

Joint Review of GRID-Arendal's cooperation with Norad

SCANTEAM

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Abbreviations

ABNJ	Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction
AGD	Agricultural Department (Australia)
ARCOS	Albertine Rift Conservation Society
CCC	Copenhagen Climate Centre
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
CI	Conservation International
COP	Conference of the Parties
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease of 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DTU-ENV	Denmark Technical University – Department of Environment
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ESA	European Space Agency
EUR	Euro
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of United Nations
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEOMAR	Helmholz Centre for Ocean Research
GiSAT	Geo Imaging Satellite
GIZ	German Corporation for International Cooperation
GM	General Manager
GRASP	Great Apes Survival Partnership
GRID	Global Resource Information Database
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
ICPDR	International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River
IFOAM	International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements
IHP	Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme
IKI	International Climate Initiative (Germany)
IMR	Institute of Marine Research
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
ISWA	International Solid Waste Association
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IW	International Waters (GEF focal area)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoCE	Ministry of Climate and Environment
MTR	Mid-term Review
MTS	Mid-Term Strategy (UNEP)
NBFN	Norwegian Blue Forest Network
NDF	Nordic Development Fund

NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIVA	Norwegian Institute of Water Research
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOK	Norwegian Kroner
Norad	Norwegian Agency for International Development
NRC	Norwegian Research Council
NTNU	Norwegian University of Science and Technology
NVE	Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
PIF	Project Identification Form (of the GEF)
PIR	Project Implementation Report
POW	Programme of Work (UNEP)
PWC	Price Waterhouse Coopers
RAMPAO	Réseau régional d'Aires Marines Protégées en Afrique de l'Ouest
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organizations
ROLAC	Regional Office for Latin America & Caribbean (of UNEP)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
STAP	Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (of the GEF)
TEEB	The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity
TMT	<i>Trygg Mat Tracking</i> (Safe Food Tracking)
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
ToC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNU-INWEH	United Nations University - Institute for Water, Environment and Health
USA	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

1 Executive Summary

GRID-Arendal is a non-profit environmental communications centre based in Norway, which transforms environmental data into innovative, science-based information products and provide capacity-building to enable improved environmental governance. Its strength is to bridge science and action. Grid-Arendal's vision is a society that understands, values, and protects the environment on which it depends.

GRID-Arendal was established in 1989 by the Norwegian Ministry of the Environment (now Ministry of Climate and Environment, MoCE) to support environmentally sustainable development by collaborating with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other partners. GRID-Arendal is part of UNEP's Global Resource Information Database (GRID) Centres Network, which is a network of environmental data and information centres. GRID-Arendal is participating in multiple UNEP activities, however it is worth highlighting its leading role in UNEP's work on assessing and advocating for nature-based solutions to climate change. It also plays a key role in producing UNEP flagship publications such as "Global Environment Outlook" and "Rapid Response Assessments".

The present report presents an assessment carried out by Scanteam AS of GRID-Arendal's programme with Norad support, as outlined in the Grant Agreement QZA-21/0199. It mentions strengths and weaknesses of the programme, and needs for adjusting certain aspects, possibilities for strengthening the modalities for programming, as well as results reporting. It is expected that GRID-Arendal and Norad will jointly act on the findings of the review report.

The review found that GRID-Arendal is playing an important and effective role, to the satisfaction both of partners and donors. Even though there are several areas that could be improved, all stakeholder interviewed mentioned that GRID-Arendal is a professional organization with a highly dedicated staff. There are few or no other organizations in the specific niche role that GRID-Arendal is playing. It is therefore important in the implementation of Norwegian environmental policy and as support for UNEP. Especially appreciated is the ability of translating complex issues into a more easily understandable language and form, along with the flexibility to take on new important tasks on relatively short notice. GRID-Arendal's projects work is divided into four programme areas: Polar climate and mountain regions, Environmental crime and transboundary governance, Marine Environment, and Waste and marine litter.

Most of GRID-Arendal's projects are implemented with partner agencies, often led by UNEP, and co-financed from Norad and/or MoCE. The Norwegian financing through GRID-Arendal would most often cover staff time, while the rest of the agencies would cover investments and other project costs. The review found it surprising that MoCE, Norad and UNEP so far have no formal coordination in the monitoring and follow-up on the projects. The funding agencies are also not represented at GRID-Arendal's Board, but are invited as observers.

GRID-Arendal's project management is an area of potential improvement. The organization has a good financial project management system, but it has been less focused on the design and implementation process, and the theory of change towards the project outcomes and impact. The use of Results Framework as a planning and monitoring instrument varies a lot, based on the donor requirements and partner agencies. One challenge in this regard is that Norad and UNEP use the concepts differently.

GRID-Arendal's long-term projects with UNEP are "opportunity based" according to proposals from partners and UNEP task managers, while at the same time the short-term projects and ad-hoc tasks are carried out "on demand". This creates a difficult and confusing picture for GRID-Arendal's staff, where many understand the organization mainly as a service centre for UNEP. On the other hand, the different UNEP task managers have little knowledge of what the others do with GRID-Arendal, and no internal coordination between them.

GRID-Arendal could continue with same institutional set-up if it is to the satisfaction of all parties, or it could make institutional changes, where there are many options. Some alternatives include a stronger Norwegian and arctic focus (growth not covered by Norad funds), or to finance GRID-Arendal through

an increase of Norway's support to UNEP if GRID-Arendal became a part of the UN system. A final alternative is to move GRID-Arendal closer to UNEP through a model similar to the Copenhagen Climate Centre.

Recommendations

Introduce a portfolio approach for all long-term projects under the Norad-funded program: GRID-Arendal should agree with Norad on the projects to be included in the program for each of the program areas, to be adjusted annually. The portfolio management should include co-financing of projects implemented with UNEP. To avoid losing GRID-Arendal's flexibility, a certain % of the budget should be non-allocated funds to provide for new projects and activities.

Organize yearly donor forums: It is recommended to have a yearly donor forum for GRID-Arendal, with the participation of Norad, UNEP and MoCE, to review annual reports, a sample of evaluations, and discuss plans and budgets. The parties should in the future consider to also invite other major donors.

Main funding organizations should be represented on the Board: With MoCE, Norad and UNEP on the Board, it is expected to create more engagement from these organizations about GRID-Arendal's work, as well as synergies and improved collaboration.

Increased funding should consider the implementation capacity: If Norad or UNEP expect more project work and services from GRID-Arendal it could be a risk for the organization. The funding agencies have a responsibility to assure that they don't overload GRID-Arendal with tasks, and especially ad-hoc requests, but ensure the quality of institutional growth.

Establish GRID-Arendal staff in main regions: GRID-Arendal wants to limit international travel to reduce its carbon footprint, but that means higher project risk. It is therefore recommended to establish staff members as advisors in the main project regions, who should institutionally respond to the Headquarters.

Make a clear distinction between project risks and safeguards: GRID-Arendal and Norad should make a clear distinction between project risk and safeguards in the Grant Agreement and design of new projects, in line with definitions used by other international donors such as UNEP.

Streamline the collaboration with UNEP: GRID-Arendal and UNEP should dialogue on how to streamline their collaboration, including (i) a long-term program partly mirroring the funding from Norway, and reducing ad-hoc requests with short deadlines. It is also recommended that UNEP should carry out a training course for GRID-Arendal staff on project design, monitoring and evaluation.

Include GRID-Arendal in the Knowledge Bank: GRID-Arendal's unique niche in international development makes it an excellent candidate for being included as a partner for one or more of Norad's "Knowledge Bank" focus areas.

Review alternatives for legal status of GRID-Arendal: It is recommended to carry out a study on alternative institutional options for the future of GRID-Arendal, including the current set-up as a Norwegian foundation that is supporting UNEP.

2 Introduction and Methodology

2.1 GRID-Arendal

Stiftelsen GRID-Arendal (in the following GRID-Arendal) is a non-profit environmental communications centre based in Norway, which transforms environmental data into innovative, science-based information products and provide capacity-building to enable improved environmental governance. Its strength is to bridge science and action. Grid-Arendal's vision is a society that understands, values, and protects the environment on which it depends. Even though GRID-Arendal is often understood as an international organization, or even thought to be part of UNEP, it is formally a Norwegian foundation, established and operating under the Norwegian laws.

2.2 GRID-Arendal's Norad funded programme

Since 2017-2018 GRID-Arendal has a Work Plan with Norad. This has focused on issues that have priority in the framework of Norwegian development policies, including support to UNEP. Norad has recently got an increased project portfolio transferred from MFA, corresponding with a budget increase from 4 to 20 billion NOK. This has however not been followed-up with an increase in positions for implementation, which might give as a result the need for more external support and service from organisations such as GRID-Arendal. It is also a need to rationalize the working relations between Norad and GRID-Arendal.

On Sept 13th 2021 GRID-Arendal applied to Norad for financial support to the programme titled Support to GRID-Arendal Programme of Work (the Programme). The programme had already been discussed between the parties and the budget was considered valid since April 2021 even though it was approved so late as December 2021.

Norad's financial support to GRID-Arendal is covering four thematic programmes:

Polar climate and mountain regions. Expected impact: Healthier environments and communities in remote and high mountain regions.

Environmental crime and transboundary governance. Expected impact: Transboundary cooperation to address environmental issues, including environmental crime, strengthened.

Marine Environment. Expected impact: Healthier marine environment in developing countries.

Waste and marine litter. Expected impact: The extent of plastics and solid waste in wastewater and excess of nutrients entering the marine environment reduced.

3 Review methodology

3.1 The task

The general purpose of the review was to assess the programme as outlined in the Grant Agreement QZA-21/0199; any needs for adjusting the programme, and possibilities for strengthening the modalities for programming, as well as results reporting. It is referred to as a 'joint review' because GRID-Arendal and Norad will jointly act on the findings of the review report. The work of the consultant team is however considered a standard external review.

The task consisted of:

- Assessment of the overall grant agreement between GRID-Arendal and Norad
- Review of a sample of individual projects and activities that have been or are currently being supported under the agreement
- On this basis extract findings, conclusions and lessons learned
- Finally, present clear recommendations to GRID-Arendal and Norad on how to improve effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the "project portfolio" under the grant agreement. These recommendations should include the programming, project design, planning, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation.

The main target groups for the review are GRID-Arendal (Board and staff) and Norad. It is expected that the findings will also be useful for MoCE, MFA, UNEP and GEF, and potentially also for GIZ and other GRID-Arendal partners on national and international level.

3.2 Approach

The team used a mixed methods approach for the review, where the various parts of the work fed into each other and triangulated the information, to be able to present reliable findings and conclusions. The review paid special attention to the progress and compliance with the objectives and goals in the Grant Agreement QZA-21/0199, and the influence and integration of the experiences and lessons learned. It is expected that many lessons would be useful for GRID-Arendal, Norad, UNEP and other partners.

During the review process, the team:

Built on solid foundations: The methodology was discussed and agreed with GRID-Arendal and Norad.

Found out what works: Registered results were consulted with GRID-Arendal, Norad and partners, to find lessons learned on "good and deficient practices", and why something works or does not work. On this basis challenges were defined, and how to confront them.

Applied a partnership approach: The review was participatory, applying a partnership approach in the relation with GRID-Arendal and Norad, considering that the main goal was to prepare a report that is useful both for GRID-Arendal and Norad. The review team therefore maintained conversations and discussions with these two main partners during the whole process, and not only with reference to the draft report.

Ensured no surprises: Based on the evaluation findings, the review team provided two types of recommendations: (i) How to improve performance on aspects under GRID-Arendal's control; and (ii) How to prepare for changes that are outside the organization's direct control, through a risk review and framework with mitigation measures.

3.3 Criteria

The criteria for the review were presented in a matrix (Annex C) with the review issues mentioned in the TOR, as well as review questions and sources of information. More specific sub-questions were used during the interviews, adapted to the stakeholder groups and each specific stakeholder, with the purpose of achieving as complete information as possible.

Even though it was not a project evaluation, it had the characteristics of a programme evaluation with child projects. A small sample of these projects/activities to review were selected together with GRID-Arendal and Norad. For the mentioned projects and the overall programme (Grant Agreement), the review team applied the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria plus a review of GRID-Arendal's value added:

Relevance: *Are the programme/projects doing the right things?* The team reviewed if the design (objectives, geographic areas, activities) have been relevant and adequate, considering the regional, national and local contexts, including socioeconomic and environmental factors, institutional setup, the situation of local stakeholders, etc., and compared it with the priorities defined in GRID-Arendal's strategy and work plan, its relation with UNEP's strategy and work plan, Norad's Strategy Towards 2030, and the collaboration with MoCE, MFA and other partners.

Coherence: *How well do the programme/projects project fit the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UN Conventions and Norwegian development policy?*

Efficiency: *How well are the grant resources being used, and how far have they been converted efficiently into expected outputs and outcomes?* The team analysed the results in relation to funds, time, human resources, and geographic distribution. The review also included adequacy of budget, reasons for delays and potential underspending, as well as efficiency of coordination with donors and partners.

Effectiveness: *Meeting of programme/project objectives and targets.* The review team assessed compliance with the goals and targets, and progress in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness, compared with the baselines and targets in the results frameworks. Other important aspects considered were the success or failures of the achievements (best and worst practices), and trends in improved effectiveness, e.g., through support/supervision of partners.

Impact: *What difference does the project make?* The team reviewed the Project's effect based on the institutional capacity of GRID-Arendal and its partners/beneficiaries, and the use of knowledge, products and expertise, as well as potentially unexpected impacts.

Sustainability: *Will the benefits last?* The review team considered the social, environmental, institutional and financial dimensions of sustainability.

GRID-Arendal's value added in the context of UNEP's and Norway's policies and strategies.

3.4 Review activities

The review combined **3 main sources** of information: (i) Formal evaluation evidence, from GRID-Arendal's M&E system, website and documents; (ii) Online survey; and (iii) Interviews (board members, managers, staff, partners). On this basis, the team used its professional judgement to formulate findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Review of background information: The first step was to review relevant documentation. A literature review was carried out to understand (i) the institutional framework and its practical application for implementation of the grant agreement; (ii) GRID-Arendal's theory of change and how it is applied for the Norad grant agreement; (iii) the conceptual models for channelling funds; and (iv) how this works in practice in the different thematic and geographic priority areas.

An online survey was designed and applied using the tool SurveyMonkey, with the purpose to cover a large number of people and thereby obtain statistically more relevant findings than from the interviews. The survey was however responded by only 14 persons despite having sent out a reminder. It consisted of 8 women and 6 men, where 7 came from the public sector and 7 from the private sector/other. Despite the low response rate, some of the results served as triangulation for the replies from the interviews.

Interviews were able to go deeper into the issues than the survey. They were carried out mostly online or through phone, combined with face-to-face interviews during a visit to Arendal. The interviews with key informants used semi-structured questionnaires, with the flexibility to dig deeper into interesting topics that came up during the conversations. Information obtained in personal interviews were maintained confidential except for a few direct references cited in the report with permission. Interviews

with focus groups were organized during the visit to Arendal and with partner organizations when many people from the same organization had interacted with GRID-Arendal.

The main stakeholders interviewed were:

- GRID-Arendal: Management, technical and administrative staff, Board members
- Norad: Staff in charge of relation with GRID-Arendal, complemented by interviews with other Norad staff in charge of relations with UNEP and GEF
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)
- Ministry of Climate and Environment (MoCE)
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- The Norwegian Embassy in Nepal
- Institutions in Nepal and West Africa that are collaborating with GRID-Arendal

No persons in the GEF Secretariat (GEFSEC) were interviewed because GRID-Arendal did not provide anybody they have had contact with there. That is logical, since UNEP is a GEF implementing agency (see 4.3.3) and would have all the direct contacts with GEFSEC in the projects that GRID-Arendal is involved in. The evaluation team did also have no interviews with GIZ since the person GRID-Arendal had contact with is on paternity leave.

The complete list of people interviewed is found in Annex D.

Visit to Arendal: A visit to GRID-Arendal was carried out during one full day the 3rd of May, to triangulate information already achieved, obtain additional information and consult preliminary findings. Meetings were held with GRID-Arendal management, technical staff and administrative staff.

Triangulation of information was ensured through repetition of the same question to different persons and comparison of the answers with documents and other sources. In case of contradictory information from different sources, the original written source was checked, or information obtained was controlled with an “expert” or key person expected to have the most reliable and updated information.

Processing of information was done in two ways: (i) The survey tool prepared statistics and graphs that present the opinion of the stakeholders surveyed; and (ii) results of the direct interviews were included in formats with answers to each review question, to compare answers and extract findings.

Gender mainstreaming was ensured throughout the review process, as much as possible trying to achieve gender balance among the persons surveyed and interviewed. Gender issues were also included in the survey and interviews, and studied in the documents provided.

Preparation of report: Based on the mentioned information, the issues contained in the Review Matrix (Annex C) were systematically addressed before drafting the present report.

4 Findings

4.1 Overview of GRID-Arendal

4.1.1 Mission, Vision and Core competences

As mentioned in the introduction, GRID-Arendal is a non-profit environmental foundation and communications centre. It is most known for transforming science-based data into a language and type of information that can be understood by political decision-makers and others without an environmental research background, thereby bridging science and action. Grid-Arendal's *mission* is to support sustainable development through the environmental work of the UN and other partners by communicating information that strengthens the environmental management capacity and motivates decision-makers to act. Its *vision* is a society that understands, values, and protects the environment on which it depends.

GRID-Arendal was established in 1989 by the Norwegian Ministry of the Environment to support environmentally sustainable development by collaborating with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other partners. GRID-Arendal is part of UNEP's Global Resource Information Database (GRID), which is a network of environmental data and information centres. GRID-Arendal is participating in multiple UNEP activities, however it is worth highlighting its leading role in UNEP's work on assessing and advocating for nature-based solutions to climate change. It also plays a key role in producing UNEP flagship publications such as "Global Environment Outlook" and "Rapid Response Assessments".

GRID-Arendal's work with UN agencies, governments, and other strategic partners is with the purpose of creating positive environmental outcomes and impact, particularly in developing countries. A major focus is on supporting the fulfilment of the SDGs, the Paris climate agreement, and other regional and international commitments.

Box 4.1 GRID-Arendal's Mission, Vision and Values

Mission: To support environmentally sustainable development through the environmental work of the UN and other partners by communicating information that strengthens environmental management capacity and motivates decision-makers to act.

Vision: A society that understands, values and protects the environment on which it depends.

Values: Embraces the core values of the UN: Integrity, professionalism and respect for diversity.

The Ministry of Climate and Environment (MoCE) provides GRID-Arendal limited core funding and appoints the members of its board of directors. GRID-Arendal also receives support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and Norad. The current Norad multi-year grant agreement covers the period April 1st 2021 – December 31st 2024, where the work plan is approved by Norad. GRID-Arendal's direct collaboration with Norad and MoCE has for instance been on supporting an amendment to the Basel Convention, and collaborating with the Secretariat of the Convention to address the challenge of plastic waste. Another important collaboration with the Norwegian Government is on "Blue Forests", which is co-funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF)¹. The Norwegian Blue Forest Network (NBFN) is

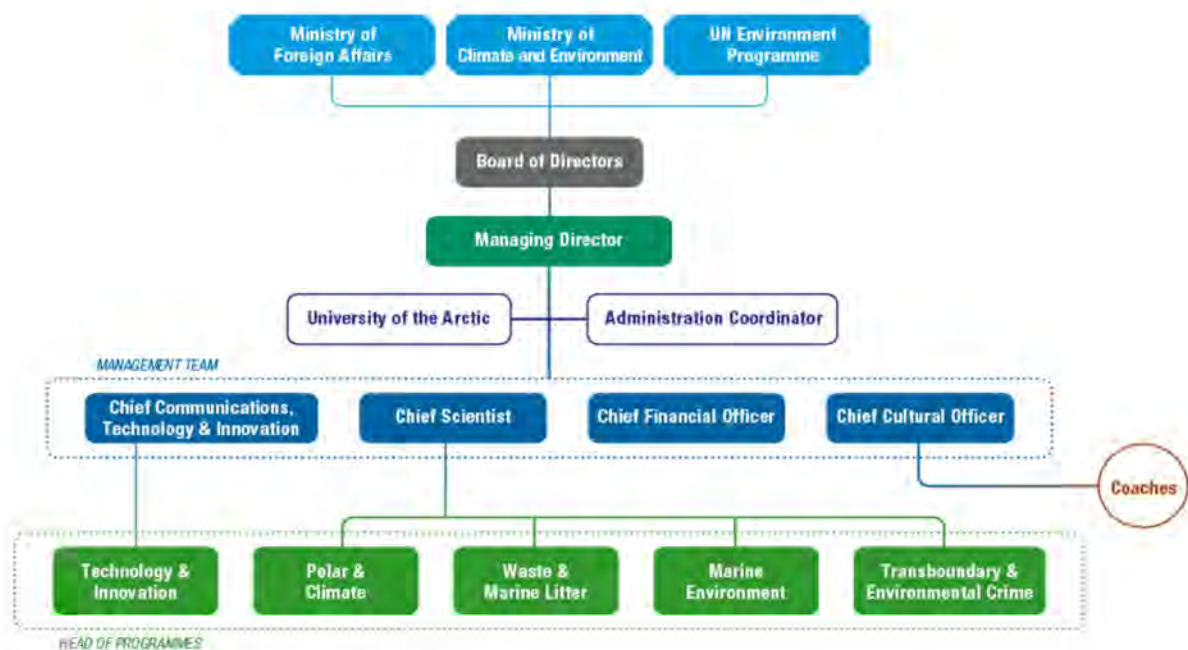
established together with the Norwegian Institute of Water Research (NIVA) and the Institute of Marine Research (IMR).

¹ The UNEP-GEF project "Standardized Methodologies for Carbon Accounting and Ecosystems Services Valuation of Blue Forests" (GEF ID 4452) was approved in 2014 with USD 4.5 million GEF funding and USD 23.3 million co-financing, including USD 440,000 cash and USD 440,000 in-kind co-financing from GRID-Arendal.

The core competence of GRID-Arendal is according to the persons interviewed the *ability to understand and extract complex scientific information and convert it to a language and format that can be understood by decision-makers and the general public*. This is reflected in GRID-Arendal's expertise in its four thematic areas, as well as "nature-based solutions" for climate change adaptation and in conservation of fauna in mountain regions of Central Africa and the Himalayas.

Even though GRID-Arendal is working on a limited number of thematic areas, reflected in its four work programmes, the broad dimensions of the issues and the limited number of staff members does not allow GRID-Arendal staff the opportunity to do research on very specific issues. The staff members are rather technical experts able to understand inter-disciplinary issues and discuss with researches from many different fields. GRID-Arendal is in the process of expanding the number of staff members. It is presently at 50 and could according to the Director comfortably increase to 60+ within the next 2 years without any need for additional office space or admin overhead.

Fig. 1. GRID-Arendal's organogram (source: GRID-Arendal)



4.1.2 GRID-Arendal's current programs

Under GRID-Arendal's four ongoing programmes Polar Climate & Mountain Regions, Environmental Crime & Transboundary Governance, Marine Environment, and Waste and Marine Litter there are a lot of projects and activities. Since 2019 a total of 31 projects have been active under the Norad framework agreement (some of them now closed) and an additional 35 projects have been implemented that were not part of this agreement (see Annex E). It should be noted that Norwegian funding is also part of many of these 35 projects, as co-funding provided from GRID-Arendal with origin in the core-funding from MoCE or Norad, often as a 50/50 agreement where GRID-Arendal provides the staff and the other organization (mostly UNEP) is financing the rest. Some UNEP projects and tasks are carried out without any co-financing from GRID-Arendal, where GRID-Arendal is a service provider to UNEP. There are also examples when UNEP requests co-financing of global advocacy projects that are not clearly related to the existing Norad workplan – e.g. Playing for the Planet².

The programme funding from MoCE is divided into three work areas related to waste and marine litter:

- Development of activities to combat marine litter in the Arctic

² <https://playing4theplanet.org/>

- The global processes under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Assembly; and
- Support to the negotiations under the Basel Convention

Each area has an allocation of 1.5 million NOK, with the remainder for communication across the same areas. This funding has been renewed annually by MoCE for the last years. The 4.5 million NOK core funding supports GRID-Arendal's role as the UNEP Key Polar Centre, activities that are not covered in the Norad work plan (particularly in the Arctic), and some core communications work.

The content of the Norad funded grant agreement is presented in table 4.1, with the following goals:

Intended Impact: Environmentally Sustainable Development enhanced.

Expected effects for the target group: Strengthened capacity and motivation of decision-makers to enhance Environmentally Sustainable Development.

The grant agreement further specifies expected impacts and outcomes for what is considered components (corresponding with GRID-Arendal's programmes, presented in table 1.1. The main products/services (outputs) are further specified in annual workplans agreed between Norad and GRID-Arendal.

Table 4.1 GRID-Arendal programmes supported by Norad (Grant agreement components).

Programme	Expected impact	Expected outcomes
Polar Climate & Mountain Regions	Healthier environments and communities in remote and high mountain regions	1. Climate Change adaptation and nature-based solutions are adopted in supported mountain regions
		2. Targeted Governments make informed and climate smart policy decisions about the environment based on the best available scientific, socioeconomic, and environmental information
		3. Selected mountain regions and remote areas develop and apply good pollution and management practices
Environmental Crime & Transboundary Governance	Transboundary cooperation to address environmental issues including environmental crime strengthened	1. Transboundary cooperation to address environmental issues including environmental crime strengthened
		2. Selected developing countries have improved capacity to combat environmental crime
		3. Capacity built for sustainable resource use and sustainable production and consumption in selected areas
Marine Environment	Healthier marine environment in developing countries	1. Selected coastal developing states practice ecosystem-based integrated ocean management within a strong regional policy framework
		2. Nature-based solutions in marine and coastal environments are incorporated into national actions and policy in targeted countries
		3. Selected national governments adopt a sustainable blue economy approach
Waste and Marine Litter	The extent of plastics and solid waste in wastewater and excess of nutrients entering the marine environment reduced	1. Global Commitments and prioritized national and regional instruments to prevent marine litter strengthened
		2. Waste management in selected countries improved

4.1.3 Sources and flow of funds

The total Norad financing for the programme period is 109.7 million NOK, or approx. USD 12.5 million according to the exchange rate April 2022. Additional financing from the Norwegian Government is 2.6 million NOK from the Ministry of Climate and Environment (MoCE) in 2021 and 5.1 million NOK in 2022. This is approved by the State budget and could therefore vary from one year to another. The programme funding from MoCE is divided into three work areas related to waste and marine litter:

- The development of activities to combat marine litter in the Arctic
- The global processes under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Assembly

- Support to negotiations under the Basel Convention

Each area has an allocation of 1.5 million, with the remainder for communications across these areas. This funding has been renewed annually by MoCE for the last few years.

The NOK 4.5 million core funding supports GRID-Arendal's role as the UNEP Key Polar Centre, activities that are not covered in the Norad work plan (particularly in the Arctic), and some of GRID-Arendal's core communications work.

UNEP is providing funds partially as co-funding and partially as payment for services, with a total of 15.7 million NOK in 2021 and 13.5 million NOK budgeted for 2022. Generally, GRID-Arendal expect the amounts to be relatively consistent for 2023 and 2024, while funding from other sources might increase in the coming years, depending on proposals that are in the pipeline.

In the following table, the Norad budget for 2021 covers the period from April 2021 and the yearly budgets for 2022-2024 are indicative only, to be confirmed according to the annual work plans. The sources "other" include funding from 20 different sources, where the largest amounts are from Horizon 2020, the German International Climate Initiative (IKI), the MAVA foundation, Norwegian Research Council, Oceans 5, Nordic Development Fund (NDF), German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Table 4.2 GRID-Arendal budget for 2021-2024

Programme	Yearly budget (million NOK) ¹										
	2021				2022					2023	2024
Funding source:	Norad	MoCE	UNEP	Other	Norad	MoCE project	MoCE core	UNEP	Other	Norad	Norad
General programme											
Polar Climate & Mountain Regions	3.2	1.8	2.0	11.3	1.5	1.7	3.0	4.0	10.4	5.0	5.0
Transboundary Governance and Environmental Crime	2.7	0.2	3.4	7.6	6.6			3.5	5.9	5.5	5.5
Marine Environment	4.1	0	5.2	15.0	5.8			3.0	9.1	5.5	5.5
Total General Programme	10.0	2.0	10.6	33.9	13.9					16.0	16.0
Waste & Marine Litter	7.0	0.6	5.1	6.6	10.0	3.7		0.9	0.2	10.0	10.0
Communication					2.3		2.1	0.3			
Technology and innovation								1.8	1.0		
Prospects									12.0		
Transfer from former year					1.2		0.6				
Total Grant	17.0	2.6	15.7	40.5	27.4	5.4	5.7	13.5	38.6	26.0	26.0

¹Other funding for 2022 to be determined, and funding for 2023 and 2024 except for Norad is not yet available.

Several agencies fall into the 'Other' category in the budget table and they are also included in 'Prospects', which include agencies where GRID-Arendal has submitted a proposal and are awaiting the evaluation by the donor. In 2022 GRID-Arendal has active projects with these agencies, and additional proposals at various stages of the process to achieve financing. For example, GRID-Arendal is part of a consortium of several partners led by UNEP that just was notified about being awarded financing from IKI for a project on climate change and migratory species in central Asia (total budget EUR 6 million). GRID-Arendal has also a proposal to GIZ for work on Blue Economy in Tanzania, and is discussing project opportunities with Oceans 5 which may lead to a proposal later this year. GRID-Arendal is participating in several proposals to the Norwegian Research Council (NRC), acting as a subcontracting partner to other Norwegian research organizations. There are currently no planned projects with IUCN or NDF, but this may change during the year 2022 when the existing project collaboration with these are finalized. Note that the MAVA foundation is closing, so there will be no new proposals to them.

The 12 million NOK for prospects in 2022 is used as a budgeting tool to account for the potential new projects that are likely to start during a year. This includes a mixture of funding proposals that GRID-

Arendal has submitted or is part of a project submitted to external funding agencies, such as the GEF, German International Climate Initiative (IKI), Horizon Europe, and Green Climate Fund (GCF). The list is maintained in GRID-Arendal's project management system. For instance, a new IKI project was recently approved, called "Enhancing the conservation of flagship migratory mammal species of Central Asia through climate-informed management and decision-making" <https://www.international-climate-initiative.com/en/project/foerderung-der-erhaltung-der-wandernden-flaggschiff-saeugetierarten-in-zentralasien-durch-klimabewusstes-management-und-entscheidungsfindung-21-iv-090-nus-m-migratory-mammals/>. The project is led by UNEP with participation of regional and national agencies (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan), GRID-Arendal, WWF and Secretariat of the Convention of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) – Germany.

The predictability of the Norwegian funding sources is good, thanks to core funding from MoCE and the long-term Norad programme, which gives a high degree of financial sustainability. It is not so easy to predict the funds from UNEP, especially since UNEP is in a difficult financial situation. As long as UNEP is satisfied with the support from GRID-Arendal this will continue to be a funding source, but the problem is however not the total amount but what it should be used for, to ensure efficient resource planning.

GRID-Arendal is satisfied with the flexibility of the Norwegian funding sources that fit well with the detailed programming carried out. Some staff interviewed have a fear that a change to more detailed planning of the Norad programme could lead to less flexibility and therefore less efficient response to UNEP's needs. On the other hand, it is frequently mentioned that UNEP's demands for support and co-financing are often too short term, and give difficulties for GRID-Arendal's planning. The solution seems to be to strike a balance between the interests of these two main partners by bringing them together in joint planning of long-term activities.

One option for increased income to GRID-Arendal could have been to participate in Norwegian public biddings, since they are already doing it on international level in consortiums with UNEP and others. The problem is however that GRID-Arendal is already receiving core funding from MoCE and program funding from Norad, and it would be understood as unfair competition if it competes with the private sector for assignments funded by the same ministries.

4.1.4 Implementing partners

As mentioned, the Norwegian Government is the most important source of funding, MoCE as core funding and Norad as a relatively flexible program funding. Norad is currently preparing a new category of collaboration called "plus-partner", which could probably be an option for GRID-Arendal. GRID-Arendal is also carrying out a wide spectre of activities together with other implementing partners with many sources of funding, but most are for relatively small amounts. Since 2019 a total of 65 projects have been under implementation, and there could be up to hundred proposals running at the same time. The number of partners will vary according to the programmes and projects under implementation, with a tendency to increase because former project partners often would like to maintain contact, make informal consultations, and sometimes invite GRID-Arendal to participate in new opportunities. Fig. 2 shows the countries covered and list of the main partners.

During the stakeholder interviews, some Norad staff mentioned that they would prefer a more portfolio style management of the projects under the GRID-Arendal programme, while others consider that it is working well as it is (but would like more frequent dialogue). One challenge for GRID-Arendal is how to include prospects in the Norad work plan, when a proposal has been submitted for external funding, but the outcome is unknown. This should be discussed in the Donor Forum and/or with Norad case by case. The MoCE staff interviewed consider that the current use of core funding and relationship works well, with focus on the overall goals and impacts, not on outputs of individual projects. GRID-Arendal is also satisfied with the general dialogue with MoCE.

Regarding UNEP project programming there is a different situation. Even though GRID-Arendal's programming cycle as mentioned goes in parallel with UNEP's POW, there is no unified planning from UNEP's side. GRID-Arendal therefore have to deal with different UNEP task managers for e.g. projects, publications, and ad-hoc requests. The different UNEP staff members are very satisfied with GRID-Arendal's cooperation and ability to respond fast to new demand, but GRID-Arendal staff are a bit frustrated with ad-hoc requests that make them re-arrange their previous planning. UNEP task managers say that GRID-Arendal can say no to ad-hoc requests they haven't time to carry out, but it seems like GRID-Arendal is doing everything to respond to UNEP's needs because that is one of the main tasks for the organization. The following proposal is prepared by the review team, and should receive comments before finalizing the report.

Table 4.3. Proposed GRID-Arendal planning procedures for different tasks and partners

Partner	Type of activity				
	GRID-Arendal programs	Long-term projects	Medium-term projects	Ad-hoc activities	Services
Norad	Institutional agreement	Agreement portfolio, annual review	Discuss and include in portfolio if >1 year	To consult before each new case	Contract paid separately
MoCE	Core funding, consultations only	Program funding, yearly consultations	To consult before each new case	To consult before each new case	Contract paid separately
UNEP	Institutional agreement	Agreement portfolio, annual review	Discuss and include in portfolio if >1 year	To consult before each case	Contract paid separately
Others	According to requirements of each partner or funding agency				Contract paid separately

When reviewing the content of table 4.3 it should be remembered that most of Norad's funding and much of MoCE's funding goes into co-financing for UNEP. It is therefore remarkable that the three funding agencies don't have joint meetings to discuss the programs and projects, only indirect consultations mostly through GRID-Arendal and when they meet in other events.

UNEP is using the funding from Norway to achieve even more financing, e.g. as co-financing for GEF and IKI projects, where a high percentage of co-financing is required, and the cash co-financing is especially appreciated (certain level of in-kind co-financing is also accepted).

A general finding is the need for bringing the main funding agencies for GRID-Arendal together in yearly events, starting with Norad, MoCE and UNEP. In these donor forums GRID-Arendal could present the situation for the programs supported, and highlight progress, challenges and lessons from the last year, as well as the plans for the upcoming year.

Since it has been a challenge for GRID-Arendal to deal with different parts of UNEP separately, and this is probably also inefficient for UNEP, it would be important that the UNEP representative(s) to take part should represent all divisions of UNEP that have relation with GRID-Arendal.

It is expected that a donor forum would improve GRID-Arendal's planning, monitoring, reporting and evaluations. All main donors would get the same yearly report at the same time, which should incorporate specific reporting requirements that each donor might have. The reporting for each funded project should be according to its Results Framework, with same reporting to Norad and UNEP. If reporting requirements are not compatible, Norad should adapt to internationally accepted standards. The financial report and audit must also comply with the requirements of all donors, and should be able to track the financing of all items by source of funding. The donor forum could agree on joint evaluations for the most important projects (however, GEF projects have their own evaluation requirements). Other

important outcomes of the donor forum would be that the donors agree on the way forward to improve GRID-Arendal's work and collaboration, including resolving challenges where some of them might be due to insufficient donor coordination.

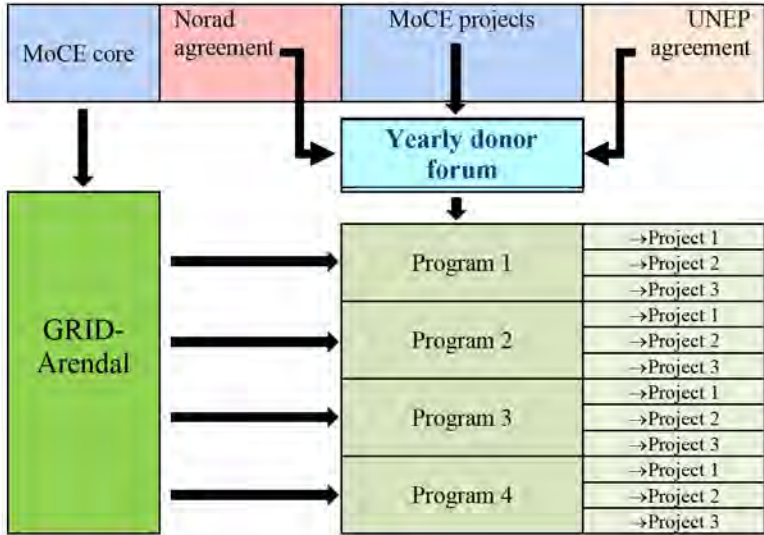
Even though it would not be time to go into details about all ongoing projects, the donor forums could also be used for considering coordination with other projects in the same countries, especially ongoing Norad and UNEP projects that are covering complementary topics.

The forums would end with an agreement on the yearly budget for support to GRID-Arendal (even though it would be formalized individually for each donor). This budget would however be quite general, because detailed project budgets must be prepared one by one during the project design process.

On Project level, it could improve project management if long-term Norad supported projects could be treated with a clearer portfolio approach. It should however be remembered that many of these projects have UNEP as the main implementing agency, and it would complicate rather than improve project management if Norad tries to intervene in management decisions of individual projects. A portfolio approach could also be tried with medium-term projects, understood as projects with a duration between one and two years. It has no meaning to include shorter-term projects if Norad is only reviewing the portfolio together with GRID-Arendal once a year.

Each project in the portfolio should have a good results framework with SMART³ indicators, a risk matrix and social-environmental safeguards, which are all important tools for monitoring and reporting on project implementation. When UNEP is the implementing agency, UNEP's definition of risk and safeguards should be used, see 4.7.2. Note that most UNEP projects would have these issues resolved during the design phase, but the review team has experienced (from other UNEP projects) that this is not always followed-up during implementation. To ensure that GRID-Arendal is able to maintain a high standard on all long-term projects, it is recommended that UNEP specialists on project design, monitoring and evaluation could carry out a training course for all relevant GRID-Arendal staff.

Fig. 3. Proposed model for joint donor planning of support to GRID-Arendal



4.1.7 Effectiveness and efficiency

Almost all the stakeholders interviewed gave very positive comments on GRID-Arendal's effectiveness, and the efficiency of its work. The people in Norad, MFA/Embassies, MoCE and UNEP that have had most relation with GRID-Arendal highlighted an excellent professional level of staff combined with flexibility to take on new tasks. The President of the GRID-Arendal Board commented that the organization is effective despite being involved in a high number of activities. MoCE staff that has

³ Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound.

followed GRID-Arendal during many years says that it has been incredible to see the positive development under the current GRID-Arendal management team. UNEP staff interviewed mention that the only times there have been challenges in the collaboration it has been due to UNEP itself. Norad is also very satisfied with the effectiveness and efficiency of the collaboration, but would have preferred an even closer collaboration.

Even though the online survey did not give a sufficient number of replies to draw statistically relevant conclusions, it gave some results that confirm what was mentioned during the interviews. On a scale from 1 to 5, GRID-Arendal's cooperation with Norad was rated on average 4.17 and the cooperation with UNEP 4.0 (for other agencies there were too few replies). The probably most interesting result of the survey was however the comparison between the efficiency of different aspects of GRID-Arendal's work, where Information and knowledge products were clearly highest rated. This is in line with the opinions about the quality of results in collaboration with UNEP, where also Information and knowledge products got the highest score (see 4.3.2).

Table 4.4 Weighted average of GRID-Arendal's efficiency according to the survey

Activity	Weighted average
Information and knowledge products	4.42
Resource management	4.00
Results reporting	3.92
Advisory services	3.90
Programming of activities	3.72
Project design	3.45
Monitoring & evaluation	3.27
Overall average	3.81

It would require a full institutional assessment to detect all areas where efficiency could be improved. One issue was however detected: All new contracts are passing the chain of Unit→Adm.→CFO→GM, where the General Manager could delegate to a lower level. The review team has also gone through the effectiveness and efficiency of GRID-Arendal's project activities according to a sample of evaluation reports, which in the following are mentioned in the order of implementation period.

The project **Enhancing Pacific Ocean Governance** was implemented 2014-2017 with funding from the Australian Government. The goal was to empower Pacific Island Countries to effectively manage their marine and coastal resources for sustainable economic development whilst supporting productive ecosystems and biodiversity. The evaluation in 2018 evidenced progress with maritime boundaries due to the provision of dedicated technical and legal support from GRID-Arendal and partners, to assist the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) with determination of boundaries and treaty negotiations. At the end of 2017 approx. 2/3 of the maritime boundaries in the Pacific had been negotiated. Officers used geospatial tools and data not accessed previously, with support from GRID-Arendal and partners, which gave high impact. The *high efficiency of project workshops* was due to interdisciplinary face-to-face interaction with participation of both legal and technical experts from each country, as well as access to equipment.

The **Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) Deep-Sea project** was implemented by FAO, UNEP, and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) 2014-19 with co-funding from GEF. GRID-Arendal's specific tasks were not mentioned in the 2020 evaluation report, however the report mentions that the project was of great assistance to newly formed and in some cases long-standing regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) on deep-sea fisheries issues, and the project showed positive results in safeguarding the vulnerable marine ecosystems. The project had only a *moderately satisfactory efficiency* due to challenges such as FAO's and UNEP-WCMC's internal financial and administrative issues, which however had nothing to do with GRID-Arendal.

The programme **International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:LEARN)** was implemented 2016-2019 with GRID-Arendal as the Implementing Agency of Component 1 on behalf of UNEP, together with the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC/UNESCO). GRID-Arendal was primarily in charge of visualisation, website, dissemination, synthesis, and ICT training. The evaluation report 2020 mentioned that the joint execution between

GRID-Arendal and IOC/UNESCO's was negatively affected by the geographic split of the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) between Paris and Arendal. Although the two executing partners made every effort to work together and adapt to this arrangement, there were sometimes miscommunications and misunderstandings. GRID-Arendal however got more positive comments than IOC/UNESCO in the evaluation report, where it was mentioned that GRID-Arendal presented quarterly reports with both narrative and quantitative information as well as expenditure reports, while IOC/UNESCO provided only updates in spreadsheet checklist format. The report commented that *inefficiency in reporting was not an issue for implementation of Component 1 since GRID-Arendal is a collaborating partner of UNEP* and their financial systems are already aligned. The evaluation report mentioned that the sustainability of the website <https://iwlearn.net> is a concern. GRID-Arendal had agreed to host it for one year after the project ended, but after that the hosting was uncertain. GRID-Arendal is however still hosting it today.

The project **Standardised Methodologies for Carbon Accounting and Ecosystem Services Valuation of Blue Forests** has been implemented since 2015 and is finalized, but has not yet any Terminal Evaluation Report. The GEF Implementing Agency is UNEP and Executing Agency GRID-Arendal, while there are also 18 other official project partners. The geographic scope is global with participating countries Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Thailand, UAE and USA. The Mid-term Review 2018 defined the overall project *effectiveness as "Satisfactory"*, however with delay of some expected outputs. The overall *efficiency was rated only "Moderately Satisfactory"* because most of the project partners reported delays in implementation, mostly for administrative reasons. The project has used partnership synergies and complementarities with other projects wherever possible.

To conclude, the evaluations available considered an overall moderately satisfactory performance of the projects, mostly due to partners and institutional set-up, while GRID-Arendal was positively rated.

Financial efficiency: According to the interviewees, GRID-Arendal is recognized for high efficiency, and for presenting the deliverables on time within the available budget. That is the case when GRID-Arendal is acting alone, e.g. as contracted by UNEP for specific tasks. As mentioned above, the situation could be quite variable in long-term projects with many partners, where one issue is that delay of outputs from one partner could negatively affect other partners and sometimes the whole project. For GEF multi-partner projects are delays and "no-cost extension" more a rule than an exception. There is of course no real no-cost extension, because delays mean additional payments needed for salaries, rent, and other fixed costs, and therefore lead to reduced cost-efficiency.

There has generally not been much underspending of the resources received from Norad or other main donors. However, during the Covid-19 pandemic GRID-Arendal had some underspending due to delay of activities on the ground in different projects, which is similar to the experience of Norad and other agencies in that period. This was particularly the case with the Waste and Marine Litter component of the Norad work plan in both 2020 and 2021, where planned activities, especially in West Africa, had to be either scaled-back or delayed until travel was possible. GRID-Arendal has remained in dialogue with Norad on these issues.

There has also been some underspending of core funding due to ad-hoc UNEP requests, often late in the year, which have required to re-prioritize some of GRID-Arendal's existing work. That was a particular challenge in 2021 when UNEP engaged GRID-Arendal on several large pieces of work with relatively short time frames. Even though it is normally not expressed officially, it seems like one reason for "last-minute requests" is that UNEP has expiring funds that they need to spend and report on to its donors.

4.2 Options for rationalisation

4.2.1 Programming of activities

The review team has considered the current efficiency of programming and also consulted it with different persons during interviews. As mentioned in 4.1.7, GRID-Arendal is carrying out efficient project planning and management, and there is great satisfaction with the results. There are however still some opportunities for improvement.

Project management has a mostly financial focus (money spent in relation to budget allocation and deadlines), which seems to be managed efficiently, but there is not a clear enough link between financial management and the actual activities on the ground. To ensure improved outcomes and impact, the design phase should involve all relevant stakeholders and consider the problems to resolve, the Theory of Change for the intervention, and the most efficient organization between partners. It must however be remembered that many of the projects have the main team leader outside GRID-Arendal, especially in UNEP, which makes it necessary that GRID-Arendal should participate on an early stage in the project design and not as an add-on to a pre-designed project. This is an issue to discuss with UNEP.

Even though most GRID-Arendal projects have a results framework, these frameworks are not always used actively as a management tool during the implementation, except for the GEF projects where Project Implementation Reports (PIR) are building on the results framework. Again, this is an area where GRID-Arendal might have limited influence, if the team leader is in UNEP or another organization. It should still be a general practice whenever possible.

4.2.2 Resource management

GRID-Arendal does not have any approved guidelines for project design, as this is generally based on the donor requirements for specific proposals. The organization has however just established a project support office (from the end of May 2022). One of its roles is to improve the quality of the project planning and the systems that support it.

The institutional regulations and requirements for the design process and stakeholder participation is currently managed at the project level. This means that local stakeholder participation could vary a lot according to who are the partners, previous experience in the country, available time for preparation of a proposal, etc. GRID-Arendal is however in the process of establishing a Project Support Office.

Logical framework/Results framework: Since the majority of GRID-Arendal's project activities are linked directly or indirectly to the Norad work plan, they inform that these are included in the overall Results-based management framework. However, the reviewer considers that this is not good enough for project level M&E. Most projects should have a separate results framework with baseline, indicators, and targets. For long-term projects the targets should preferably be yearly, but should at least be at mid-term and in the end. This is the case for all UNEP-GEF projects and most other long-term projects implemented by GRID-Arendal with different funding sources.

Theory of change: GRID-Arendal is working on developing the Theory of Change (ToC) at the Programme Level – starting with the Waste and Marine Litter programme. This is considered positive, to ensure that all main projects under the programme go towards the main programme goal(s), and also to promote synergies between the projects. Some projects can build on the outcomes of previous projects while others can go on in parallel towards the same common goal. A ToC analysis on programme level is also important to avoid duplication of efforts between projects carried out by GRID-Arendal and the main partners. Some individual project such as UNEP-GEF projects will have their own ToC to ensure that all project activities have a clear pathway to the expected outcomes and impacts.

Baseline study is prepared at the project level during the design or initial implementation. It is a very variable practice for establishing baseline – not only for GRID-Arendal – but also for Norad and UNEP projects in general. The reviewer strongly recommends to establish the complete baseline before project approval and include it in the results framework. When a baseline study for any issue is postponed until the implementation phase it is a tendency that it will be delayed, and sometimes the baseline is not even finished before the Mid-term Review (MTR). It is therefore recommended that if no reliable baseline can be established during the design, the project should only consider new results (project outputs), in other words considering the baseline as zero.

Project risk analysis and risk management: Each GRID-Arendal project is required to fill out a risk assessment before the project is approved (see fig. 4). Nine risk elements are being assessed to estimate the overall risk, considering the context and allow the setup of risk mitigation measures when required.

Fig. 4. GRID-Arendal Risk Assessment matrix

- 1: The risk that the project manager is **unable to complete** the project?
- 2: The risk that the project will **exceed the approved budget** (cost over-run)?
- 3: The risk that the project content is **not accepted by client**?
- 4: The risk that the project **partners fail to deliver** agreed outputs?
- 5: The risk that the project **contractors fail to deliver** agreed outputs?
- 6: The risk that **safety of staff** working on the project is jeopardized?
- 7: The risk that the **reputation of GRID-Arendal is jeopardized** by this project?
- 8: The risk that the project **time-line is insufficient** for delivery of project?
- 9: The risk that the project **human resources are insufficient** for delivery of project?

Catastrophic 5					
Major 4					
Moderate 3					
Minor 2					
Negligible 1					
	1 Rare	2 Unlikely	3 Possible	4 Likely	5 Almost certain

This is an *internal process* in GRID-Arendal, and the risk matrix is not presented to the funding agency. Note that the nine criteria are *risks for GRID-Arendal* at the moment of design, and that the result of this analysis could in some cases mean rejection or complete reformulation of the project proposal. The nine criteria can be divided into three categories:

Issues under project management’s control, under the condition of good project design, planning and management (also called internal risks): criteria 1, 2, 8, 9

Issues outside project management’s control: criteria 3, 4, 5

Issues outside or under project management’s control, depending of the circumstances: criteria 6, 7

It should also be noted that the mentioned risk analysis is not relevant for a project after approval, when most of these risks should have been eliminated or mitigated. On the other hand, there would normally be other risks for implementation. Common risk factors are low institutional capacity, institutional changes, high level of corruption in project country, social conflicts, reduced budget value (currency changes), and natural disasters. These types of risks should be reviewed at the moment of approval and monitored during implementation. Most GRID-Arendal long-term projects have a risk matrix with such *real risks* included in the project document, and GRID-Arendal is using the format required or most often applied by the funding agency. According to stakeholder interviews, it is however a problem that the risk analysis carried out during the design is frequently forgotten during implementation, and the risk matrix is not used as a monitoring tool and updated. This is not exceptional for GRID-Arendal, but very often found among other agencies, e.g. UNEP.

Safeguards: The review of potential environmental and social impact is also most often done during project design, and is done at project level based on the donor requirements. The projects GRID-Arendal are involved in have most often positive environmental goals and “soft” outputs such as people trained and studies. It is therefore not expected to be any potential negative environmental impacts that would require an EIA. Social safeguards are probably more relevant because GRID-Arendal is operating projects in many countries with different cultures and without its own staff on the ground. Note that Norad is including crosscutting issues such as gender participation as part of risk, while UNEP and most other agencies consider it under social safeguards (see also 4.7.2). GRID-Arendal is considering gender participation and women’s empowerment at project level based on each donor’s requirements, which could lead to different types of design from case to case.

Institutional quality control: The project proposals are approved in GRID-Arendal’s internal project management system as ‘prospects’ prior to submitting to donors. Project proposals are approved by the Head of Programmes, while the Board is not involved. When a project proposal is to be submitted to a donor this is approved as a ‘prospect’ in the system. It remains a prospect until GRID-Arendal has received a decision from a donor – whereby it will become a project if successful. This will then be followed by another internal approval process of the project plan and contract. During the implementation it is each team leader that is in charge of project monitoring and follow-up with project partners, and reports to GRID-Arendal Management.

Roles of the Board: The Board members are appointed for four years, with a possible extension for additional four years. In compliance with the GRID-Arendal by-laws, the Board members are appointed by MoCE for a period of three years, and could be re-elected. This ministry is defining the level of payment to the Board and Managing Director. MoCE, UNEP and Norad are observers in the Board meetings, and the Director is also an observer without voting right. The President of the Board considers that MoCE, Norad and MFA would probably have a more active role if they were regular members of the Board. The current relation to Norad is mostly through bilateral meetings (without representation of the President of the Board), while the relation with MFA is more distant. To make any changes on representation on the Board, the initiative would have to come from the Board itself or from MoCE.

The by-laws for the Board are very general. It is understood that the overall task of GRID-Arendal's Board is to have control of the economy, and the issues of budget and accounting are therefore included in all board meetings. *The President of the Board rejected an invitation to be present in a seminar on GRID-Arendal's strategy.* The Board is not involved in negotiation of collaboration agreements with other institutions, but it is maintained informed and sign the final agreement. The Board has recommended that GRID-Arendal should be more visible on national level in Norway. This could e.g. be achieved through a collaboration with the Norwegian Research Council, but it would require interest and effort to give emphasis in that area. GRID-Arendal has already appointed a new Head of Media Relations to address this concern. Additional to budget and accounting, some of the issues that are discussed in the board meetings are:

- Salary development in comparison with the Norwegian public sector
- Strategic work, plans, thematic priorities, actors and alliances (on national and international level)
- Work environment

Regarding the last-mentioned bullet point, an external consultant was contracted to review the situation. The consultant found that it was generally satisfactory, but with some areas that should be improved. GRID-Arendal has a culture with many relatively young people that are communicating frequently through staff assemblies, but there is a weak staff syndicate structure, and communication with the leader group has not been strong enough.

In 2021 the Board had to deal with a warning case against specific persons. A lawyer had to be involved, but finally the warner withdrew the case.

4.2.3 Results reporting

Since the signing of the Norad programme with GRID-Arendal, the results reporting should be based on the Results Framework, combined with a narrative description of activities, challenges and results. The review team considers that the narrative report for the period April-December 2021 (presented March 2022) has sufficient detail for information to Norad, and if Norad task managers are interested in more information about any project that could be asked during the consultation meetings.

According to Norad staff, one area where efficiency could be improved is project planning, M&E, including the use of Results Framework. This is also an area that could easily improve Norad's ability to monitor and follow-up the projects. The review team agrees with this view, but would like to comment that the current Results Framework for the Programme Agreement also has some weaknesses, such as impacts completely outside project management's control (could however be regarded ex-post impact) and several outcomes where baseline and target does not measure the same issue (making them impossible to compare). The framework also has a column for risks and assumptions, but no risks were identified. The Results Framework is included in Annex F, but it lays outside the TOR for this review to update the framework, and it should preferably be done by the two partners together.

4.3 Modalities of existing cooperation with partners

4.3.1 Norad

Different staff members in Norad's section for Nature and Climate has a relationship with GRID-Arendal, depending on which issues and projects they are working on. Priority areas for both Norad and GRID-Arendal are climate change, environment and oceans. The same section is also covering the institutional collaboration with UNEP, GEF and GCF, where GRID-Arendal is involved in some of the activities. Norad considers that it is not possible for them to have any umbrella for their collaboration with such large organizations, so they deal with each individually.

Norad staff members have the opinion that GRID-Arendal is a professional organization that works well. Interviewees mentioned that the staff has a high level and present good quality products. Certain areas are however more developed than others, such as GRID-Arendal's special "niche" to present difficult issues in a more easily understood language. Norad staff consider this to be an important task, but it has sometimes been difficult to make contracts with GRID-Arendal through normal procurement process. On the other hand, there are some examples where Norwegian agencies had unused budget allocations and gave GRID-Arendal funds ad-hoc without a clear definition of what was expected.

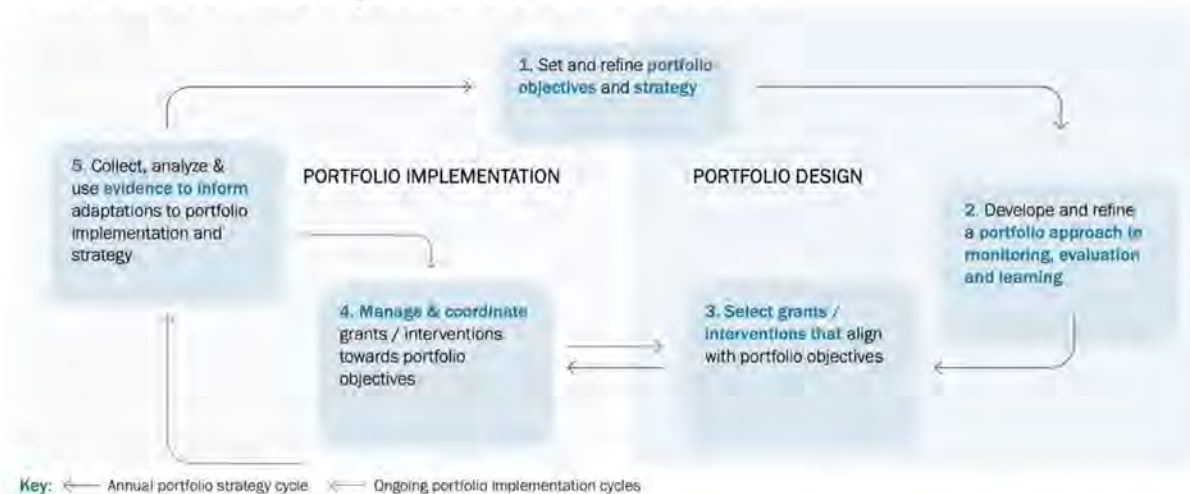
Norad staff is commenting that the yearly reports from GRID-Arendal are informative, but often a bit too short. The review team will however highlight that the reports would be too long if they went into details about each project, and that they include links to additional project information. Norad managers would appreciate to know in advance about the publications that will come out, because they are using them actively in their jobs. It was recommended from Norad staff that GRID-Arendal should be less humble in reporting about how their work has led to impact, and also recommend that there should be ex-post project evaluations to analyse the sustainability of impacts.

Norad has follow-up meetings with GRID-Arendal each semester. Norad staff commented that it is important to continue the positive flow of information between GRID-Arendal and Norad. They mention that GRID-Arendal's documents and presentations make difficult issues easy to understand, and they have even prepared analyses that have been used directly in Norad's daily work. They think it would be possible with improved synergies in relation with Norad's programmatic efforts, for instance, the current increasing priority to the topic of international oceans, where GRID-Arendal has made an impressive work. Another priority area where there are great opportunities for synergies is environmental governance and anti-corruption. Norad has now been informed about a doubling of the climate adaptation budget and then a triplication until 2026. This would most probably mean more need for collaboration with GRID-Arendal in that area.

Norad has different modalities of cooperation with its civil society partners and a long and stable collaboration relationship with GRID-Arendal. Norad funds can however not cover all types of GRID-Arendal activities, only those that are accepted as Official Development Assistance (ODA). The organization presents yearly reports to Norad, which is following-up on them, but Norad is not involved in GRID-Arendal's dialogue and negotiation with partners. There is however a challenge for Norad to be able to review the results on the ground, since the embassy staff dedicated to the projects has gradually been reduced. It is also a problem that the Norwegian embassy staff members involved have different thematic interests and change a lot, only partially mitigated by involvement of national embassy staff. There is also weak capacity in most recipient countries for monitoring and evaluation, to be able to report to the embassies.

To increase the efficiency of this cooperation, Norad is currently reviewing this cooperation with an interest of knowing more specifically what the funding is used for. Norad has indicated that it would be interested in applying a portfolio perspective, where Norad's agreements with UNEP and GEF also are of interest. Norad staff interviewed however recognize that it would be a challenge for GRID-Arendal because it could affect its flexibility that is a value in itself.

Fig. 5. The five steps in Norad's portfolio management
 Source: Norad Evaluation Department 2020, Evaluation Brief 2.



One of Norad's units is called "*Kunnskapsbanken*" (the Knowledge Bank). It could be considered a hybrid of different broad priority areas, especially where it is considered that Norway has special know-how to transfer to other countries. The programs are Oil for Development, Fish for Development, Tax for Development, Equality for Development, Statistical cooperation, Higher education and Research, Innovation, and Institutional collaboration on energy. Projects on food security and climate adaptation in agriculture shall also be connected to the Knowledge Bank. Approx. 20% of the participating partners are public organizations and the Knowledge Bank is closely related with public management. The Oil for Development programme has worked directly with UNEP on strengthening the environmental component, including use of the Nansen ship⁴. The Knowledge Bank is increasingly supporting the topics of oceans and fisheries, where there are clear common interests with GRID-Arendal. There are also several other areas where there could be a role for GRID-Arendal, such as climate change adaptation and mitigation, including the agricultural and energy sectors. The Director of the Knowledge Bank expressed that GRID-Arendal potentially could be part of the Banks capacity base, which would be attractive for development.

4.3.2 MoCE

The Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment (MoCE) is the channel for core funding from the Norwegian Government to GRID-Arendal through yearly state budget allocations. Additionally, MoCE is financing projects that are in the ministry's special interest, such as marine litter and arctic issues. On both of these areas MoCE has a dialogue with GRID-Arendal about the activities to be carried out based on the funding, and the impact achieved. It is however a very "hands-off" approach, where MoCE doesn't go into any discussion about the outputs of individual projects.

MoCE appoints the representatives to GRID-Arendal's Board of Directors. UNEP, MoCE and Norad are invited as observers to the Board meetings, but this is not mentioned in the by-laws. MFA/Norad have in the last years established a stronger relation with the Board than before.

MoCE has been involved with GRID-Arendal longer than Norad, and its staff therefore has a complete understanding of the institutional challenges and development process that has been going on. They mention weaknesses in the control of staff ten years ago, and a huge improvement of management under

⁴ These issues are covered by Scanteam's Mid Term Review of "Strengthening the environment component of the Oil for Development Programme 2016-2020".

the current leadership. MoCE personnel also consider that GRID-Arendal has an intrinsic value, since there is no other organization just like it.

4.3.3 UNEP

Norway's direct support to UNEP was in 2021 USD 26 million⁵, while its support to GRID-Arendal the same year was 19.6 million NOK (USD 2.3 million). In that way Norway could indirectly co-finance itself. The ongoing cooperation with UNEP has the following main modalities:

- Implementation of medium- and long-term projects, typically with several partners
- Environmental monitoring and data
- Studies
- Production of knowledge products

There is high degree of satisfaction among the project managers in UNEP that have collaborated with GRID-Arendal. They mention that the staff is very well qualified, efficient, flexible, and with an attitude that make them easy to collaborate with. It is frequently mentioned that GRID-Arendal on request from UNEP can take up new issues and get things done much faster than what is possible in the UN system. While GRID-Arendal can recruit a specialist on a specific issue within 2-3 months, it might take 10-12 months for UNEP. When asked about conflicts or problems in the collaboration, UNEP staff is not able to mention anything of importance, but some say that when there have been any difficulties in time planning it has normally been due to UNEP.

The effectiveness and efficiency of UNEP's collaboration with GRID-Arendal is mentioned in par. 4.1.7, while the following table presents opinions about the quality of cooperation from GRID-Arendal to UNEP according to the online survey. Information and knowledge products are highest rated, while also project collaboration and environmental monitoring got high scores.

UNEP and GRIP-Arendal are partners in the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) for Oceans.

Table 4.5. Quality of GRID-Arendal's collaboration with UNEP according to the online survey (rated from 1-5 with 5 being the highest score)

Type of collaboration	Weighted average
Information and knowledge products	4.63
GRID-Arendal's involvement with UNEP in long-term projects	4.33
Environmental monitoring and data	4.25
GRID-Arendal's involvement with UNEP in medium-term projects	4.14
Overall average	4.34

The Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) <https://www.unep-wcmc.org/en> is a global centre established in Cambridge, UK, focused on biodiversity and nature's contribution to society and the economy. WCMC works at the interface of science, policy, and practice, to tackle the global crisis facing nature and support the transition to a sustainable future for people and the planet. The review team has noticed that WCMC covers several of the same areas as GRID-Arendal, and will recommend a stronger inter-relation between these two centres. There are however examples of projects where they have worked together, such as the GEF projects "Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction Deep-Sea Project" and "Standardised methodologies for carbon accounting and ecosystem services valuation of Blue Forests" (see below). There are alternative models for how this collaboration could be strengthened, but the review team considers that the most important is to clarify the role of each, to create synergies and avoid duplication of efforts.

The Board of Directors of GRID-Arendal considers the collaboration with UNEP as highly important, and the President of the Board has participated in meetings with UNEP in Nairobi. The GRID-Arendal

⁵ Source: www.unep.org

Board consider the organization as a “UNEP affiliate”, but it is not clear if it can formally use the UNEP logo.

4.3.4 GEF

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) provides co-funding to projects that GRID-Arendal participates in. The GEF is a pure funding agency and its programmes and projects are implemented through GEF implementing agencies, where UNEP is one of them⁶. The main GEF-projects that GRID-Arendal has participated in are “Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction Deep-Sea project” (GEF ID 4660), “International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network” (GEF ID 5729) and “Standardised methodologies for carbon accounting and ecosystem services valuation of Blue Forests” (GEF ID 4452). Information about these projects are found on the GEF database <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/database> (inserting the mentioned numbers). The last-mentioned project is still not closed in the GEF system even though the activities have finalized. The GEF budget is USD 4.95 million (+ UNEP fee), with additional USD 23,268,215 co-financing. This includes USD 440,000 cash and USD 440,000 in-kind co-financing from GRID-Arendal. The project provides evidence-based experience that supports replication, up-scaling and adoption of the blue forests concept by the international community and the GEF.

For this project it is interesting that even though it has a lot of partners, the recognized Executing Agency is GRID-Arendal. The other executing partners are UNEP-WCMC, UNEP’s Regional Office for Latin America & Caribbean (ROLAC), Blue Ventures, Charles Darwin University, Conservation International-Ecuador, Counterpart International, Duke University, The Environment Agency of Abu Dhabi, Indonesian Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute, South African Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm University, The Ocean Foundation, University of West Brittany, US NOAA, US Forest Service, WWF-Mozambique, Distant Imagery, Conservation International (CI), and Silvestrum. Despite being approved in 2014 with expected duration until 2018 (extended until 31.12.2019), the project is still not formally closed and has not had any Terminal Evaluation Report. The project however had a satisfactory (S) rating in the last PIR.

Another GEF project where GRID-Arendal had a leading role is the GEF International Waters: Learning Exchange and Resource Network (GEF:IW-LEARN). This project had both UNDP and UNEP as implementing agencies, and GRID-Arendal as the executing agency for component 1: Support the Harvesting, Standardization, Dissemination and Replication of Portfolio and Partner Results, Data and Experience.

One issue for GRID-Arendal’s work in this project was Quality control of the website, where all the active projects and agencies are required to ensure accurate and up-to-date information on each project. GRID-Arendal made continuous efforts to engage projects in updating the IW:LEARN website, emailing all project managers and face-to-face contact at the 9th International Waters Conference (IWC9) in Marrakech Nov 2018, as well as in regional workshops. Although project information on the website improved, many projects did not use the site and information on many projects remained incomplete or out of date. In this project GRID-Arendal worked with the Paris-based PCU to identify projects to support in displaying their spatial data. GRID-Arendal hosted clinics on communications and visualization at the IWC9, where the communications workshop was particularly well attended and IW projects showed a desire for more communications support and knowledge.

Further information about the mentioned GEF projects is found in the section of effectiveness and efficiency (4.1.7).

⁶ GEF has 18 implementing agencies, consisting of UN agencies, development banks and large environmental NGOs.

4.3.5 Other partners

During the last 2-3 years, GRID-Arendal has been working with an extensive network of more than hundred national and local partners in developing and developed countries (see Box 4.2). In Norway GRID-Arendal has worked closely with WWF on marine litter. There are an even larger number of local NGOs, CSOs and community-based organizations in developing countries that have benefitted from project implementation. Two examples of institutional collaborations are reviewed under par. 4.5.

Box 4.2 GRID-Arendal's collaborating partners since 2019

Organizations GRID-Arendal has worked with since 2019 under the Norad program
UNEP, UNEP-WCMC, UNDP, UNECE, UNESCO-IHP, UNIDO, UNU-INWEH, GRID-Geneva, IUCN, SPC Geoscience, University of Sydney, ESA, CLS, GISBOX, Hatfield Consultants, PWC, SIRS, SISTEMA, UNITAR, DHI GRAS GeoVille, GiSAT, DTU-Env, CPPS, East African Seas Regional Coordinating Unit, CI, WWF, IOC, UNESCO, Indonesian Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Blue Ventures, University of Cape Town, Ellen MacArthur Foundation, Ocean Conservancy, GWP, ICPDR, IRF, TNC, ISWA (Netherlands), Doko Recyclers (Nepal), CREASION (Nepal), ICIMOD, GIZ, Rare, Abidjan Convention Secretariat, Teheran Convention Secretariat, Basel Convention Regional Centre for Asia & Pacific, Governments of Bhutan, Cape Verde, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Benin, Togo, Vietnam, Kenya, Colombia and Peru, Bhutan National Tiger Centre, Ifoam, NTNU, NIVA, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, NVE, GEOMAR, East China Normal University, China Northwest Institute of Eco-Environment and Resources, National Marine Environmental Monitoring Centre, State Oceanic Administration, Mu Gamma Consultants, The Energy and Resources Institute of India, SRM University, Center for SE Asian Studies, Indonesia Institute of Sciences, Bandung Institute of Technology, University of Indonesia, SALT, Malcolm Clark, Wetlands International, RAMPAO, Duke University, ARCOS, Sustainable Caucasus, Good Cause Promotions, GRASP Secretariat, Centre de Suivi Ecologique, Wetlands International, Réseau des Aires Marine Protegees de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, Fundación Natura (Bolivia), Cuencas Sustentables (Bolivia), Institute of Tibetan Research, Regional Partnership for Coastal and Marine Conservation in West Africa, Trygg Mat Tracking (TMT), Ministry of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Maritime Economy of Guinea, ATLAN-Space, Church of England, Swedish pension fund, Sustainable Caucasus, Geoscience Australia, Australian Environment Department, Australian Agricultural Dept., Commonwealth Secretariat.

4.4 Support to UNEP

4.4.1 Medium- and long-term projects

GRID-Arendal is integrated in UNEP's work, and it is therefore both a partner, a beneficiary and a service provider. To what extent these three aspects of the cooperation with UNEP are reflected in the activities varies, however the UNEP staff members interviewed see GRID-Arendal most of all as a partner.

The experience of GRID-Arendal's involvement with UNEP's medium- and long-term projects is highly positive. It gives both the opportunity to complementary technical knowledge and co-financing. The opportunity for using Norwegian co-financing has been fundamental for achieving e.g. GEF funding.

4.4.2 Work programming

UNEP's general programming cycle consists of 4-year Medium-Term Strategies (MTS) that consist of 2-year Programmes of Work (POW). The current [Medium Term Strategy 2022-2025](#) has the vision of reversing the trajectory of three interconnected crises – climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, that are putting global economic and social well-being at risk. The MTS also presents UNEP's expected role in delivering the promises of Agenda 2030 and the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and its outcome document "The Future We Want".

The close connection between UNEP and GRID-Arendal is influencing the institutional priorities. For instance, MoCE highlights that GRID-Arendal is playing a leading role in UNEP's work on assessing and advocating for nature-based solutions to climate change, which is prioritised by UNEP due to the crises mentioned above.

As mentioned in par. 4.1.5, GRID-Arendal's programming cycle is related with UNEP's, and the new joint UNEP / GRID-Arendal work program 2022-2023 goes in parallel with UNEP's POW 2022-2023, which is the first implementation phase of UNEP's MTS 2022-2025. Despite this relationship, the yearly planning is not clearly linked. GRID-Arendal is covering some of UNEP's priority areas, but does not go into the details of the POW when it is discussing and developing its own work program. UNEP has agreed that GRID-Arendal should try to establish a biennial workplan based on areas of the POW that GRID-Arendal can contribute to.

4.4.3 Environmental monitoring

One of GRID-Arendal's roles is to participate in environmental monitoring, especially in the Arctic. For instance, GRID-Arendal has studied and explained the elevated risk of wildfires, even for the Arctic and other previously unaffected regions. The report was realized before the resumed 5th session of the UN Environment Assembly 28 Feb - 2 March, 2022. GRID-Arendal also continues with its outreach and communications role in a joint project with UNEP to monitor and report on inland water resources, using earth observation technology. Another environmental monitoring task deals with analyzing and publishing data on litter monitoring in Sierra Leone (West Africa), Indonesia (Asia) and Kiribati (Pacific).

4.4.4 Publications

GRID-Arendal has since many years ago been playing an important role in preparation of UNEP's flagship publication Global Environment Outlook (GEO) and Rapid Response Assessments. In the last (6th) version of GEO, GRID-Arendal helped writing the chapters on Africa, gender and oceans with the main areas (i) the state of the environment; and (ii) ocean environmental policy. GRID-Arendal also participated in writing the Polar chapter.

GRID-Arendal has since then been heavily involved in 'GEO for Cities – Towards Green and Just Cities' <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/geo-cities-towards-green-and-just-cities>, to explain the science and make it easier to understand for local government decision-makers on state, province and municipal level. Recently GRID-Arendal has supported digitalization of the GEO process, including formalizing tools and creating a one-entry portal to connect digitally. This digital transformation is expected to not only help UNEP but also make the collaboration more efficient. The "Vital Graphics" and other publications are also popular in Norad and Norwegian ministries, but not enough people know them.

4.4.5 Ad-hoc support

The experience with Ad-hoc support to UNEP is mostly positive seen from UNEP's side. GRID-Arendal has some experience and skills not found in UNEP, and is more flexible and much faster to respond to an upcoming demand than UNEP. When GRID-Arendal does not have staff with the required experience they are able to recruit someone in 2-3 months, while a UN staff member normally takes at least ten months to recruit.

GRID-Arendal is also mostly positive to this type of collaboration, because it makes them involved with new and up-coming issues that later may turn into a part of the long-term work programme. On the other hand, GRID-Arendal staff mention that they are not so satisfied with some short-term demands, especially late in the year, that often is due to that UNEP managers have available funds at the end of the year that they want to use within the budget year. This makes it difficult to respond properly because GRID-Arendal staff already have already planned other activities, and it might be too short time to recruit someone else, even consultants. Most of the ad-hoc support with short notice have resulted in important products (especially studies), but in the worst-case scenario it could result in products that have low priority or duplicate efforts from other agencies. UNEP staff comment that GRID-Arendal can always say no, but this has seldom been the case. This is one of the problems with having parallel contacts between UNEP managers and GRID-Arendal instead of one over-arching framework for the institutional relation (see recommendation 5.3.2).

4.4.6 UNEP's assessment of the partnership

The experience of UNEP staff members interviewed with the collaboration of GRID-Arendal has been uniformly positive. They mention that the organisation has a high quality of work, and if it doesn't have the required competence in-house it is able to find it relatively fast. GRID-Arendal is also timely and works within the agreed budget limits. The people interviewed are very satisfied with the collaboration, and mention that small issues in the relationship has been mostly due to UNEP, e.g. requiring services with short time notice, and that UNEP has not been efficient enough.

4.5 Cooperation with partners in developing countries

4.5.1 Relevance

OECD-DAC defines Relevance as “the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries’, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change”. It is understood that both the Norwegian Government’s and UNEP’s development policies consider the needs of local stakeholders, but within a global framework. The interviews therefore included questions about if GRID-Arendal respond to the policies, priorities and needs of the organization each specific person represented, as well as local stakeholders. This was triangulated with review of organizational policies and international conventions, to consider *if GRID-Arendal is doing the right things*, not only based on partner needs, but on common global goals.

The conclusion from the interviews is that GRID-Arendal’s work respond to and complements well the tasks carried out by Norad, MFA/Embassies and MoCE. The Ministry of Climate and Environment has a “hands-off” approach to GRID-Arendal and discuss general priorities, but is not involved with local stakeholders. The embassies are often directly involved with the local partners and can therefore have a clearer opinion about GRID-Arendal’s relevance on local level. Former Embassy staff in Nepal mentioned satisfaction with the high quality of GRID-Arendal’s work with ICIMOD, and that this regional programme is relevant for Norwegian policy on both climate change and poverty reduction. Norad has not the same direct relation as the embassies, but many staff members make changes between Norad and the embassies, thereby contributing to transfer of experience in both directions, and relevant opinions from Norad staff. The Norad staff members interviewed commented that according to their knowledge, GRID-Arendal respond well to local partner needs, as expressed in the dialogue between partners. It was also mentioned that an important role of GRID-Arendal is to strengthen local partner organizations, and that the relevance for local stakeholders very much depend on the strength and profile of the partners.

A representative of ICIMOD mentioned that GRID-Arendal’s way of working is very relevant for them, because it helps ICIMOD present scientific data in a simplified language, to be able to reach the politicians. ICIMOD is new strategy and action plan, and want to get GRID-Arendal involved also in the coming years. Regarding GRID-Arendal’s work with the Abidjan Convention Secretariat, the former project coordinator in West Africa gave emphasis to the relevance of the support to the political process in the region. He considered the most important result to be an Integrated Ocean Governance Policy, approved by the Conference of the Parties (COP) in December 2021.

The stakeholder interviews revealed a general opinion that GRID-Arendal is working in line with the Norwegian development policies, and also supports the process towards many of the sustainable development goals (SDG). This was also reflected in the online survey (see the following table).

Table 4.6. How well GRID-Arendal’s programme consider different goals, policies and strategies, according to the online survey (rated from 1-5 with 5 being the highest score)

Goals, policies and strategies	Weighted average
Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)	4.00
Norwegian Development Policies	4.00
UNEP policies and programming	3.67
UN Conventions	3.57
Overall average	3.81

4.5.2 Efficiency of the forms and modalities

Since the current review is covering most of GRID-Arendal’s activities, it is not reviewing in detail individual projects. However, to get a better picture of efficiency and effectiveness of the projects where GRID-Arendal has participated, the review has triangulated three sources of information:

- Evaluation reports
- Interviews with local partners

- Online survey

GRID-Arendal has a very satisfactory collaboration with the Secretariat of the Abidjan Convention <https://abidjanconvention.org>. The former project coordinator (2015-20) in the Secretariat expressed that GRID-Arendal has a dedicated and professional staff, is easy to work with, and is responsive to e-mails. The work has covered capacity building and technical support to implementation of the project.

The Abidjan Convention Secretariat has been supported on development in the political area, where the most important result was the Integrated Ocean Governance Policy (Dec. 2020). In this process there has been some challenges, and delays, which are considered part of the game to ensure multi-country agreement.

There have been few challenges in the collaboration with GRID-Arendal, but some misunderstandings because the European and African perspectives are different. GRID-Arendal staff is technically skilled but not trained on diplomacy. When talking to representatives of the Government it is necessary to use a diplomatic language, which is a learning process.

The Secretariat of the Abidjan Convention has also been partnering with GRID-Arendal on other projects, such as both first and second phase of the West Africa sea-grass project, with pilot countries Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Mauretania and Sierra Leone. A regional program on Sustainable Fisheries was affected by a coup d'état in Guinea 2021, but the project is still ongoing.

GRID-Arendal's has a good reputation in the Abidjan Convention Secretariat and among member countries. It is however a problem that most outcomes are "soft", such as policies and strategies, which cannot be seen in the field. Local stakeholders give more emphasis to tangible results that they can observe, as well as the impact on local communities. Some stakeholders therefore don't have a complete understanding of the results. It would be considered positive if GRID-Arendal could combine the political-institutional advisory with pilot projects that can showcase local results. It was also suggested that GRID-Arendal could have a regional program and regional office with local staff.

ICIMOD: GRID-Arendal has a very fruitful and appreciated collaboration with the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). It is an inter-governmental knowledge and learning centre with much focus on research, with headquarters in Kathmandu, Nepal. ICIMOD's presents itself as working on behalf of the people of the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH), and has eight regional member countries – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan.

Fig. 7. ICIMOD's regional member countries



The collaboration between GRID-Arendal and ICIMOD has focused most on the still ongoing programme "Resilient Mountain Solutions" <https://www.icimod.org/initiative/rms/>, where the Norwegian Embassy in Nepal was involved in monitoring and follow-up. Norway's support to ICIMOD

Fig. 6. Geographical scope of the Abidjan Convention (Source: Abidjan Convention Secretariat 2018)



expires in December 2022, but the organisation is currently preparing a new strategy (2023-2030) and a Medium-Term Action Plan for 2023-2026. If continued collaboration with Norwegian institutions is reflected in these documents it would be something the Embassy and Norad could build on, which would potentially also involve GRID-Arendal.

Staff from the Norwegian Embassy in Nepal informs that the collaboration between ICIMOD and GRID-Arendal has been efficient and without problems. They consider that GRID-Arendal gives a good impression, and that the main synergies consist in that ICIMOD is a research organization with much local knowledge and GRID-Arendal is able to bring in specialists on specific areas, who can see the organization's work a bit from outside and thereby detect opportunities for improvement. ICIMOD received core funding from Norway and many other donors. The specific projects where GRID-Arendal has been involved have not been evaluated, but the donor countries carry out joint evaluations of the support to ICIMOD.

4.5.3 Suggestions for improvements

The collaboration with regional organizations such as the Abidjan Convention and ICIMOD is a good form of development because it supports the priorities developed jointly between the countries and can therefore achieve strong impact. To improve the results of GRID-Arendal's advisory it would be more effective if GRID-Arendal could have a staff member as long-term advisor established within each of the regional organizations.

4.6 Options for increasing synergies with Norad

4.6.1 Norad's knowledge programmes

GRID-Arendal has a direct collaboration with many of Norad's task managers on development of knowledge products that Norad can use in its daily work. A knowledge product is something that enables effective action by an intended user, client or stakeholder of a government agency or a non- government or development organization. The Norad staff interviewed express satisfaction with these knowledge products, because they are easy to understand and fit well with their work tasks.

The experience and lessons learned from this collaboration are that GRID-Arendal is able to analyse and synthesize complex issues, and present them in an easy language and format, better than Norad self. This makes it a valuable source of support for both Norad and UNEP, as well as for other organizations with interest for the same topics.

The mentioned collaboration is however quite informal and often ad-hoc. It means that some Norad staff would not necessarily know the existence of certain knowledge products that could be of interest for their work. To improve the synergies with Norad, GRID-Arendal should be recognized as a partner for Norad's Knowledge Bank (see 4.3.1 and 5.3.8).

4.6.2 Other Norad programmes

As mentioned in different parts of the report, GRID-Arendal has a direct collaboration with Norad programmes in several thematic areas, especially several environmental issues such as climate change adaptation and mitigation, marine pollution, and international conventions.

The experience and lessons learned from this collaboration are that there are synergies between the two organizations, but also lost opportunities. The individual staff members in Norad have not sufficient knowledge about GRID-Arendal and its institutional capacity in different areas, and are therefore not able to efficiently use this capacity. The key words are information exchange, and also to strengthen the formal interaction between Norad and GRID-Arendal, as mentioned in recommendations 5.3.1-5.3.3.

4.7 Other relevant issues detected during the review

4.7.1 Formalisation of the relation with UNEP

During interviews with UNEP it was mentioned that the GEO unit is interested in formalizing its relationship with GRID-Arendal. One option would be to recognize it as a Technical Support Unit, which has already been consulted with UNEP's Director General Inger Andersen. It is however still under discussion, and could be done as a support centre (similar to Copenhagen Climate Centre (UNEP-CCC) or a more "light touch relationship". This is of course an issue that the Board of GRID-Arendal must discuss, and it should also be consulted with the Norwegian Government.

A first step towards formalising the relation would be to establish a "UNEP/GRID-Arendal programme" similar to the one GRID-Arendal has with Norad, and to bring these two donors plus MoCE together in a joint donor forum (see recommendation 5.3.1).

4.7.2 Risk management

Confusion of concepts in the Grant Agreement: The Grant Agreement par. 3.3 mentions that the Grant Recipient shall continuously identify, assess and mitigate any relevant risks associated with the implementation of the Programme. The risk of potential negative effects of the Programme in the following cases (Cross-Cutting Issues) shall always be included in the risk management of the Programme:

- anti-corruption
- climate and environment,
- women's rights and gender equality, and
- human rights (with a particular focus on participation, accountability and non-discrimination)

The review team found that this paragraph is mixing project risk and project safeguards. This is not surprising, and has also been observed in Norad documents by the Consultant in previous occasions. Note that most international development agencies, including the UNEP, GEF and the development banks use the following definitions (only in slightly different wording):

Risk: External factor or condition outside project management's control that may negatively affect the project's performance.

Safeguards: Management approaches to avoid or mitigate negative project effects (most often used for social and environmental safeguards).

To say it simple: Safeguards consider factors where the project could negatively affect others or the environment, while risks consider effects of others or environment/external factors to the project. Mixing these two issues into one makes it difficult and often confusing for the executing agency, and also makes it difficult to monitor. In the case of GRID-Arendal, an additional difficulty is that the organization reports to international partners such as UNEP, which is using the internationally recognized definitions mentioned above, and should not have to prepare progress reports based on different definitions to different partners (see recommendation 5.3.6).

While corruption can clearly be a risk in many projects, and "climate and environment" could be a risk e.g. the possibility of natural disasters, the two other "risks" (gender and human rights) are issues that should be dealt with through a project's risk management system, which of course also covers environmental assessments/EIA. Previous direct discussions between the Consultant and the former Norad "Results Unit" came to the conclusion that Norad is using risk as "issues that can negatively affect Norwegian development cooperation". This explains the wording in the Grant Agreement and the mention of some cross-cutting issues that normally are covered through safeguards. In GRID-Arendal's narrative progress report to Norad for the period April-December 2021, the organisation is however doing its best to try to adjust the report to the Agreement.

Risk countries and risk environments: The progress report mentions political instability in target countries as a risk, and mentions Guinea, where a coup d'état was carried out in September 2021. Two of the projects under the Norad framework agreement are partially implemented in this country: (i) the ResilienSEA project, covering 7 West African countries (part of output 2.5 – Marine Environment); and (ii) Reinforcing fisheries' governance in Guinea (part of output 1.2 – Transboundary Governance & Environmental Crime). The projects have continued, however with a slower pace. Some reasons for this are the priority from the new government's side, which has maintained technical staff, and another factor is that many other agencies have closed their activities after the coup. If the GRID-Arendal projects should also have been put on hold is a political question, since Norwegian government funding is involved. GRID-Arendal however highlights that Norad funds have not been transferred to government partners and have only financed staff time.

A coup d'état in Guinea is no longer a risk, but an example of a risk that has materialized. The important question is how many other projects GRID-Arendal is supporting in high-risk countries and regions, and what is the joint risk for the project portfolio. People interviewed during the study mentioned that since GRID-Arendal is taking part in a high number of projects, often in risk countries and regions, they have on average a high risk. The risk is greatly increased by not having permanent staff in the countries and working through partners with variable size and capacity. This has before Covid-19 partly been mitigated through frequent travels, where technical assistance to partners could be combined with monitoring of the activities. GRID-Arendal has however a goal of reducing its environmental and carbon footprint, especially through reduced international travel and use of remote technologies. This is an example where two different goals turn against each other. *The review team consider that reduced international travel without having its own staff on the ground would increase the project risks, including the risk of corruption.*

Anti-corruption: GRID-Arendal has an anti-corruption policy that is compulsory for all staff, which includes prevention of fraud and corruption, as well as an investigation policy. The policy defines roles, responsibilities, and processes in case of suspected corruption. In 2021 there was one case detected of a project funded by another donor where funding had been misused, related to transfer of funds between organizations in-country. It should be remembered that 2021 was a year with nearly no international travel, which greatly limited the opportunities for on-the ground monitoring, reviews and evaluation with participation of GRID-Arendal staff (see comment above).

COVID-19: GRID-Arendal has adapted its work to the circumstances during the pandemic, which since 2020 affected the projects under implementation. GRID-Arendal has been able to adjust well to mostly remote work (advisory, meetings, etc.) combined with more focus on knowledge products, but the delivery of project outputs on the ground through local partners has been slower than normal. GRID-Arendal was however able to produce most outputs expected under the Norad agreement within the budget in the second semester of 2021. This is a positive surprise since most agencies, including Norad and UNEP, have experienced huge delays during COVID-19 pandemic, and many requests for no-cost extensions.

4.7.3 Crosscutting issues

Climate and environment: GRID-Arendal's mission, policies and activities goes towards the goals of sustainable management of natural resources and mitigation of climate change. It has also been certified in Norway as an "environmental lighthouse" (miljøfyrtårn) <https://www.miljofyrtarn.no/>. It is however no guarantee that environmental organizations and projects designed with environmental goals could not also have adverse impacts. When GRID-Arendal participates in a consortium led by UNEP, a screening of potential environmental and social impact would be ensured from UNEP's side. When GRID-Arendal is the lead executing agency, it is important that it has its own clear safeguards policy.

Human rights and gender mainstreaming: GRID-Arendal's work has the goal to be aligned with the UN and Norwegian policies on human rights and gender, which are also in agreement with the policies of other donors. It is focusing on participation, accountability and non-discrimination, with a zero-tolerance to human rights violations.

GRID-Arendal is promoting gender balance in all program and project activities, while trying to design operations that would improve the situation for women and girls. One area that is specifically highlighted is the role of women in waste management.

5 Conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

5.1.1 GRID-Arendal is playing an important and effective role, to the satisfaction of partners and donors.

Even though there are several areas that could be improved, the review team considers that GRID-Arendal is carrying out its work with dedication and professionalism. There are few or no other organizations in the specific niche role that GRID-Arendal is playing. It is therefore an important stakeholder in the implementation of both Norwegian environmental policy and as support for UNEP, and could potentially be a partner for the Knowledge Bank managed by Norad. All partners and donor organizations interviewed gave highly appreciative comments about GRID-Arendal's work and support. Aspects that are especially appreciated are the ability of translating difficult issues into a language and form of presentation that is understood by policy makers and the general public and the ability and flexibility to take on new important tasks on relatively short notice.

5.1.2 The main funding agencies have no formal coordination

Most of the projects implemented by GRID-Arendal are funded by an external donor such as GEF, IKI, bilateral cooperation agencies and partner agencies, with a co-financing from Norad and/or MoCE. The Norwegian financing through GRID-Arendal would most often cover staff time, while the rest of the agencies would cover investments and other project costs. Since most of the projects have UNEP as the implementing agency or main partner, it is surprising to find that MoCE, Norad and UNEP so far have not formally met to discuss their jointly financed projects. The evaluation of these projects has also been quite ad-hoc, except for the projects co-funded by the GEF, which have specific evaluation requirements.

5.1.3 The main funding agencies are not represented at the Board

None of the Norwegian funding agencies MoCE and Norad/MFA are represented on the Board of GRID-Arendal, and they are only invited as observers, and also UNEP is formally an observer. The board members are nominated by MoCE as individual persons. While this model might have some advantages, e.g. bringing in key experts, it is considered by the review team as a weakness that the main funding agencies do not discuss with each other the present and future role of GRID-Arendal, and therefore does not have a more active role in the institutional development.

5.1.4 The project management, M&E are areas with opportunities for improvement

GRID-Arendal's project management is an area of potential improvement. The organization has a good financial project management system, but it has been less focused on the design and implementation process, and the theory of change towards the project outcomes and impact. The use of Results Framework as a planning and monitoring instrument varies a lot, based on the donor requirements and partner agencies. Since quality of project planning, monitoring and implementation should be standard, it should not have to vary so much according to who are the donor or partners.

5.1.5 The Grant agreement is not using the concepts correctly

As mentioned in par. 4.7.2, the Grant Agreement is not using the concepts of risk and safeguards correctly, and are mixing them, which makes it difficult for the task managers in GRID-Arendal to monitor and report on the projects. It is especially complicated that the terms applied are different from those commonly used by international agencies such as UNEP. This makes it impossible for GRID-Arendal to report to Norad and UNEP with use of the same terms and definitions.

5.1.6 New projects are opportunity-based or on-demand

GRID-Arendal's long-term projects with UNEP are currently "opportunity based" according to proposals from partners and suggestions from UNEP task managers, all within the framework of Norwegian international environmental policies. At the same time, the short-term projects and ad-hoc tasks are carried out "on demand". This creates a difficult and confusing picture for GRID-Arendal's staff, where many understand the organization mainly as a service centre for UNEP. On the other hand, there is also a confusing picture within UNEP, where the different task managers that deal with GRID-Arendal do not know what the others are doing (only in very general terms) and have no internal coordination.

5.1.7 Alternative institutional set-ups

GRID-Arendal could continue with same institutional set-up if it is to the satisfaction of all parties, or it could make institutional changes. There are many alternative options, but the details on these are not part of the present study. Some alternatives include a stronger Norwegian and arctic focus, but this would require added funding from sources other than Norad, since the growth would not be in the developing countries, but could be done through increased funding through MoCE. Another alternative is to finance GRID-Arendal through an increase of Norway's direct support to UNEP, but only if GRID-Arendal become a part of the UN system. In that case it would mean that GRID-Arendal would be a UNEP office, under a model similar to WCMC. A final alternative is to move GRID-Arendal closer to UNEP through a model similar to the Copenhagen Climate Centre (UNEP-CCC).

5.1.8 Increased GRID-Arendal portfolio would require capacity building

Since Norad is getting a much larger portfolio but no additional staff, it is an incentive for outsourcing to organizations such as GRID-Arendal. MoCE has also got an increased workload, with more emphasis on the Arctic and international oceans, as well as other issues. Finally, UNEP is lacking financial resources to carry out all its tasks. This situation could easily result in increased demand for services from GRID-Arendal, however that could be a risk for the organization if it is not done gradually and with enough resources allocated to specialized staff, covering not only technical issues but efficient project design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The funding agencies have a responsibility to ensure that they don't overload GRID-Arendal with tasks, and especially ad-hoc requests, but work with the organization to ensure the quality of institutional growth.

5.2 Lessons learned

5.2.1 Presentation of fact increasingly important in the time of fake news

GRID-Arendal has got high recognition of its publications and website, which makes it easy to understand complex issues. It is increasingly important in this period of fake news to have an organization that is able to present facts in an easily understandable language and format. It would however be important to bring the messages to a much larger audience in Norway and internationally.

5.2.2 Low interaction between co-financing agencies is a challenge for the executing agency

For the moment, GRID-Arendal is dealing separately with MoCE, Norad and UNEP, and the contacts between these co-financing agencies is very general and not focused on individual projects. It is a challenge for GRID-Arendal having to respond to different institutional norms and requirements during monitoring and reporting. These challenges could increase if the Norad programme should be implemented with a portfolio approach with more focus on performance of individual projects.

5.2.3 Non-participation of donors on the Board lead to less proactivity on institutional issues

In most institutional and company Boards it is the members or owners that are represented on the Board. In GRID-Arendal the board members are appointed as individual persons, and even though some of them work in relevant organizations, they do not formally represent anyone else than themselves. Since the main donors are not represented on the Board it leads to less proactive agencies regarding discussion and promotion of institutional development of GRID-Arendal. The fact that they are invited as observers to the Board does not change this.

5.2.4 Reduced travel increases project risk

GRID-Arendal has the goal of reducing its carbon footprint, where a concrete measure is to reduce international travel and use more digital communication. Even though this is a positive goal, it must also be recognized that reduced on-the-ground presence would lead to higher project risk, due to the lack of possibility to see and control results and discuss with local beneficiaries. This risk is higher for an organization such as GRID-Arendal that is working with a very high number of partners, often in high-risk countries, and does not have its own staff on the ground.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Introduce a portfolio approach for all long-term projects under the Norad-funded program

GRID-Arendal should manage all long-term Norad funded projects through a portfolio approach and planning of the whole project cycle. This includes to agree with Norad on the projects to be included in the Norad funded program for each of GRID-Arendal's program areas. It would first be through a dialogue regarding the programme, and later yearly meetings and agreements between Norad and GRID-Arendal on adjustments of the project portfolio (preferably related to the donor forum mentioned above). Long-term projects are here understood as projects under GRID-Arendal's program areas that have a planned duration of more than two years. The portfolio could if agreed between the parties also include medium-term projects with duration 1-2 years. The portfolio management should include co-financing of projects implemented with UNEP (often also integrating other partners).

One advantage of the current approach is GRID-Arendal's flexibility to take up new issues on demand, and fast be able to respond, which should not be lost with a project portfolio approach. The yearly budget under the Norad program should therefore include a certain % of non-allocated funds to provide for new projects and activities. The review team considers that it should be at least 20% of the budget, but this should be discussed between the parties.

5.3.2 Organize yearly donor forums

There should be a yearly donor forum for GRID-Arendal, with the participation of Norad, UNEP and MoCE. The main reason is that most projects implemented by GRID-Arendal are funded with a co-financing between UNEP and Norad and/or MoCE. It is therefore a good practice of donor coordination to establish this forum, which should review annual reports and the situation of the jointly funded projects, including important mid-term and terminal evaluations, as well as discuss plans and budgets for new programs and projects. To reduce the administrative burden on GRID-Arendal, the organization should be allowed to have one common narrative and financial report and common audit, but this must comply with the minimum requirements of all donors. After the first-year experience with a donor forum, the parties should consider to also invite other major donors such as IKI, since GRID-Arendal staff time in the new IKI project will be co-funded by Norad resources. The review team would like to highlight that the forum would *not replace the important role of the GRID-Arendal Board*, which is covering all key aspects of the organization's activities.

5.3.3 Main funding organizations should be represented on the Board

The current set-up of the GRID-Arendal Board is a bit strange compared with other organizations. MoCE appoints the Board members, who are recruited as individual persons, but the ministry has a “hands-off” attitude to what the Board is doing. The review team recommends that the main funding agencies should be represented on the Board, for the moment at least MoCE, Norad and UNEP. This is expected to create more engagement from these organizations about GRID-Arendal’s work, not only for individual programmes and projects. It would also promote synergies and improved collaboration of the organizations in the periods between each donor forum.

5.3.4 Increased funding should consider the implementation capacity

As mentioned in this report, Norad has got responsibility for a much larger project portfolio but no new staff items. This could give an incentive for outsourcing of project management to organizations such as GRID-Arendal. MoCE has also got an increased workload, with more emphasis on the Arctic and international oceans, as well as other issues. Finally, UNEP is lacking financial resources to carry out all its tasks. This situation could easily result in increased demand for services from GRID-Arendal, however that could be a risk for the organization if it is not done gradually and with enough resources allocated to specialized staff, covering not only technical issues but efficient project design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The funding agencies have a responsibility to ensure that they don’t overload GRID-Arendal with tasks, and especially ad-hoc requests, but work with the organization to ensure the quality of institutional growth.

5.3.5 Establish GRID-Arendal staff in main regions

With the goal to reduce international travel due to the carbon footprint, GRID-Arendal must look out for how to avoid increasing the project risks. It is recommended to establish permanent staff members in the main project regions, such as in West Africa and the Himalayas. Regional technical advisors for GRID-Arendal could be established e.g. within the offices of the Abidjan Convention and ICIMOD, which would improve institutional dialogue and local impact. The main difference compared with using consultants is to have staff that clearly respond to the Headquarters.

5.3.6 Make a clear distinction between project risks and safeguards

GRID-Arendal and Norad should make a clear distinction between project risk and safeguards, which could be done as an addendum to the Grant Agreement and followed up for the design of new GRID-Arendal projects. The Grant Agreement is mixing the concepts of project risk and safeguards, which makes it difficult for GRID-Arendal to monitor and report on the projects, and impossible to report to different donors with use of the same definitions.

5.3.7 Streamline the collaboration with UNEP

Since this review is not contracted by UNEP, it will not give recommendations directly to UNEP. It is therefore recommended that GRID-Arendal should approach UNEP and suggest a dialogue on how to streamline their mutual collaboration. It is recommended that the improvement of effectiveness and efficiency of the collaboration should consist of: (i) Establish a long-term UNEP GRID-Arendal program that would partly mirror the funding from Norad and MoCE through GRID-Arendal, but also include joint long-term projects and activities funded by other sources, including UNEP’s own funds; (ii) Invite UNEP to the yearly donor forum mentioned in recommendation 5.3.1; (iii) Ensure that all the different parts of UNEP that have contact with GRID-Arendal should be coordinated internally, and represented by the participants in the donor forum; and (iv) UNEP should make strong efforts to reduce the number of ad-hoc requests with short deadline, especially towards the end of the budget year. On the other hand, GRID-Arendal should clarify for UNEP that it cannot necessarily respond to all such ad-hoc requests, if it could negatively affect on the performance of other activities.

To ensure streamlining of project management between UNEP and GRID-Arendal, combined with improved project performance, UNEP should carry out a training course for GRID-Arendal staff on project design, monitoring and evaluation. The course should have the participation of all GRID-Arendal

staff that deals with these issues, even those that have much experience on project management, to ensure that all staff should have a common understanding of all concepts and methodology that would be used in both UNEP and GRID-Arendal.

5.3.8 Include GRID-Arendal in the Knowledge Bank

GRID-Arendal is formally a Norwegian foundation and therefore part of the Norwegian knowledge base. Its unique niche in international development makes GRID-Arendal an excellent candidate for being included as a partner for one or more of the Knowledge Bank's (Kunnskapsbankens) focus areas. It is recommended that GRID-Arendal and Norad enter into dialogue about this issue.

5.3.9 Review alternatives for legal status of GRID-Arendal UNEP

It is considered outside the scope and budget of the current review to study reorganization and alternative legal status for GRID-Arendal. It is however recommended that a study should be carried out to review and propose alternative options for the future of GRID-Arendal, including if the current institutional set-up as a Norwegian foundation that is supporting UNEP is the most relevant form of collaboration. Alternatives to be studied are e.g. (i) to strengthen the "Norwegian interest" in GRID-Arendal through more emphasis on polar and European issues (not Norad funded); (ii) to finance GRID-Arendal through Norway's support to UNEP; (iii) to establish GRID-Arendal as a UNEP branch, under a model similar to WCMC; or (iv) to move GRID-Arendal closer to UNEP through a model similar to Copenhagen Climate Centre (UNEP-CCC).

Annex A: Terms of Reference for joint review of GRID-Arendal's cooperation with Norad

I Background

GRID-Arendal is a Norwegian foundation, established on initiative of the then Norwegian Ministry of Environment in 1989 to support the United Nations Environment Programme. GRID-Arendal's strength is on the translation of complex science to policy action and building global capacity for good environmental management bridging science and action.

The Ministry of Environment provides GRID-Arendal limited core funding and also nominates the board of directors for the foundation. GRID-Arendal has, since its establishment, received support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad. Since 2017 GRID-Arendal's work programme has been supported by Norad through several multi-year grant agreements. The latest grant agreement (QZA-21/0199) was signed in 2021 and covers the work programme for the period of 1st April 2021 to 31st December 2024.

In 2020 Norad's management responsibilities for Norwegian Development Aid increased from about 4 billion NOK to almost 20 billion NOK while its staffing remained at the same level. In 2021 Norad launched a new strategy and new organisation to accommodate the increased responsibility. To increase its efficiency, Norad is currently reviewing its cooperation modalities including with its civil society partners as well as restructuring its knowledge programs.

Norad aims to apply a portfolio perspective when managing aid projects and programs. With regards to GRID-Arendal, Norad's agreements with UNEP and GEF are of particular interest in a portfolio perspective.

Given that these processes were on-going at the time when the new agreement between GRID-Arendal and Norad was entered into at the end of 2021, a provision in the grant agreement establishes that a joint review of the programme shall be carried out, aimed at strengthening the management modalities of the programme including the reporting of results.

Another reason for this early review of the cooperation program has been the finalisation of the new GRID-Arendal strategy 2022-2024, which was finally approved after the signing of the new agreement. Also, to be considered in the review of the program is the new joint UNEP / GRID-Arendal work program for the period 2022-2023 also formalized after the signing of the GRID-Arendal - Norad agreement.

Given these changes and circumstances and in accordance with the agreement Norad, GRID-Arendal has agreed to carry out a programme review in the first half of 2022 with findings and recommendations provided by the end of June 2022 with the following purposes:

II Purposes of the Programme review

The joint review will assess the programme as outlined in the Grant Agreement QZA-21/0199 and shall assess any needs for adjusting the programme, possibilities for strengthening the modalities for programming, and reporting on results. A report will be produced summarising the findings and recommendations of the review, which will serve as a basis for possible, subsequent adjustments to the programme and its management.

III Scope of Work

The consultant shall address but not limited to the following issues:

- a) Present a brief overview of GRID-Arendal's
 - core competences
 - current programs
 - sources and flows of funding and their character in terms of predictability and flexibility vs detailed programming
 - implementing partners
 - programming and budgeting routines
 - monitoring and reporting system and reporting obligations
 - ad hoc support to UNEP
- b) Review of and recommend on possible options for rationalisation of the modalities of cooperation with a focus on programming of activities and resources and reporting on results
- c) Assess modalities of existing cooperation between Norad and UNEP as well as other relevant partners (GEF, GIZ)
- d) Assess the balance of ad hoc support to UNEP with medium- and longer-term projects and work programming
- e) Consult at least two of the partner institutions in the South involved in the program on their experiences with regard to
 - Relevance
 - Efficiency of the forms and modalities
 - Suggestions for improvements
- f) Review of possible options for increasing synergies between programs including with Norad's knowledge programs
- g) Raise other issues deemed relevant by the consultant may also be addressed in the report

V Proposed timeline

9 March	TORs agreed with Norad and GRID-Arendal
10-28 March	Tendering Process
1 April	Consultant engaged
April-May	Implementation
5	Draft Report
10 June	Consulting meeting
30 June	Final Report

The review shall be based on

1. interviews with key informants in GRID Arendal both staff and board, Norad, MFA/ selected Norwegian Embassies, KLD, UNEP, GEF and collaborating institutions in developing countries, and other partners the consultant deem relevant,

2. available reports and documents including but not necessarily exclusively, those listed in Annex I below

VI The Consultant

It is estimated that approximately 2 persons during 2 to 3 weeks will be needed for the assignment

The consultants shall jointly have the following qualifications

1. Good knowledge of and insights into the environmental and climate development cooperation landscape, including UNEP and GEF;
2. Good knowledge and insights on management for results;
3. Good knowledge of Norwegian development cooperation policy and practice

VII Offer

The consultant should submit a written offer to procurements@grida.no marked 'Consultant - Joint Review' and copy miles.macmillan-lawler@grida.no

The offer should include the relevant competence of the consultant to undertake the work and a total price. The offer should be written in English.

Offers will be assessed on relevant competence (50 % weight) and price (50 % weight). Closing date for offers is 28.03.2022

Annex

The review will consider the following background documents and information as input.

1. Norad's Strategy towards 2030 and its operationalisation
<https://www.norad.no/en/toolspublications/publications/2021/norads-strategy-towards-2030/>
2. GRID-Arendal Strategic Plan 2022-2025 <https://www.grida.no/publications/413>
3. UNEP strategy for 2022-2025 <https://www.unep.org/resources/policy-and-strategy/people-and-planet-unep-strategy-2022-2025>
4. UNEP / GRID-Arendal 2019-2024 Framework Agreement (which specifies a joint biannual Programme of Work) plus summary of existing cooperation
5. GRID-Arendal Programme strategic plans
6. A summary of the relationship between the program and financial support from and collaboration with other parties such as GEF and UNEP
7. GRID-Arendal General Annual Reports and specific reports to NORAD/MFA and KLD and other key partners and financiers such as UNEP and GEF

Annex B: Documents consulted

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Annex C: Review matrix

Issue	Sub issue	Review questions	Sources of information
A brief overview of GRID-Arendal	Core competences	What are the core competences of GRID-Arendal?	Documents, survey, interviews, website
	Current programs	What are the ongoing programs GRID-Arendal?	Documents, website, interviews
	Sources and flows of funding and their character in terms of predictability and flexibility vs detailed programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the main core funding sources (and amounts)? What are the main project/ activity funding sources (and amounts)? What is the predictability of each funding source? What is the flexibility of each funding source vs detailed programming? 	Documents, budgets, financial reports, interviews
	Implementing partners	What are the current implementing partners, and what activities are done with each of them?	Documents, survey, interviews, yearly reports, partner reports, websites
	Programming and budgeting routines	What are GRID-Arendal's routines for programming and budgeting (overall and projects)?	Documents, budgets, financial reports, interviews, yearly reports, partner reports
	Monitoring and reporting system and reporting obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is GRID-Arendal's monitoring and reporting system structured and functioning? What are GRID-Arendal's reporting obligations to different partners/ funding agencies? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M&E system and user manual, survey, interviews Documents, yearly reports, interviews
	Ad hoc support to UNEP	What has been covered by GRID-Arendal's support to UNEP?	GRID-Arendal's and UNEP's yearly reports, project progress reports, survey, interviews, former evaluations
Review of and recommendation on possible options for rationalisation of the modalities of cooperation	Programming of activities	What is the current efficiency of programming and how can it improve?	Strategic plan, annual reports, survey, interviews, former evaluations
	Resource management	What is the current efficiency of resource management and how can it improve?	Strategic plan, annual reports, survey, interviews, former evaluations
	Results reporting	What is the current efficiency of results reporting and how can it improve?	Strategic plan, annual reports, survey, interviews, former evaluations
Assessment of modalities of GRID-Arendal's existing cooperation with relevant partners*	With Norad	What are the findings and conclusions on cooperation with Norad?	Documents, annual reports, survey, interviews, former evaluations
	With UNEP	What are the findings and conclusions on cooperation with UNEP?	Documents, annual reports, survey, interviews, former evaluations, websites
	With GEF	What are the findings and conclusions on cooperation with GEF?	Documents, annual reports, survey, interviews, former evaluations, GEF website
	With GIZ	What are the findings and conclusions on cooperation with GIZ?	Documents, annual reports, survey, interviews, former evaluations (if available)
	With others	What are the findings and conclusions on cooperation with other partners?	Documents, annual reports, survey, interviews, former evaluations (if available)
Assessment of the balance of ad hoc support to UNEP	With medium- and longer-term projects	What is the experience with GRID-Arendal's involvement with UNEP in medium- and longer-term projects?	Project documents, survey, interviews, annual reports, former evaluations
	With work programming	What is the experience of collaboration between with GRID-Arendal and UNEP on programming?	Annual reports, survey, interviews, former evaluations
Experience of at least 2 partner institutions in the South involved with GRID-Arendal in the program	Relevance	What is the relevance of GRID-Arendal collaboration for partners in the South?	Partner documents, websites, survey, interviews, former evaluations, websites
	Efficiency of the forms and modalities	What is the efficiency of different modalities used for collaboration with partners in the South?	Partner documents, websites, survey, interviews, former evaluations, websites
	Suggestions for improvements	What are the suggestions from partners in the South for improvements of GRID-Arendal collaboration?	Survey, partner progress reports, interviews

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Review possible options for increasing synergies between GRID-Arendal and any Norad program, including Norad's knowledge programs*.	Synergies with Norad's knowledge programs	What are the options for increasing synergies between GRID-Arendal and Norad's knowledge programs?	Annual reports, survey, interviews, former evaluations
	Synergies with other Norad programs	What are the options for increasing synergies between GRID-Arendal and other Norad programs?	Annual reports, survey, interviews, former evaluations
Other issues deemed relevant by the consultant	TBD	TBD	TBD

Annex D: Persons interviewed

Name	Affiliation	Contact	Notes
Norad			
Lars Carl Olov Eckman	Norad	Lars.Carl.Olov.Ekman@norad.no	GRID-Arendal Focal point
Lauren Céline Naville Gisnås	Norad	Lauren.Celine.Naville.Gisnas@norad.no	
Ivar Thorkild Jørgensen	Norad	Ivar.Thorkild.Jorgensen@norad.no	
Anders Martin Larnemark	Norad	Anders.Martin.Larnemark@norad.no	Limited knowledge. Preferred to fill out survey only.
Øyvind Eggen	Norad Knowledge Bank	Oyvind.Eggen@norad.no	
MoCE (KLD)			
Ingeborg Mork-Knutsen	MoCE	Ingeborg.Mork-Knutsen@kld.dep.no	Marine Litter
Anne Martine Solstad	MoCE	Anne-Martine.Solstad@kld.dep.no	GRID-Arendal Focal Point
Torstein Lindstad	MoCE	Torstein.Lindstad@kld.dep.no	Lead on GRID-Arendal in MoCE
MFA/Embassies			
Jan Erik Studsrød	MFA - Nepal embassy	Jan.Erik.Studsrod@mfa.no	
Solveig Andresen	MFA	Formerly in Nepal Embassy solveig.andresen@mfa.no	
UNEP			
Pierre Henri Boileau	UNEP	pierre.boileau@un.org	Global Environmental Outlook
Sam Barratt	UNEP	sam.barratt@un.org	Youth, Education & Advocacy
Heidi Savelli Söderberg	UNEP	heidi.savelli@un.org	Marine Litter
Partners in developing countries			
Nand Kishor Agrawal	ICIMOD	nand.agrawal@gmail.com Nandkishor.Agrawal@icimod.org	https://www.icimod.org/initiative/rms/
Richard Dacosta	Abidjan Convention Secr.	Richard.dacosta@grida.no	https://abidjanconvention.org
GRID-Arendal Board			
Jan Gunnar Winther	GRID-Arendal	jan.gunnar.winther@npolar.no	President of the Board of GRID-Arendal; Director, Polar Institute
Guri Enodd Hope	GRID-Arendal	guri.hope@miljodir.no	Board member
GRID-Arendal Staff			
Peter Harris	GRID-Arendal	Peter.Harris@grida.no	Director General
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Eivind Halaas	GRID-Arendal	Eivind.Halaas@grida.no	Leader Group. Chief Financial Officer
Janet F. Skaalvik	GRID-Arendal	Janet.Skaalvik@grida.no	Leader Group. Technology & Innovation
Clever Mafuta	GRID-Arendal	Clever.Mafuta@grida.no	Waste & Marine Litter
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Björn Alftan	GRID-Arendal	bjorn.alftan@grida.no	Polar & Climate Change

Anna Sinisalo	GRID-Arendal	anna.sinisalo@grida.no	Polar & Climate Change
Miles Macmillan-Lawler	GRID-Arendal	Miles.Macmillan-Lawler@grida.no	Finance & Administration
Mona Edvardsen	GRID-Arendal	mona.edvardsen@grida.no	Finance & Administration
Steven Lutz	GRID-Arendal	Steven.Lutz@grida.no	Marine Environment
Tanya Bryan	GRID-Arendal	Tanya.Bryan@grida.no	Marine Environment
Marco Vinaccia	GRID-Arendal	marco.vinaccia@grida.no	Marine Environment
Valentin Yemelin	GRID-Arendal	Valentin.Yemelin@grida.no	Transboundary Governance & Environmental Crime
Romain Langeard	GRID-Arendal	romain.langeard@grida.no	Transboundary Governance & Environmental Crime

Annex E: Project table (since 2019)

Project name	Funding Agency	Budget	Country or region	GRID-Arendal's partner executing agencies	Start-end
Projects planned and implemented under the Norad program					
Capacity development to address risks in coastal zones	CTCN-UNIDO	USD 308,077	Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Palau, Solomon Islands	SPC Geoscience, University of Sydney	2019-2021
EO4SD Fragile States/ESA	ESA	EUR 208,466	Colombia, Peru, Ecuador; Niger, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, DRC, Kenya, Somalia; Iraq; Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kiribati	ESA, CLS, GISBOX, Hatfield Consultants, PWC, SIRS, SISTEMA, UNITAR	2018-2021
WorldWater - Surface Water Dynamics	ESA	EUR 181,525		DHI GRAS GeoVille GiSAT DTU-Env	2020-2022
GEF Common Oceans ABNJ ¹	GEF (ID 4660)	NOK 1,231,935	Global, Nairobi Convention and CPPS	IUCN, CPPS, East African Seas Regional Coordinating Unit	2016-2019
GEF Blue Forests ¹	GEF (ID 4452)	USD 4,500,000	Global (project sites Ecuador, Madagascar, Mozambique, UAE, Indonesia)	WCMC, CI, WWF, IOC, UNESCO, Indonesian Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, IUCN, Blue Ventures, University of Cape Town	2015-2021
GEF Addressing Marine Plastics	GEF (ID 9681)	USD 370,000	Global	Ellen MacArthur Foundation, Ocean Conservancy, UNEP	2018-2021
GEF IW:LEARN ¹	GEF (5729)	USD 1,000,000	Global	CI, GWP, ICPDR, IRF, IUCN, TNC, UNECE, UNESCO-IHP, UNIDO, UNU-INWEH, WWF	2016-2020
Commonwealth Blue Charter Project Development Training	Commonwealth Secretariat	GBP 11,790	Global	UNEP-WCMC	2020-2020
HMF Nepal Rivers	HMF	NOK 3,500,000	Nepal	ISWA (Netherlands), Doko Recyclers (Nepal), CREASION (Nepal)	2022-2025
Resilient Mountain Solutions - ICIMOD	ICIMOD	NOK 2,161,588	Hindu Kush Region	ICIMOD	2019-2022
Blue Solutions,	IKI	EUR 375,000	Global	GIZ, IUCN, UNEP, Rare, UNDP	2019-2022
Mami Wata	IKI	EUR 2,625,367	West Africa (Abidjan Convention Region)	Abidjan Convention Secretariat + Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Benin	2015-2022
Mami Wata Amendment	IKI	EUR 265,000	Togo and Benin	Abidjan Convention Secretariat + Togo, Benin	2022-2022
Panorama Communications Package	IUCN	USD 290,000	Global	GIZ, IUCN, UNEP, UNDP, Rare, Ifoam	2021-2023
Protected Area Solutions	IUCN	NOK 955,297	Global, Vietnam	IUCN, stakeholders in Vietnam, Kenya Colombia, Peru	2017-2019
JPIO - Deep Sea Mining	JPIO	NOK 680,000	Global	NTNU, GEOMAR, UNEP	2019-2022
ASAP- Asian Scientific Alliance for Plastic pollution and waste value network management	NIVA	NOK 800,000	Asia	Basel Convention Regional Centre for Asia & Pacific, East China Normal University, National Marine Environmental Monitoring Centre, State Oceanic Administration, Mu Gamma Consultants, The Energy and Resources Institute India, SRM University, Center for SE Asian Studies, Indonesia Institute of Sciences, Bandung Institute of Technology, University of Indonesia, NIVA, SALT	2020-2024
MACBIO Atlas	MACBIO	NOK 857,000	Fiji, Vanuatu, Tonga, Kiribati and Solomon Islands	IUCN (project lead) Malcolm Clark (NIWA - partner) GIZ (funding) SPC Geoscience Division (PACGEO access)	2016-2019
ResilienSEA	MAVA	EUR 1,532,602	Mauritania, Cabo Verde, Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone	Abidjan Convention Secretariat, Wetlands International, RAMPPO, Duke University	2018-2022
Adaptation at Altitude	UNEP	USD 86,000	South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia); East Africa (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania)	UNEP, ARCOS, Sustainable Caucasus	2021-2022
Vanishing Treasures	UNEP	USD 321,939	Bhutan, Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan), Virunga region (Rwanda, Uganda)	UNEP, Good Cause Promotions, GRASP Secretariat, Government of Bhutan, National Tiger Centre	2019-2022
ResilienSEA Phase II	MAVA	USD 231,718	Mauritania, Cabo Verde, Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone	Centre de Suivi Ecologique, Wetlands International, Réseau des Aires Marine Protegees de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (RAMPPO)	2021-2022
West Africa - Extended Continental Shelf	MFA - via NPD	NOK 2,305,739	Mauritania, Cabo Verde, Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone	Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, MFA in Cabo Verde, Partner Countries	2018-2022
WaterShared	NDF	EUR 392,506	Bolivia	Natura (Bolivia), Cuencas Sustentables (Bolivia)	2019-2022
GOTHECA-NOCK	RCN	NOK 469,000	Norway, Chinese Karakoram	NTNU, NVE, and Institutt for miljø og naturvitskap, Hogskulen på Vestlandet, Norway; Institute of Tibetan Research (CAS) and Northwest Institute of Eco-Environment and Resources, China.	2021-2024

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Reinforcing fisheries' governance in Guinea	Oceans5	USD 954,910	Guinea	Regional Partnership for Coastal and Marine Conservation in West Africa (PRCM), Trygg Mat Tracking (TMT), Ministry of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Maritime Economy (MPAEM) of Guinea	2021-2024
FishGuard Seychelles	NatGEO	NOK 380,448	Seychelles	ATLAN-Space, TMT	2018-2019
Global Tailingsdam Portal	Church of England Pension Fund + UNEP	USD 83,900	Global (plus Asia Pacific)	UNEP, Church of England, Swedish pension fund	2019-2022
Uruguay Rapid Blue Economy	UNEP + ROLAC	USD 10,000	Uruguay	UNEP-WCMC	2020-2021
Caucasus Environment Outlook	COSUDE South Caucasus	CHF 69,500	Caucasus Region	Sustainable Caucasus, UNEP, GRID-Geneva	2019-2022
Enhancing Pacific Ocean Governance ¹	Australia MFA via Univ. of Sydney	NOK 2,060,000	Pacific Islands	Geoscience Australia, Australian Environment Department, SPC Geoscience Division, Australian AGD, and Commonwealth Secretariat	2015-2020
Projects not planned under the Norad program²					
Air and Water Quality in Africa UNEP	UNEP	USD 60,000	Africa		2021-2021
Sudan State of Environment UNEP	UNEP	USD 69,000	Sudan		2019-2020
Wastewater Management in Africa	UNEP	USD 381,331	Africa		2015-2020
Arctic-Global Vital Graphics	UNEP	USD 18,400	Arctic/Global		2018-2019
Vital Arctic Graphics part 2 - UNEP	UNEP	USD 17,000	Arctic/Global		2019-2019
Asia Pacific Tailings dam Portal	UNEP	USD 64,400	Asia/Pacific		2021-2022
COBSEA Nutrient Pollution Red. Strategy	UNEP	USD 160,000	East Asia		2022-2022
Support to the Tehran Convention Process	UNEP	USD 527,923	Tehran Convention		2021-2022
H2020 Arctic PASSION	H2020	EUR 518,937.50	Arctic	AWI	2021-2025
H2020 EcoPotential - Part II	H2020	USD 127,831	Europe, Caribbean, Africa	UNEP Vienna	2017-2019
ECOTIP	H2020	EUR 461,462.10	Arctic Seas	UNEP Vienna	2020-2022
NUNATARYUK Permafrost	H2020	EUR 317,500	Arctic	AWI	2017-2022
Communicating science outputs of GNC project	UNEP	USD 60,000	Global		2018-2019
Gaming UNEP	UNEP	USD 30,000	Global		2019-2019
Playing 4 The Planet	UNEP	USD 118,311	Global		2021-2021
Playing For Planet	UNEP	USD 18,000	Global		2020-2020
GEO advocacy publication	UNEP	USD 138,500	Global		2021-2021
Global Marine Litter Assessment	UNEP	USD 165,000	Global		2020-2021
Global Seagrass Report	UNEP	USD 56,300	Global		2018-2019
Global wildfires RRA	UNEP	USD 50,000	Global		2020-2021
GPA - Global Program of Action	UNEP	USD 691,848	Global		2021-2022
Illegal Trade of Chemicals	UNEP	USD 55,000	Global		2018-2019
Little Book of Green Nudges	UNEP	USD 83,850	Global		2019-2020
SSFA Kelp & Seagrass Reports	UNEP	USD 110,000	Global		2020-2021
TED-Ed Earth School	UNEP	USD 56,500	Global		2021-2021
Mine tailings forum	UNEP	USD 27,000	Global		2018-2019
GEO for Cities	UNEP	USD 198,536	Global		2019-2020
COVID media partnership	UNEP	USD 38,000	Global		2021-2021
Global Tailingsdam Portal	UNEP	USD 50,000	Global		2019-2019
IETC Gender and Waste	UNEP	USD 70,500			2018-2019
Sports for Nature	UNEP	USD 85,000	Global		2021-2022
Sustainable Blue Economy support	UNEP	USD 160,000	Global		2021-2021

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Little Book of Green Nudges Part 2	UNEP	USD 14,000	Global		2021-2021
World Environment Situation Room	UNEP	USD 30,000	Global		2021-2021
MED POL	UNEP	USD 14,000	Mediterranean Sea		2021-2021

Annex F: Results framework

Result Level	Description	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Target year	Assumptions ¹
I POLAR CLIMATE AND MOUNTAIN REGIONS						
Impact	Healthier environments and communities in remote and high mountain regions	SDG 15.4.1 Coverage by PAs of important sites for mountain BD	In 2020, 41% of each mountain key BD area were within PAs	49 % of KBAs in mountain areas in PAs	2024	
		SDG 13.2.1 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning	No target countries have submitted national action plans to UNFCCC	Two target countries submit national action plans or similar to UNFCCC	2024	
Outcome 1	Climate change adaptation and nature-based solutions are adopted in supported mountain regions	Number of new adaptation and nature-based solutions adopted in target countries	0	2 solutions adopted and upscaled in each target region (Hindu-Kush of the Himalayas, Central Asia, Virunga in East Africa)	2024	Solutions are able to be adopted and upscale in the countries.
Outcome 2	Targeted governments make informed policy decisions about the environment based on the best available scientific and environmental information	Number of new national policy initiatives in target countries that are linked to our work	2021 - no new policy decisions have resulted from our work	One policy initiative in each target country/region		
Outcome 3	Selected mountain regions and remote areas formulate and apply good pollution and environmental management practices	Actions taken to address waste management in mountain regions and remote areas	Current guidelines on mountain waste management outdated	Updated guidelines on waste management in mountain regions adopted		
II ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME AND TRANSBOUNDARY GOVERNANCE						
Impact	Transboundary cooperation to address environmental issues, including environmental crime, strengthened	Number of target countries addressing selected environmental issues (including environmental crime)	0	6	2022	
		SDG 12.1.1 Number of African countries with sustainable consumption and production (SCP) national action plans or SCP mainstreamed as a priority or a target into national policies	0	5	2024	
Outcome 1	Transboundary cooperation and governance on selected environmental issues strengthened	Number of actions taken by member states to fulfil commitments under regional conventions	No actions have been documented by since the release of the Caspian State of Environment Report	2 actions per member state reported to Tehran Convention Secretariat	2024	
Outcome 2	Selected developing countries have improved capacity to combat environmental crime	Number of initiatives from national government to tackle environmental crime in target countries	0	4	2024	
Outcome 3	Capacity built for sustainable resource use and sustainable production and consumption in selected areas	Number of national initiatives in target countries that address target environmental issues	0	20	2024	
III MARINE ENVIRONMENT						
Impact		SDG 14.2.1	3	6	2024	

	Healthier marine environment in developing countries	Proportion of nationalexclusive economic zones managed using ecosystem-based approaches - measured as the number of countries in Abidjan Convention undertaking integratedocean management				
		SDG 14.5.1 Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas - measured by number of Abidjan Convention Countries with MPA networks covering at least 10% of their marine area	3 countries with greater than 10%(Gabon, South Africa and Cameroon)	6	2024	
		Number of countries with blue coastal ecosystems recognised in their NDCs to UNFCCC	34 countries have recognized blue coastal ecosystems in mitigation actions, 3 in adaptation actions	40 countries recognise blue coastal ecosystemsin mitigation actions, 80 in adaptation actions	2024	
Outcome 1	Selected coastal developing states practice ecosystem-based integrated ocean management within a strong regional policy framework	Number of countries that implement integrated ocean management in the Abidjan Convention	3 pilot countries being supported in implementation of integrated ocean management	6 countries with national integrated ocean management implemented	2024	Target countries have capacity and willingness to undertake integrated ocean management
Outcome 2	Nature-based solutions in marine and coastal environments are incorporated into national actions and policy in supported countries	Number of Nature-based solutions adopted by target countries in West Africa	Seven West African countries trained in seagrass monitoring	At least 5 West African countries implement nature-based solutions	2024	Solutions identified are relevant to the target countries
Outcome 3	Selected national governments adopt a sustainable blue economy approach	Number of governments supported to adopt sustainable blue economy practices	0	3	2024	National governments see benefits in sustainable blue economy approaches and have capacity to operationalize
IV WASTE AND MARINE LITTER						
Impact	The extent of plastics and solid waste in wastewater and excess of nutrients entering the marine environment reduced	SDG indicator 14.1.1Index of coastal eutrophication and floating plastic debris density	Target countries will need support to establish the baseline and monitoring against SDG 14.1	SDG 14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, includingmarine debris and nutrient pollution	2025	
Outcome 1	Global commitments and selected national and regional instruments to prevent marine litter strengthened	Global agreement on marine litter	No global agreement onmarine litter			
		Regional Action Plans developed and updated for Regional Seas Conventions in Africa	Abidjan Convention - No current regional action plan (in development); Nairobi Convention - Western Indian Ocean Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (2018); Barcelona Conyention - Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean (2013)	All Africa Regional Seas have up-to-date Regional Action Plans	2024	Member states endorse Regional Action Plans

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		National Action Plans on marine litter in AbidjanConvention member states	22 member states - Nigeria has National Action Plan on Marine Litter in development	5 countries withNational Action Plan on MarineLitter	2024	Member states will engage to develop national action plans
Outcome 2	Waste management in selected countries improved	Number of policy/ management actions related to marine litter in target countries	0 new actions implemented from March 2021	Supported countries make policy/ management actions	2024	Partner countries have capacity to implement actions

¹The original RFW called the column Risks and assumptions, but no risks were identified