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**Elimination of Obsolete Pesticide Stockpiles and Addressing Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Contaminated Sites within a Sound Chemicals Management Framework in Armenia”**

**UNDP-GEF full-sized Project**

**THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT BOARD AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE JOINT SESSION 2018**

Conference hall of UN office in Armenia

19 January 2018

11:00-14:30

**Participants**

<b><i>Project management board members</i></b>		
1.	Khachik Hakobyan	Deputy Minister of Nature Protection of the Republic of Armenia <i>Project management board co-chair</i>
2.	Vrezh Gabrielyan, Rescue service Colonel-Major	Deputy Director of Rescue Service of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Armenia <i>Project management board co-chair</i>
3.	Dmitri Mariyasin	UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Armenia
4.	Lilia Shushanyan	Adviser to the Minister-Chief of Government Staff
5.	Ashot Harutyunyan	Deputy Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Armenia
6.	Arman Hovhannisyan	Head of UN Division of the Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia
<b><i>UNDP</i></b>		
7.	Armen Martirosyan	Sustainable Growth & Resilience Portfolio Analyst
8.	Tatevik Koloyan	Sustainable Growth & Resilience Programme Associate
9.	Gayane Gharagebakyan	Project Coordinator/PC
10.	Vardan Tserunyan	Project Technical Task Leader
11.	Kristina Tereshchatova	Project Assistant
12.	Gagik Karapetyan	Project Local consultant- engineer
<b><i>Participants</i></b>		
13.	Artak Khachatryan	Head of Division of waste inventory, classification and technology investigation at “Environmental Monitoring and Information Center” SNCO, Ministry of Nature Protection of the Republic of Armenia / Basel Convention Focal Point
14.	Irina Hakobyan	Chief specialist of the Hazardous substances and waste policy division Ministry of Nature Protection of the RA / Member of PAC
15.	Karapet Karapetyan, Rescue Service lieutenant colonel	Head of Technogenic accidents division of the Department of population protection and disasters consequences elimination of Rescue Service of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the RA / Member of PAC

16.	Vahan Simonyan	Department for Mobilization and Civil Defense of the RA Police/ PAC member (replacement)
17.	Arshak Smbatyan	National Security Service
18.	Nune Bakunts	Deputy Director General of the “National Center for Disease Control and Prevention” SNCO of the RA Ministry of Health / PAC member
19.	Lilik Simonyan	Head of Hygienic and Environmental Risks Division, Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment NGO / PAC member
20.	Voyteck Mussil	Nubarashen evaluation and design project coordinator / Dekonta a.s./ Czech Republic
21.	Boris Urbanek	Nubarashen evaluation and design project expert / GEOTest a.s. / Czech Republic
22.	Artak Ter-Torosyan	Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) specialist
23.	Aram Bayanduryan	Translator

### **Documents / materials submitted**

- Annual Project Operational and Management Plan for the years 2018 and 2017;
- Scope of Project Outcomes as of December 31, 2017;
- Revised budget for 2017
- Nubarashen burial site assessment and characterization report – executive summary
- Costs/budget assessment

### **Introduction / Opening Speech**

UNDP Deputy Resident Representative Mrs. Dmitry Mariyasin, delivered opening speech for the session, presenting the format of the meeting activities. It was noted that during the first half of the meeting the Project Management Board (PMB) will review the report on the Project’s activities for the year 2017 and the planned activities for the year 2018. The second half of the meeting will proceed with expanded scope and will be joined by expert members from the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) and representatives of the Czech contractor company. Mr. Mariyasin noted that the project faces complications in all aspects – both technical and political, and public response is unpredictable, too, hence these complications, as well as the necessity for consistent work on various political and conceptual issues should be borne in mind when discussing the year 2018 activities.

Mr. Hakobyan welcomed the meeting participants and noted that throughout the course of the project in 2017, a considerably extensive scope of work has been accomplished, marked with significant progress and achievements. He emphasized that the team of the project has done a good job by communicating the upcoming planned meeting and its agenda to members one month in advance. Mr. Hakobyan requested that decisions be made after a thorough study of technical and political issues, as the issues are numerous.

Mr. Gabrielyan welcomed the participants of the session, also highlighting the effective work performed during the past year, and implementation of remarkable studies. Progress of work has been marked in many aspects, many of the Board’s members have actively participated or assisted in these processes. The program is very closely linked to other problems existing in the country, for example, the Nairit issue, and the decisions on further course of action are of crucial importance in this respect.

Ms. Gharabekyan presented the general framework and structure of the Project activities, key data on the Project, covering the report for the year 2017 on work performed results achieved, briefly presenting the studies and qualification of hazardous waste disposal technologies, as well as presented the 2018 work plan for the Project. Participants were also provided with the multi-year budget of the project, for the period covering 2017 and 2018, the project progress evaluation framework, with the inclusion of indicators and targets set out in the project document.

It was highlighted during the speech, that during the analysis of Nubarashen site and waste, re-evaluation of the disposable/eliminable volumes of obsolete pesticides (OPs) was made as follows: 1,052 tons of waste containing 1 category POPs (vs. previous 900 tons); 4,123 tons of Category 2 – highly POP-contaminated soil/waste (according to previous estimate -7,100 tons), and 8,500 tons of Category 3- low POP-contaminated soil, vs. previously 12,700 tons, as well as additional 40 tons of construction materials, concrete residues classified as

Category 4. The new amounts of evaluated waste, with evaluation methodological details were presented by the representatives of Dekonta a.s. Project contractor company. Questions were raised concerning some uncertainties in the amounts evaluation. As a result, the meeting has considered the new amounts acceptable, and henceforth the presented amounts are to be used for upcoming clean-up and disposal. With regard to adjustment of the total amount of waste subject to elimination, as well as in view of implementation of the Project Output 1.3, the session proceeded by discussing the issue of collecting 150 tons of obsolete pesticides accumulated and maintained in rural community warehouses, which was supposed to be achieved with the support of FAO. It was suggested that a request be made to obtain an official response/stance on the status of the designated actions.

A presentation was made on the progress made towards Output 1: "Removal of Priority POP Pesticide wastes from Nubarashen burial site, local containment to prevent residual pollution", Output 1.1 "Comprehensive physicochemical research, geotechnical and hydrogeological assessments in Nubarashen POPs/OPs burial site, detailed design and modeling of operations, including operational planning". Members of the board referred to the structure of the terms of reference (TOR) and inquired to clarify - which issues resulted in bids exceeding the pre-estimated (2014) budget. The Project Coordinator informed that a new assignment was added to the first tender TOR, namely, Task 3 was developed for supplying Category 2 soil samples to technology companies (for testing and demonstration of effectiveness achieved in cleaning in highly polluted soil), also, requirement for conducting complex geophysical examination of Nubarashen site was added. The addition of the two above-mentioned issues as well as response to market changes, resulted in increase of price component in all bids, as compared to the previous bid quotes and response to these two issues led to market changes in the price component of all proposals, compared to the previously canceled bid quotes. Afterwards, the progress of implementation of 11 tasks towards fulfillment of the executed contract, and anticipated works were presented.

The next component of the presentation was the design and reconstruction of Hazardous Chemical Waste (HCW) storehouse reconstruction, within the framework of Output 1.2, "Developing area for hazardous waste management". A brief presentation was made covering data obtained during study of the technologies for hazardous waste disposal. Particularly, the discussions held with the Russian expert (who had arrived in Armenia with the assistance of the UNDP Russia Trust Fund) on high temperature incineration plant manufactured in Russia were presented, remarking that the proposed technology is not yet well developed, with only one pilot sample available. The incinerator plant sample manufactured in the Republic of Iran was also presented (more particular details had been provided to the PMB members earlier), which holds an appropriate international certification.

Ms. Shushanyan noted that even though GEF does not encourage cooperation with Iran, yet, taking into consideration the geopolitical situation and the specificities and approaches which are typical for Armenia, proposed not to dismiss this option from the agenda and try to proceed with negotiation process, considering both budgetary and other restrictions, as well as existing issues with Georgia. In this context, the circumstance that Armenia's roads to the southern direction of Iran were not sufficiently safe, was also discussed, which poses another limitation to transportation of waste to Iran for disposal in trucks. In this connection, Mr. Mariyasin mentioned that there is a railway connectivity with Georgia, which is a safer route, and the steps towards dialogue have been already initiated. Mr. Hakobyan informed the participants that, based on assurances made by the Georgian side, the updated version of the law regulating the transit of waste will be adopted by their National Assembly in spring. However, taking into account the legislative reform processes, it may be likely that this issue may be postponed. It was noted that the Georgian side has not yet responded to the letter issued by the Armenian Foreign Ministry to the Georgian Foreign Ministry in October 2017 on this issue.

Ms. Ghargebakyan proposed that the Project's Regional Technical Advisor, Mr. Surkov, being well-familiar with the background of the Project, as well as both the UNDP and GEF procedures, should be included as a participant at the next meeting, as he can be very useful in bringing about effective solutions to various issues. This proposal was welcomed by Mr. Hakobyan. PC again raised the question for approving the program budget and work plan and inquired whether it would be necessary to organize another meeting. Mr. Mariyasin suggested that conditional 2018 work plan and attached budget be approved, at least for those components where there are no major policy issues, and to set up a new meeting soon, to discuss the other details and come up with a general consensus so that the program can move forward. He also suggested that details of timelines for launching the activities be added to the project work plan, to have a clear picture of activities launched or finalized at the end of the month.

## **II part of the Session**

Mr. Urbanek, Representative of GEOTest (a consortium member with Dekonta a.s.) made a presentation on his report covering the key findings of the assessment of the obsolete pesticide burial site in Nubarashen, specifically referring to the details of survey of the burial site and the risk re-assessment.

In his report, Mr. Mussel Dekonta's representative, made a reference to the three key scenarios of technology solutions for Nubarashen burial site cleanup, in particular addressing the technical, economic and environmental issues related to the removal and decontamination of I, II and III category waste/soil. He parallelly presented a comprehensible animated video material on key phased action plans to be carried out in the burial site.

Mr. Hakobyan suggested that scenarios be summarized into one consolidated table format, based on degrees of soil contamination, so that it may provide a more vivid picture and inform the decision-making process, with the positive and negative aspects included next to each of the options for each technological solution, and also adding a column with information on whether a proven experience exists, whether it conforms to availability of funds, whether it complies with outcome set out by GEF.

Mr. Hakobyan proposed to PC to discuss the issue related to PMB and reviewing the composition of PMB and PAC, and in this regard, it was proposed to include a representative of the RA Ministry of Finance in the PMB composition.

Mr. Hakobyan thanked the Project Team, the Management Board and the Advisory Committee, and in particular, the UNDP, as the Project is about to launch its operational phase, he specifically emphasized the importance of a more responsible consideration of all issues and consistent approach to each particular document, scenario or a resolution. It was proposed to agree the next meeting date as soon as practicable for presentation and discussion of pending questions, to be able to make a substantial assessment and come up with an informed decision.

### **IT WAS PROPOSED:**

1. To identify the possibility of collection and elimination of existing and estimated 150 tons of OPs in RA communities, and in this context, the realistic likelihood of achieving the Output 1.3.
2. To conditionally approve the 2018 work plan and the submitted underlying budget.
3. To clarify questions/issues for GEF (starting with project extension) to be addressed to GEF.
4. To invite the Project's regional consultant to participate in the next meeting of the PMB.
5. To consolidate the summary findings of Dekonta a.s. assessments into a brief reference document.
6. To present the summary results of two bids for designing the cleanup works of the Nubarashen OPs burial site.
7. To include a representative of the RA Ministry of Finance in the PMB composition.
8. To invite Regional Technical Adviser Mr. Surkov, who is well familiar with the background of the project as well as both with UNDP and GEF procedures and can have an immense contribution to the meeting.
9. To organize additional PMB session in order to finalize all pending issues.

### **RESOLUTION:**

To consider the board session open. To organize the next meeting with a view to discussing and resolving open issues.

Signed by:

**Khachik Hakobyan**

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Deputy Minister of Nature Protection,  
Co-Chairman of Project Management Board

**Vrezh Gabrielyan**

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Deputy Director of Rescue Service of the Ministry of  
Emergency Situations of the Republic of Armenia, Co-  
Chairman of Project Management Board