

**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY/SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME
OPERATIONAL PHASE 6**

**Minutes of the GEF/SGP National Steering Committee Meeting
28th January 2019 - Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment**

Present

Dr. Keerthi Mohotti

Mr. M P D U K Pathirana

Mr. Suranjan Kodithuwakku

Mr Vidura Relapanawa

Dr. Soma De Silva

Dr Raji Gnaneswaran

Dr. Sujatha Wijethilake

Mr. S A M Azmy

Ms. Achala Samaradivakara

Mr. Ajith Silva

Ms. Tharuka Dissanaikie

Mr. Sarinda Unambuwa

Dr. Lalith Welamedage

Ms. Deepa Liyanage

Observer

Ms. Sureka Perera

UNDP/GEF/SGP

Ms Dinali Jayasinghe (NC)

Mr Nuwan Perera (PA)

Miss. I U Gamage (Intern)

Agenda Item 1 - Minutes of the NSC Meeting held on 23 November 2018.

The Minutes of the last NSC meeting were read and approved.

Agenda Item 2 – Strategic Project

The NSC Chair welcomed the members and initiated the discussions on the (14) proposals in terms of evaluation for the 3 Strategic Projects. The evaluation done by the Strategic Project consultants was circulated among the NSC members in order to evaluate the capability of the project proponents. It was suggested that the SGP office should present the past experience, capacity, performance and specific issues encountered by each proponent during past projects. NSC instructed SGP office to carry out a profile evaluation on each proponent, paying particular attention to registration. It was decided to give clear instructions to project proponents in advance on the proposed mechanism of scaling up of the proposed projects when making their presentations.

It was decided to conduct field visits to all the projects to assess proposed activities and to incorporate small sub committees with landscape level knowledge and expertise during field assessments.

The necessity of defining the objectives was then brought forward for the evaluation of the project outputs and to link the budget with the output was also raised. It was also decided to carry out an assessment on all the proposals received prior to conduct site visits based on the knowledge of the NSC in the 3 landscapes.

The issue of different addresses of NGO's was brought forward to the consideration and the NSC proposed to cross-check the information on registration and to request all project proponents to send an endorsed copy of their organization registration through the District Secretariat office.

Agenda Item 3 – SGP Way Forward

An update on the multi-stakeholder meetings held for the 3 landscapes and the way forward was shared by the National Coordinator. Recap on budget revisions for grant allocations on OP6 and recent discoveries of new species found from the project landscape under SGP project carried out by one of grantee organizations.

The hectare indicators of OP6 were discussed extensively by the NSC members and avoid the possible gaps that could emerge, it was requested for clear definitions of land areas covered by the project activities and the terminology used to define them. NSC agreed to extend assistance and guidance the KM groups to support in assessing and adding the use of geospatial information for the consistency. For the geospatial data and the land area data the Forest Department and Wild Life Department. were suggested to be consulted.

It was suggested to provide a periodical update on all projects to the NSC with the challenges the project groups faced to be mentioned in addition to the existing information to enhance the transparency of the project and this to be led by the Knowledge Management Groups. It was also further discussed to work on the monitoring formats, Knowledge Management

reporting formats and Indicator reporting formats and shar with Dr Soma for further improvements

GEF/SGP operations phase 7 was also discussed during the meeting and the suggestion of scaling up existing projects in the landscapes of Phase 6 was proposed. It was agreed to focus on all three landscapes and accordingly to revise the proposal with the inclusion of government facilitation and linking with the social enterprise model, ensuring the propose mechanism will complement with existing projects carry out in each landscape to avoid duplication and submit a draft at the next NSC for evaluation prior to present to the Secretary, Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment at earliest.

Agenda Item 4 - Any Other Matters

The investigation findings carried out by UNOPS with regard to Rajarata Eco Culture Project in OP6 and Naula Grameeya Kantha Maha Sangamaya (NGKMS) Project in OP5 was shared with the NSC. Based on findings, it has come to light that Rs. 750,000 has been misused to obtain a land in the project carried out in OP5 by NGKMS and Rajarata Eco Culture organization has provided fraudulent documentation to prove its registration. Hence, it was recommended by UNOPS to appoint a team from the NSC to inform the said parties on irregularities that had undertaken on projects and carry out appropriate actions while ensuring recalling of misused funds of project carryout under OP5. The NSC Chair also brought up concerns related to Mannar Eco Friends (*KM group for the Mannar Landscape for OP6*) administrative matters raised by its' project coordinator. It was decided to investigate all these concerns and the NSC nominated Dr. Keerthi Mohotti and Mr. Suranjen Kodithuwakku to appear on behalf of NSC and requested the SGP office to arrange a meeting with all relevant parties at the UN compound.

NSC also requested the Knowledge Management Teams to be better mobilized to provide knowledge products, technical expertise and project improvement guidance to project proponents to ensure maximum benefits from each landscape and to provide periodical updates to the NSC. Further, prior approval from the NSC should be taken on changes, amendments and improvements made for projects where it is necessary.