, where the governments of Russia and Mongolia must now move forward in a meaningful way in relation to agreement on the SAP, and on strengthening transboundary cooperation mechanisms. This includes a revised and updated agreement that can support transboundary integrated natural resource management based on current international norms and standards, and an enhanced joint institutional mechanism to support implementation of the SAP and effective transboundary cooperation. A large number of valuable outputs have been produced by the project, but it is necessary to have the bilateral cooperation mechanisms in place to support future work, and ensure sustainability of the Baikal project's impressive results".</p>	
UNDP Country Office Programme Officer	Satisfactory
<p>The project is well advancing toward achieving the end-of-project targets. It is likely that the project will deliver environmental and social benefits for an extended period. Therefore the project is rated as satisfactory. No critical risks reported. The MTE carried out in the reporting period has acknowledged that the project is on track to achieve the majority of indicators and assessed its progress as satisfactory.</p> <p>Over the reporting period a very important breakthrough has been achieved by the project: The TDA was completed, accepted at the PSC meeting in 2013, draft SAP prepared based on the TDA in June 2014. One of the key MTE recommendations is that the future SAP development process shall include consultations with sub-national government stakeholders so that a highest likelihood of implementation is ensured. MTE also reads that information dissemination and awareness raising on key issues identified in the TDA shall be supported through 1-2 page policy briefs highlighting the key points of the primary threats and issues identified in the TDA for the Baikal Basin, particularly for Mongolia in order to continue raising awareness of high-level policy makers in understanding these complex issues.</p> <p>In order to ensure essential progress with the key indicators at the Objective level, the project has completed the sub-basin management plans. 11 more policies and regulations that incorporate biodiversity management and ecosystem resilience objectives adopted/modified.</p> <p>As for the Outcome 1 indicators, Baikal Basin-Wide Pollution Hot Spot Analysis and Reporting Methodology have been prepared. Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) has been described and EFH maps have been prepared. Additionally fish stock assessment and recommendations have been provided. MTE mentioned multiple high quality technical studies and reports on various aspects of the Baikal watershed as one of the main projects successes so far.</p> <p>Under Outcome 2 key result achieved is the new draft revised bilateral agreement on transboundary water cooperation including a new institutional structure developed and presented to Russian and Mongolian authorities. As per MTE recommendation, the project shall explore the possibility of providing further immediate support to the government of Mongolia to facilitate the process of for reviewing and analyzing the draft revised transboundary agreement. Training program and capacity development activities continued now involving also Mongolian authorities.</p> <p>Progress demonstrated under Outcome 3 indicators: 3 pilot projects in different mining sites to reduce water pollution have been completed and 1 new pilot project started (in Russia). MTE recommended, that the project should increase activity related to responsible mining in Mongolia through sharing the results of biodiversity friendly mining pilot activities with Mongolian government, involving Mongolian stakeholders into discussion of best practices for the mining industry and exploring opportunities for mining pilots in Mongolia (this question to be raised at the next SC meeting).</p> <p>Two new pilot cattle mortuaries have been constructed in Barguzinski and Kurumkanski district of Buryatiya Republic. 0 cases anthrax diagnosed. 2 new eco-tourism plans started developing in 2014. Preparation of the first annual "State of the Baikal-Hovsgol Basin" report in Russian, Mongolian and English started. Ongoing progress reported under indicators showing km of Baikal shoreline and tributary rivers cleaned of litter/solid waste and media coverage of this cleaning work. Baikal Information Center website has been launched and maintained. http://bic.iwlearn.org.</p> <p>MTE recommended reviewing the results framework, in particular indicators for Outcome 2 (to be discussed at the SC meeting).</p> <p>All in all the progress reported on the key indicator values shows clearly that the project is on good track to achieve most of its environmental objectives, and this opinion is also supported by the project mid-term evaluation.</p>	
Project Implementing Partner	
GEF Operational Focal point	
Other Partners	
UNDP Technical Advisor	Highly Satisfactory

The project is well progressing towards meeting its development objectives and can be rated Highly Satisfactory this year. The project team was able to deliver most of the foreseen outcomes including the revision of the TDA including the inclusion of the groundwater resource assessment and surface water - groundwater interactions and groundwater dependent ecosystem in the Baikal Basin.

The project provided support to both beneficiary countries to introduce modifications to several national policies and regulations of the national legal system dealing with tourism mining, fishing and watershed management. 2 sub-basin management plans for Russia (Tugnuy-Sukhara and Khilok) and 2 sub-basin management plans for Mongolia (Ider and Eg) have been completed and endorsed by government. Orkhon sub-basin management plan for Mongolia has been updated.

In accordance with the workplan, the project successfully supported existing institutional transboundary structures (the institute of Plenipotentiaries and their working groups) formed by 1995 bilateral agreement "Protection and Use of Transboundary Waters". The project developed a draft of revised bilateral agreement on transboundary water cooperation, including a new institutional structure, which was shared with the countries and presented at the second SC.

Water quality of the Selenga Delta was monitored and Kharaa River Basin pollution assessment was implemented. Several pilots projects were successfully implemented - three in mining, two cattle mortuaries in Kurumkansky and Barguzinsky district of the Republic of Buryatia, Russia.

During the reporting period the Mid Term Evaluation was conducted and assess the project is "Highly Satisfactory" MTR recommendations are being implemented by the project team.

General Comments

Progress in Implementation	
Project Manager/Coordinator	Highly Satisfactory
<p>According to 2013 work plan, within the scope of the Project's realization, 36 activities were under implementation. The Project supported and participated in different events relevant to its goals and tasks. Totally in 2013, the Project Implementation Unit took part in 46 events. More than 60 mass media sources published information about project activities. The Project web-site worked in Russian, Mongolian and English. Information was regularly updated. RSS channels were functional in three languages as well. Additionally the PMU replicated all project news on Facebook and Twitter. Approved second year budget was 1 143 690.97 USD. Expenditures by the end of 2013 amounted to 1 106 230.92 USD. The 2013 Project budget was realized by 97%. Project management costs were also below the budgeted amount, and are expected to remain less than 10% of GEF funding. Financial management procedures were in-line with norms for international development projects, and conform to UNDP and UNOPS policies and procedures, as well as the requirements of both participating governments. Project co-financing was on-track (with a co-financing ratio of 1 : 12.7). All project reports and results are available on the Project web site: http://baikal.iwlearn.org/.</p> <p>The MTR confirmed that the project clearly supported priority transboundary environmental and water management issues between Russia and Mongolia, and is in line with numerous national policies and pieces of legislation in both countries. The project was also relevant to local resource user needs and priorities. The project was supportive of with the agreed UNDP country priorities for each country, and is in-line with the GEF strategic priorities for the biodiversity and international waters focal areas. Further, the project clearly supported implementation of relevant multilateral environmental agreements, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Ramsar Convention, and the World Heritage Convention.</p> <p>The Inception Steering Committee meeting was held in November 2011, the Second Steering Committee meeting was held in April 2013. The Third Steering Committee meeting was held in July 2014. Project board carefully reviewed all project results and activities and were satisfied with the project implementation. Using adaptive management principles several changes in the project document and strategic framework results were made.</p> <p>Short reports outlining main updates in project progress were provided quarterly to the UNDP by the project team based upon a standard format provided by UNDP-GEF. An annual monitoring process mandated by the GEF and UNOPS were prepared on time. As and when called for by UNDP, UNDP-GEF or the Implementing Partner, the project team prepared Specific Thematic Reports, focusing on specific issues or areas of activity. Stakeholders were informed about project 2013 results, annual 2014 workplan and 2014 budget. Stakeholders received exception and progress reports and provided feedback about project activities.</p> <p>All project achievements were a result of team effort. PMU tried to maintain a warm, friendly relationship within the project team. Project team recognizes that project goals are also their goals. The project organized different trainings and learning courses for project staff. Their salaries were increased a bit using updated salary scale level. Personnel arrangements and team spirit is such that the teammembers feel themselves a part of UN big international family.</p>	
UNDP Country Office Programme Officer	Highly Satisfactory
<p>The project was managed in a very effective and efficient manner in accordance with annual work plan and budget. Delivery rate in the reporting period is 97%, totally more than 50% of the project budget disbursed.</p> <p>The project team keeps demonstrating commitment and dedication to the project. Among other project management successes are timely reporting, efficient adaptive management, adequate risk management, efficient procurement and human resource management. MTE however recommends the project team to avoid short notice in announcing tenders. The project SC works smoothly and efficiently.</p> <p>The project has a strong partnership approach, though there is a room for improvement. In particular, as says MTE, through involvement of sub-national authorities in Mongolia and private sector in Russia, collaborating with SGP in Mongolia to activate the Baikal NGO network. Country ownership is weaker in Mongolia than in Russia which is partly attributed to objective reasons. However several MTE recommendations address the necessity to enhance the engagement of the Mongolian side.</p> <p>The annual outputs represent sufficient progress to achieve the project outcomes. Key achievements, already mentioned in DO section, are the completion of TDA and drafting of SAP, preparation of a new bilateral agreement on transboundary water cooperation. Now the project will concentrate on achieving the following results: Development of SAP which can be adopted both in Russia and Mongolia, concluding bilateral agreement and creation of a legal body on transboundary water management. MTE recommends the project to continue demonstrate an adaptive management approach in terms of strengthening the existing plenipotentiaries mechanism as both an aid and alternative to the still not created legal body (commission).</p> <p>All these factors, along with considerable progress with implementation of the intended activities, made it possible for the MTE to assign the HS rating to the project, and the CO extends its congratulations to the team.</p> <p>The project team has prepared a management response to the MTE recommendations, some of which mentioned above, and is expected to implement them until the end of the next reporting period.</p>	
Project Implementing Partner	
GEF Operational Focal point	
Other Partners	

The project document was dully signed by all parties in June 2011. Due to several reasons, political and human factor, it has only been launched at the Inception workshop held 6 months after the project document signature. The core project implementation unit was established in November 2011, thus implementation start was significantly delayed. This delay was reported on in the Adjustment tab of 2013 PIR.

In the current reporting period, all project activities were successfully implemented in line with the approved AWP and generally according to the schedule. Financial management of the project is highly satisfactory. After two and a half years of its duration the project spent \$2,259,369 including PPG funds, which is 56% of total GEF funding, in accordance with the plan. Delivery in 2013 was 99%, which is highly satisfactory and supports the efficient financial management. Project delivery in 2013 is calculated as ratio of project annual expenditure of \$1,127,400 versus project budget/Annual Spending limit of \$1,143,691. The project delivery thus exceeded the UNDP set target of at least 80% delivery in 2013. Project management costs have not exceeded budgeted amount, and are expected to remain less than 10% of GEF funding, in line with GEF rules.

Delivery in 2014 so far is 46% as per Atlas financial system. This indicates a good financial planning and management. The project team regularly monitors project risks. In this reporting period, no risks have been identified as critical. Project progress in during the reporting period was properly reported via regular quarterly reports and recorded in ERBM. All operations, procurement and necessary procedures were done in accordance with UNDP and UNOPS (Executing Agency) requirements and rules.

Total of \$28,269,542, which is 57% of planned co-financing has been disbursed as reported during this reporting period.

In this reporting period, the project progressed well with implementation of project outcomes as per the strategic framework and in line with UNDP norms and standards. Project activities were implemented on time, effectively and fully transparently.

The critical result in the first half of the project is the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) which was completed and accepted by the Project Steering Committee in the 2nd quarter of 2013. The TDA identifies the priority issues for integrated water resource management in the Baikal basin and is printed in Russian, Mongolian and English.

During the reporting period, the most significant achievement of the project is that the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) team has been formed at the beginning of 2014 and draft SAP has been prepared based on the TDA in June 2014 and will be considered and officially endorsed by Governments in 2015. development of river basin management plans in both Russia and Mongolia is nother significant achievement of the project. The Project web-site works in 3 languages, Russian, Mongolian and English with information regularly updated.

During the reporting period, the project held one Steering Committee meeting in July 2014 and the project meetings were held at the regular basis to review all project results and activities and to ensure accurate information exchange within the project team.

The project has conducted Mid-term review during the reporting period. The results of the evaluation are very encouraging. With respect to relevance, the project is considered highly satisfactory for strengthening integrated natural resource management and supporting sustainable in the Baikal basin. The project clearly supports priority transboundary environmental and water management issues between Russia and Mongolia, and is in line with numerous national policies and pieces of legislation in both countries. The project is also relevant to local resource user needs and priorities. The project is supportive of the agreed UNDP country priorities for each country, and is in-line with the GEF strategic priorities for the biodiversity and international waters focal areas. Further, the project clearly supports implementation of relevant multilateral environmental agreements. Project efficiency is also rated highly satisfactory. Project results thus far are rated satisfactory, and project effectiveness is also rated satisfactory. Overall sustainability is considered moderately likely. Currently, financial risks and institutional/governance risks are not significant. The project team has prepared a management response to the MTE recommendations, and is expected to implement them until the end of the next reporting period.

The project team has continued to show a dedicated support and commitment to the project in order to achieve its outcomes. The project team has been very successful in delivering required reports on time as well as managed risks adequately and have kept procurement and human resources management highly efficient and should be praised for their great job.

General Comments

H. Communications and Knowledge Management

The Story of This Project

The critical result in the first half of the project is the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA), which was completed and accepted by the PSC in the 2nd quarter of 2013. TDA additionally includes specific studies like hot spot assessment, climate change assessment, groundwater pollution risks and ground / surface water intermixing, Selenga Delta study and etc. Best practice conservation standards for tourism, mining using international and regional examples were elaborated and the gap analysis was provided. Two sub-basin management plans for Russia (Tugnuy-Sukhara and Khilok) and two sub-basin management plans for Mongolia (Ider and Eg) were completed and then they were endorsed by the governments.

Project supports existing institutional transboundary structures (the institute of Plenipotentiaries) formed by 1995 bilateral agreement "Protection and Use of Transboundary Waters". New comprehensive bilateral transboundary water cooperation was developed. The Harmonized water quality monitoring program for the Baikal Basin was developed and submitted to both governments. At list 13 of data parameters jointly were monitored by the two countries across the Baikal Basin. About 30 parameters were harmonized. An intercalibration of analytical procedures was conducted. The database for modeling and simulation of pollutants transport in the Baikal basin waters was developed. A pollution transport model was set up within the Baikal basin applying the HEC-RAS 1D (i.e. one dimensional) modeling software.

The project supported three demonstration projects for biodiversity-friendly mining:

- Development of technological solutions for minimization of anthropogenic impact of adit mine waters of Kholodninsky polymetal deposit on water ecosystems
- Development of optimal technological solutions for safe storage, retreatment, neutralization and utilization of toxic substances, contained in waste products of inoperative mining enterprise "Dzhidinsky"
- Development of technological solutions for minimization of anthropogenic impact of ore gold mining and processing enterprises on environment

Also the project worked with local communities to address human health considerations. Two mortuaries have been constructed at two locations in the Barguzin valley.

The project worked with protected areas in Russia to support strengthening of ecotourism opportunities. A feasibility study of impacts of tourism on different ecosystems of Zabaikalsky National Park (protected area, buffer zone, transport corridors) was completed. Under a separate activity in Zabaikalsky National Park the project is supporting construction of an eco-path to the viewing area of for the Baikal seal. The project also supported enhancement of another eco-path, in Baikal State Nature Biosphere Reserve, another national-level protected area on the southeast corner of Lake Baikal. One of the innovative activities supported by the project has been the partnership developed with the Barguzin Datsan, or monastery, on improving the walking path into the forest to the pilgrimage site, and provided nature-related information boards highlighting the unique biodiversity and helping raise awareness about environmental issues in the region.

The "Baikal Information Centre" (BIC) was established and BIC web portal was launched. The "Baikal Information Centre" (BIC) is envisioned as an online portal for accessing a large body of data and other types of information about the Baikal basin. The project also produced a very professional and comprehensive documentary, called "Baikal Without Boundaries", that is available to view online (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_axjCkbhDY). This is a valuable public relations and awareness raising tool that was cited by multiple project stakeholders as something that truly emphasizes the transboundary nature of the Baikal watershed, building in both Russia and Mongolia a joint sense of responsibility for conserving the ecological resources of the Baikal basin. Shoreline clean-up companies in Russia and Mongolia for raising public awareness in environment conservation issues were organized.

Adaptive Management this Reporting Period

The Baikal IWRM project is being implemented in a flexible and adaptive manner, and there have been a number of small changes and adjustments made to the project plans and expected results, as needed. Changes have been made following the inception workshop, though there have been no changes at the objective or outcome levels. For example, the project document foresaw \$50,000 USD budgeted for four monitoring buoys to be installed in Lake Baikal. Based on feedback from project stakeholders, the PSC determined the funds would be better spent in providing some water quality monitoring equipment for the relevant laboratory in Mongolia. Some modifications to the project results framework have also been made. For example, the original results framework included ecosystem resilience parameters for Khovsgol Lake – nutrient concentrations, secchi depth, and abundance and age structure of Khovsgol grayling. However, there is not an adequate monitoring program in place to track these indicators, there are no pollution hotspots near the lake, and there is little fishing pressure. The project proposed to remove these indicators from the results framework, and to agree with the Mongolian government on new, more relevant indicators for Khovsgol Lake. In another example, the indicator related to Taimen in Russia had to be changed, as it related to the level of fishing pressure on Taimen, and since the Taimen is a Red List species in Russia, it is officially not allowed to be caught.¹¹² One notable point for adaptive management is whether the project will actually catalyze a "new" Joint Commission between the two countries for water management, or whether the project will even succeed in getting Russia and Mongolia to agree to an enhancement of the current "plenipotentiaries" meeting. The current outlook is that there will not be a "new" Joint Commission as foreseen in the project document, but that the current mechanism could be strengthened and given a more meaningful mandate.

Lessons Learned

Lesson: When a multi-country project concept originates with one country, it is important to secure equal engagement from the other countries that will be involved. The Baikal basin project is perceived as a Russian-centric endeavor, which weakens the legitimacy of the project's objective at the highest political levels in Mongolia. The project has made notable efforts to ensure Mongolian stakeholders are involved, and numerous Mongolian organizations and institutions are actively engaged, but at high political levels the project is still identified as being mainly in Russia's interest – and by correlation, not Mongolia's.

Lesson: A project management unit with good management capacity is important for ensuring timely and well-planned project implementation. The Baikal project has greatly benefited from having a PMU with good management capacity, as

indicated by good financial delivery rates, good progress in the project workplan, and strong partnerships with a large number of organizations and institutions.

Lesson: Appropriate implementation arrangements are critical to support successful execution of project activities when working in multiple countries. The Baikal project has full-time project staff based in both national capitals, while the PMU headquarters is based in the region. This approach has been critical for engaging important national level institutions in each country, but particularly in Russia.

Lesson: Donor organizations can incentive countries to cooperate on transboundary natural resource management issues, but should be cautious about prescribing specific approaches and mechanisms. Russian and Mongolia already have a cooperation mechanism in place addressing transboundary water management, and are currently not inclined to establish a “new” institutional mechanism in the form of a Joint Commission, as the GEF project document specifies. It may be possible to achieve the same management objectives with some modification of the current plenipotentiaries mechanism, yet the Baikal project logframe leans heavily on results indicators linked to establishment of the Joint Commission.

Lesson: Grounding political discussions about natural resource management in scientific fact can be a useful way of developing trust and building cooperative approaches. Thus far the Baikal project has been successful in producing a good amount of scientific data about the Baikal basin, in the hopes that this will provide a strong foundation for political discussions.

Lesson: On a similar note, building political consensus and stakeholder buy-in for processes that will require later stakeholder action (such as development of the Strategic Action Plan) fare best with a combination of bottom-up and top-down approaches, and must actively engage stakeholders at all necessary levels.

Lesson: When working on issues of national priority even relatively small GEF projects can garner political audiences at the highest levels. The Baikal project has been able to directly contribute to sessions in the Russian State Duma on topics related to the management of Lake Baikal. While many environmental initiatives find it difficult to gain traction at the highest political levels, the Baikal project has demonstrated that when project objectives are aligned with high-level national priorities, strong political will for environmental conservation is possible.

Lesson: When working in transboundary contexts it is important to build a common transboundary identity to strengthen stakeholder buy-in and cooperation toward a common objective. The Baikal project has started moving in this direction (particularly with the production of the “Baikal Without Boundaries” documentary), but there is still a need for strengthening recognition of the Baikal basin as a single shared resource, to catalyze joint action on integrated natural resource management.

General Comments

I. Partnerships

Partners	Innovation and Work with Partners
Civil Society Organisations/NGOs	The Mongolian and Russian NGOs were sub-contractors for numerous project activities. The NGO network “Friends of Baikal Basin” is participating in the development of the Baikal Information Center (BIC). The NGOs organized different shoreline clean-up companies in Russia and Mongolia for raising public awareness in environment conservation issues.
Indigenous Peoples	One of the innovative activities supported by the project has been the partnership developed with the Barguzin Datsan, or monastery, on improving the walking path into the forest to the pilgrimage site, and provided nature-related information boards highlighting the unique biodiversity and helping raise awareness about environmental issues in the region.
Private Sector	Different private companies were involved into implementation of the pilot projects in mining and tourist sector in 2013. Also several joint projects were organized with private “Baikal Conservation Fund” for raising public awareness in environmental issues for example a production of the documentary “Baikal without boundaries” and shoreline clean-up companies.
GEF Small Grants Programme	
Other Partners	The Joint OECD&UNDP-GEF Project in Russia was conducted in 2013-2014. This project focused on costs control and incentives for improving efficiency of performance of water service providers in the irrigation and WSS sectors, as well as cost-effectiveness of public expenditures in the two sectors, in the Russian part of Lake Baikal basin.

General Comments

J. Progress toward Gender Equality

Findings of gender/social needs assessment	
Changes in targeting women/girls	
Additional information on the project's work on gender equality	

General Comments

K. Environmental \ Social Grievances

Related environmental or social issue	
Status	
Significance	
Detailed description	

L. Project Contacts and Links

Partner	Contact Name	Email Address
Project Coordinator / Manager	Sergey Kudelya	SergeyK@unops.org
UNDP Country Office Programme Officer	Nataly Olofinskaya	nataly.olofinskaya@undp.org
Project Implementing Partner	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (Russia)	
GEF Operational Focal Point		
Other Partners	Ministry of Environment and Green Development (Mongolia)	
UNDP Technical Adviser	Vladimir Mamaev	vladimir.mamaev@undp.org

Project website, etc.	http://baikal.iwlearn.org/en http://baikal.iwlearn.org/ru http://baikal.iwlearn.org/mn https://www.facebook.com/baikal.iwlearn.org http://iwlearn.net/iw-projects/4029 https://www.unops.org/english/where-we-work/multi-country-programmes/Pages/Baikal-Basin-Transboundary-Ecosystem.aspx Full HD documentary "Baikal without boundaries": English – http://youtu.be/g_axjCkbhDY - 39 min for download : http://yadi.sk/d/n2pqc7esJcaw5 - 2,7 Gb Russian - http://youtu.be/1KKecbgbzPw - 39 min for download : http://yadi.sk/d/eXjGYKY5Jcb2B - 2,7 Gb Mongolian - http://youtu.be/M1ifEFSKd8s - 39 min for download : http://yadi.sk/d/W2SutZLMJcb3G - 2,7 Gb
Links to media	21 February 2013 Ulan-Ude, Russia "Baikal's Little Treasure Chest" - a presentation of the training aids for primary and middle grade students http://egov-buryatia.ru/index.php?id=4&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=29273

coverage	<p>http://www.unmultimedia.org/radio/russian/archives/132412/ http://www.tvcom-tv.ru/news/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=22697 http://arigus-tv.ru/news/item/27583/ http://www.rg.ru/2013/02/21/reg-sibfo/baikal-anons.html http://ria.ru/society/20130221/923976201.html http://www.undp.ru/index.php?iso=ru&lid=2&cmd=news&id=1118</p> <p>01 March 2013 Ust-Barguzin, Russia A workshop in Zabaikalski National Park – (revision of methods of evaluation and identification a recreational capacity and dedicated visitor allowable loads on natural areas. http://npzabaikalsky.ru/news/350.php</p> <p>20 March 2013 Ulan-Ude, Russia The second workshop of the UNESCO Groundwater project activities 21 March 2013 Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia World Water Day in Mongolia http://ubpost.mongolnews.mn/?p=3481 http://www.wvi.org/world-water-day http://www.infomongolia.com/ct/ci/5764 21 March 2013 Gusinoozersk, Russia World Day of Water in Russia http://everydropmatters.ru/index.php?mod=news&act=show&id=58 http://www.unwater.org/water-cooperation-2013/events/worldwide-events/events-list/en/?page=38&ipp=20&tx_dynalist_pi1[par]=YToxOntzOjE6lkwiO3M6MToiMSI7fQ== http://www.bsu.ru/?mod=news&nid=8950 05 April 2013 Ivlginsky, Russia A seminar on introduction of the training aids "Baikal Box" into the education process http://www.everydropmatters.ru/index.php?mod=news&act=show&id=59 http://selorodnoe.ru/today/show/id3656251/</p> <p>06 April 2013 Holodyanka, Russia The campaign "Pure Ice Lake Baikal in 2013" http://ria.ru/eco/20130124/919546328.html http://www.infpol.ru/news/673/146639.php http://www.tvcom-tv.ru/news/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=22014&sphrase_id=79948</p> <p>08 April 2013 Moscow, Russia A round-table discussion of the State Duma Committee on Natural Resources, Environment and Ecology www.komitet2-21.km.duma.gov.ru http://baikalfund.ru/</p> <p>18 April 2013 Istomino, Russia A workshop of the Baikal territory municipalities and protected areas 18 April 2013 Ulan-Ude, Russia A seminar at the Republican Buryatian national lyceum-boarding school No.1 http://www.everydropmatters.ru/index.php?mod=news&act=show&id=60</p> <p>22 April 2013 Barguzin, Russia A seminar on introduction of the toolkit "Baikal Box" in the Barguzinsky District http://www.everydropmatters.ru/index.php?mod=news&act=show&id=62</p> <p>25 April 2013 Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia The second TDA regional technical workshop 26 April 2013 Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia The Second Regional Steering Committee Meeting http://baikal.iwlearn.org/ru/proekt-1/rukovodyaschii-komitet/vtoroe-zasedanie/Minutes%20SC%20Eng%20Annex%20%20-%20Second%20SC%20List%20of%20Participants.pdf/view</p> <p>26 April 2013 Ulan-Ude, Russia Water Hall Inauguration in the Natural History Museum http://everydropmatters.ru/index.php?mod=news&act=show&id=63</p> <p>16 May 2013 Ulan-Ude, Russia A seminar on introduction of the training aids "Baikal Box" into the education process http://www.everydropmatters.ru/index.php?mod=news&act=show&id=65</p> <p>30 May 2013 Khanty-Mansiysk, Russia The Baikal Box toolkit presentation at the International Conference in Khanty-Mansiysk http://everydropmatters.ru/index.php?mod=news&act=show&id=66</p> <p>03 June 2013 Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia World Environmental Day in Mongolia http://www.infomongolia.com/ct/ci/6085 http://www.grida.no/polar/news/5607.aspx</p> <p>04 June 2013 Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia The National Workshop "Selenge – A River without Borders" http://www.mongoliawaterforum.com/8/post/2013/12/completed-study-onwater-quality-of-the-kharaa-riverbasin-mongolia.html</p> <p>06 June 2013 Irkutsk, Russia The International Conference "Rivers of Siberia and Far East" http://www.istu.edu/news/14575/ http://www.discoverbaikal.ru/node/1352 http://ecodelo.org/rossiyskaya_federaciya/sibirskiy_fo/irkutskaya_oblast/22255-viii_mezhdunarodnaya_konferenciya_reki</p>
----------	---

17 June 2013 Moscow, Russia Duma hearings on "Transboundary Water Issues" <http://www.gazeta-n1.ru/blogs/badmaev/23108/>
<http://ria.ru/announce/20130611/942779485.html>

15 July 2013 Cape Nameless, Russia The Baikal shoreline volunteer camp
 11 July 2013 Ulan-Ude, Russia The International forum «Eco-tourism on Lake Baikal +20» <http://np-mag.ru/news/2013/07/09/eco-tourism-baikal-20/>
<http://sol-bur.ru/n82118-mezhdunarodnyj-ekologo-turisticheskij.html>

12 July 2013 Ulan-Ude, Russia The Third Workshop of the UNESCO Groundwater project activities
 13 July 2013 Turka, Russia The Round Table «Eco-tourism on Lake Baikal +20»
<http://www.visitburyatia.ru/news/section-105/item-105419/>

30 July 2013 Istomino, Russia The training workshop for stakeholders "Awareness rising and management improvement in the field of environmental problems of Lake Baikal Basin and the role of green economy in their solving" http://www.sbras.nsc.ru/HBC/images/2013/n30-31/Nvs_30_05_Black.pdf

01 August 2013 Irkutsk, Russia A workshop of the working group for preparation of Russian-Mongolian plenipotentiaries meeting
 04 August 2013 Mongolia Making the documentary "Baikal without Boundaries" in Russia
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxtzDHy6Fb8>

04 August 2013 Baikal region, Russia Making the documentary "Baikal without Boundaries" in Russia
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxtzDHy6Fb8>

05 August 2013 Ulan-Ude, Russia The shoreline clean-up campaign "Clean River Selenga"
<http://www.baikal-media.ru/news/society/247749/>
http://ecodelo.org/rossiyskaya_federaciya/sibirskiy_fo/respublika_buryatiya/23102-otchyot_so_vserossiyskoy_uborki_na

07 August 2013 Ulan-Ude, Russia The International Conference "Baikal strategic resource of the planet" <http://vtinform.ru/vti/144/65276.php>
<http://baikal24.ru/text/03-07-2013/ulan-ude/>
http://www.minpriroda-rb.ru/index.php?ELEMENT_ID=42520

20 August 2013 Ulan-Ude, Russia Environment and Sustainable Development in Mongolian Plateau and Surrounding Regions <https://sites.google.com/site/monplateau2013/>
<http://www.sbras.nsc.ru/events/detail.php?ID=5432>

20 August 2013 Dushanbe, Tajikistan High-Level International Conference on Water Cooperation
<http://www.hlicwc.org/>
http://www.unwater.org/events_dushanbe2013.html

22 August 2013 Ulan-Ude, Russia The Second "Baikal dialogue" Forum <http://council.gov.ru/press-center/news/34426/>
<http://www.deloros.ru/main.php?mid=8&doc=26655>

03 September 2013 Istomino, Russia Pilot sport fishing program <http://ecoleague.ru/news/text-634/>
<http://binm.ru/>

03 September 2013 Ulan-Ude, Russia Award for the Outstanding Professional in the Tourism Industry
<http://www.visitburyatia.ru/news/section-105/item-181307/>

15 September 2013 Olkhon, Russia The campaign "Clean Olkhon Island"
<http://afisha.gorodirkutsk.ru/event/sohranim-bajkal-volonterskaya-akciya-na-olhone/>
<http://asibur.ru/?p=1865>
<http://www.kuluars.info/novosti/2549-aktsiya-na-ostrove-olkhon-chistyj-ostrov-olkhon>

01 October 2013 Ulan-Ude, Russia
 A training for raising awareness and improvement in management of stakeholders in Persistent Toxic Substances (PTS) and Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Russia
 04 October 2013 Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia A training for raising awareness and improvement in management of stakeholders in Persistent Toxic Substances (PTS) and Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Mongolia
 04 October 2013 Khatgal, Mongolia Khobsogul clean-up campaign
 09 October 2013 Debrecen, Hungary EUROPARC Annual Conference 2013
<http://www.europarc2013.eu/>
<https://www.elance.com/samples/website-europark-conference-codeigniter-php5-xhtml-css-mootools-web-design/74016039/>

20 October 2013	Bangkok, Thailand	The GEF IW:Learn Web Award competition http://iwlearn.net/websitetoolkit/wow/iw-wow-2013
28 October 2013	Moscow, Russia	3rd meeting of The Joint Russian-Mongolian commission of environment preservation. http://www.mnr.gov.ru/news/detail.php?ID=131592
26-31 October 2013	Bridgetown, Barbados	7th GEF Biennial international waters Conference in Bridgetown (Barbados) with presentation of Project activity results http://iwlearn.net/abt_iwlearn/events/conferences/iwc http://www.geftwap.org/twap-project/news-events/news/7th-gef-biennial-international-waters-conference-iwc7-28-31-october-bridgetown-barbados http://www.thegef.org/gef/node/10057
18-20 November 2013	Almaty, Kazakhstan	Sub-regional workshop: "Strengthening Regional Cooperation in Water Management in North and Central Asia" http://www.e-cis.info/news.php?id=7306 http://www.wecoop-project.org/ru/news http://news.headline.kz/chto_v_strane/v_almaty_na_zasedanie_spetsprogrammy_oon_sobralis_predstaviteli_stran_tsa.html
2- 4 December 2013	Moscow, Russia	IV All-Russian congress of environmental protection of Natural Resources Ministry of Russia. http://www.mnr.gov.ru/activities/list.php?part=1475 http://www.ngv.ru/ic/4-y-vserossiyskiy-sezd-po-okhrane-okruzhayushchey-sredy/
06 December 2013	Ulan-Ude, Russia	The partner of tourism year. (Organising committee meeting on republican year of tourism, 2013) http://baikaltravel.ru/agency-for-tourism/news/detail.php?ID=839 http://ulanmedia.ru/news/byuriatia/09.12.2013/321212/itogi-goda-turizma-podveli-v-buryatii.html

M. Annex 1 - Ratings Definitions

Implementation Progress Ratings Definitions

Highly Satisfactory (HS): Implementation of all components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised implementation plan for the project. The project can be presented as 'good practice'.

Satisfactory (S): Implementation of most components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan except for only few that are subject to remedial action.

Moderately Satisfactory (MS): Implementation of some components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan with some components requiring remedial action.

Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): Implementation of some components is not in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan with most components requiring remedial action.

Unsatisfactory (U): Implementation of most components is not in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan.

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): Implementation of none of the components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan.

Development Objective Progress Ratings Definitions

Highly Satisfactory (HS): Project is expected to achieve or exceed all its major global environmental objectives, and yield substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings. The project can be presented as 'good practice'.

Satisfactory (S): Project is expected to achieve most of its major global environmental objectives, and yield satisfactory global environmental benefits, with only minor shortcomings.

Moderately Satisfactory (MS): Project is expected to achieve most of its major relevant objectives but with either significant shortcomings or modest overall relevance. Project is expected not to achieve some of its major global environmental objectives or yield some of the expected global environment benefits.

Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): Project is expected to achieve of its major global environmental objectives with major shortcomings or is expected to achieve only some of its major global environmental objectives.

Unsatisfactory (U): Project is expected not to achieve most of its major global environment objectives or to yield any satisfactory global environmental benefits.

Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): The project has failed to achieve, and is not expected to achieve, any of its major global environment objectives with no worthwhile benefits.