

Minutes of the Project Board Meeting

Project name: UNDP-GEF Global ABS Project (Nagoya Protocol)
Project ID: SVK10/00095244
Output IDs: SVK10/00099240
Place: Istanbul Regional Hub and remotely via Skype
Date: 14 November 2017

Agenda:

#	Session	Time
1	<i>General opening and introduction</i> - Chair: Gerd Trogemann, Manager- UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub - Alternate Chairperson: Ekaterina Paniklova, Senior Programme Coordinator, IRH	16:00-16:05
2	<i>Approval of the Terms of Reference of the Steering Committee</i>	16:05-16:10
3.	<i>Presentation & Discussion on 2017 Progress and 2018 Workplan</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview: Strengthening human resources, legal frameworks, and institutional capacities to implement the Nagoya Protocol - Alejandro Lago, Manager- UNDP-GEF Global ABS Project	16:10-16:20
4.	<i>Presentation of the Quality Assurance Report</i> - Ekaterina Paniklova, Senior Programme Coordinator, UNDP IRH	16:20-16:25
5.	<i>Discussions and Inputs from Senior Beneficiaries Representatives</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Botswana (CO) • Comoros (CO) • Dominican Republic (CO) • Kazakhstan (CO) • Myanmar (NC-MONREC) • Panama (NC-UNARGEN) • Sudan (NC- HCENR) • Tajikistan (NC-NBBC) 	16:15-16:50
6.	<i>Approval of documents</i> <i>Recommendations and conclusions</i>	16:50-17:00

Participants:

Institution/Country	Name and Title
Project Board	
UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub Representative	Gerd Trogemann Manager Istanbul Regional Hub – Chair
UNV Representative	German Reyes UNV Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
Representing the RBA region	
Comoros representative	Anliyat Mze Ahmed Abdallah (Ms.) UNDP Comoros
Botswana representative	Dineo Gaborekwe (Ms.) UNDP Botswana
Representing the RBAP region	

Myanmar Representative	Dr. San Oo (Mr.) MoNREC
Representing the RBAS region	
Sudan Representative	Dr. EL Khitma EL Awad Mohammed (Ms.) and Shama Meki (Ms.) Higher Council for Environment and Natural Resources and UNDP Sudan
Representing the RBEC region	
Kazakhstan representative	Firuz Ibrohimov (Mr.) and Gulmira Kabanbayeva (Mrs.) UNDP Kazakhstan
Tajikistan representative	Neimatullo Safarov (Mr.) and Dilovarsho Dustov (Mr.) National Biodiversity and Biosafety Center and UNDP Tajikistan
Representing the RBLAC region	
Panama Representative	Dario Luque (Mr.) Ministry of Environment. Genetic Resources Unit.
Dominican Republic representative	María Eugenia Morales (Ms.) UNDP Dominican Republic
From UNDP-GEF Global ABS Project	
Alejandro Lago	Project Manager
Fouad Bergigui	Regional Project Specialist
Claudio Chiarolla	Regional Project Specialist
Anthony Foronda	Regional Project Advisor for Asia Pacific
Alejandro Iberico-Hervias (UNV)	Knowledge Management and Project Specialist
Jose Antonio Rayos Diaz	Project Associate
Handan Bezci	Project Finance Associate
Other	
Ekaterina Paniklova	Senior Programme Coordinator, UNDP IRH
Santiago Carrizosa	Global Adviser on ABS and Senior Technical Advisor – Ecosystems and Biodiversity, BBPS
Andrey Pogbrenyak	Operations Advisor, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub

1. General opening and introduction

In his capacity as the Chair of the first steering committee meeting of the UNDP-GEF Global ABS project, Mr. Gerd Trogemann welcomed all the participants. He expressed his thanks to colleagues from the United Nations Volunteers Program for their support in creating a Community of Practice and South-South cooperation, to the Senior Beneficiaries representatives, and the 8 country representatives from the 24 countries of the project for their constant support and participation in this meeting considering their different time zones.

The participants were given the space to submit their questions through the skype chat box to be considered and captured in the discussions. After submitting the agenda for approval, the Chair declared the agenda approved with no objections.

2. Presentation & Discussion on the Terms of References for the Project Steering Committee

Mr. Gerd Trogemann explained the efficiency rationale behind the selection of 8 country representatives on a rotational basis, with 4 representatives from national Government counterparts and 4 representatives from Country Offices, to allow a balanced participation of each of the 24 countries in one of the 3 Project Steering Committees planned during the lifespan of the UNDP-GEF Global ABS Project.

During the Inception Workshop held in Istanbul 27-28 April 2017, participating countries expressed a strong preference to have a balanced representation at the Steering Committee between representatives from UNDP Country Offices and national government counterparts. In an attempt to combine that approach with the idea

of ensuring the participation of all the 24 countries in the Steering Committee meetings, the Global ABS project team submitted on October 17th a draft proposal to all the participating countries that was endorsed as contained under Document number 1.

The Chair invited the participants to express any comments, and then declared the Terms of References approved with no objections.

3. Presentation & Discussion on 2017 Progress and 2018 Workplan

Dr. Alejandro Lago, Manager of the Global ABS Project, welcomed the participants and enumerated the supporting documents sent to the participating countries in the project on 7 November 2017. He explained that document n°2 contains the Project Progress Report, document n°3 is the Project Results Framework for 2018, document n°4 is the Project Annual Workplan for 2018 and document n°5 contains the project presentation for the Steering Committee. He also explained that the latest figures based on the budget revisions for 2017 and 2018 requested last week by the United Nations Volunteers Program, the Global ABS Project team and the 24 participating countries were received this week. Based on the latest figures indicated under section 6 of the Project Progress Report the corresponding figures were also updated in documents n°4 and n°5.

The Project Steering Committee is the supreme decision-making body while UNDP's Istanbul Regional Hub provides the necessary administrative and operational support to the Global ABS project.

The UNDP-GEF Global ABS Project supports 24 countries in the development and strengthening of their national ABS frameworks, human resources, and administrative capabilities to implement the Nagoya Protocol. The project is being implemented through its 4 components namely:

1. Strengthening the legal, policy, and institutional capacity to develop national ABS frameworks;
2. Building trust between users and providers of genetic resources to facilitate the identification of bio-discovery efforts;
3. Strengthening the capacity of indigenous and local communities to contribute to the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol;
4. Implementing a Community of Practice and South-South Cooperation Framework on ABS.

In his overview, Mr. Lago recalled that 2 global inception workshops were conducted for Latin American Countries in Panama and in Istanbul for the rest of the countries, 23 annual workplans were approved (with the remaining one received last week), 17 inception workshops conducted at the national level with the last one held in Apia last week with the participation of the Regional Advisor for Asia-Pacific, Mr. Anthony Foronda.

The Project has also conducted specialized trainings for lawyers and policymakers at both regional (LAC countries) and national levels (Panama and Honduras). In the Latin America Region, the project supported the ratification of the Nagoya Protocol in Ecuador bringing the number of the project countries which are Parties to the Nagoya Protocol to 23. In different countries, the project has already conducted couple of workshops for the validation of national ABS regulations.

Globally, the project supported other UNDP national ABS projects for instance in Mexico, Argentina, Cook Islands and Fiji. The project did also facilitate an exchange mission between UNDP's ABS projects' teams in Morocco and South Africa.

Good collaboration was initiated with existing initiatives enabling the project to be recognized at an international scale. Key forthcoming activities include a joint workshop next week with Bio-Diversity and the Secretariat of the ITPGRFA which will benefit 8 countries targeted by the project in addition to Lebanon. The Project is also organizing a joint webinar by the end of November with the Secretariat of the Convention of

Biological Diversity and is considering supporting a community to community exchange of experiences in South Africa and other trainings with the Secretariat of the Convention of Biological Diversity and International Development Law Organization.

In 2018, the global ABS project team will continue to provide critical and timely support to the participating countries. Under component 1, appropriate measures were taking to draft and/or update the legal ABS instruments, raise awareness and build capacities for the implementation of ABS provisions including those related to traditional Knowledge in terms of access, protection and valorization.

Regarding component 2, countries will be supported to undertake genetic resources and traditional knowledge inventories, draft national research strategies and conclude biodiscovery partnerships including with the private sector. For component 3, the focus for 20-18 will be on developing specific learning tools adapted in local languages to benefit indigenous and local communities, and on facilitating awareness raising activities and trainings events on genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.

Under component 4, the project will support the interaction of its member countries to exchange experiences, best practices and products elaborated on ABS. It will enable UNDP regional and country offices to address ABS requirements, disseminate knowledge generated through the project, and provide an online collaborative tool for the community of practice on ABS.

According to the updated financial figures a significant share of the 2017 budget will be re-phased and its corresponding activities executed in 2018. Therefore, all the different parties involved in the execution of the project at all levels need to be extremely diligent and efficient in planning to ensure a good delivery rate in 2018.

Lessons learned during 2017 highlighted the project adaptive approach to accommodate flexible implementing modalities depending on national contexts. The project sustainability is being strengthened by investing in capacity building, creating a community of practice platform for south-south cooperation and knowledge management and by building strong partnerships including with the private sector. Moreover, there is a need to increase the project visibility and to generate better evidence for the results achieved.

The project risk log is regularly monitored with a new risk introduced to consider delays due to national elections detected in a number of countries namely Albania, Ecuador, Honduras and Kenya that could affect country level delivery. Appropriate management responses and measures were taken by the Global ABS team and country teams to mitigate these risks and ensure a good progress.

Mr. Lago concluded his presentation by introducing the project logo and motto designed by the Mongolia team as the winner of the global contest launched by the Global ABS Team. The logo and motto were adapted to represent both terrestrial and marine genetic resources and connect the project to the broader international context of sustainable development. He thanked all the project countries that submitted their brand proposals and made significant efforts to produce a visual identity that represent the spirit and goals of this project.

He thanked all the participating countries for their active support and keen interest in the implementation of the project, the global ABS team members for their constant hard work, positive attitude and innovative ideas to implement the project, Mr. Santiago Carrizosa, UNDP's ABS Global Advisor, for his constant guidance and support to the project and the colleagues at the Istanbul Regional Hub.

No comments were received from the participants at this stage, the Chair thanked the Project Manager and recommended to reflect on the lessons learned, including monitoring risks and carefully review the activities that were rephased from 2017 to 2018 and focus on moving forward.

4. Presentation of the Quality Assurance Report by Ekaterina Paniklova, Senior Programme Coordinator, UNDP IRH

Ms. Paniklova thanked the project participants and addressed a number of recommendations from the quality assurance report. Overall, the report review was satisfactory, she emphasized on the need to align the project with UNDP's new Strategic Plan and stressed the importance of the procurement plan. Ms. Paniklova commended the project teams for the results so far achieved considering the short time for delivery and reminded the participants to follow up on the provided recommendations.

The Chair thanked and congratulated the countries for the results on the report and asked if there were any comments, no comments were made.

At this stage, the Chair gave the floor to the senior beneficiaries' representatives to react to the presentations and provide their respective inputs.

5. Discussions and Inputs from Senior Beneficiaries Representatives

- Botswana (CO) - Dineo Gaborekwe - Project Officer ABS on behalf of Dr. Oduetse Koboto Programme Specialist –Environment & Climate Change Unit

Thanked the Chair, appreciated the documents that have been shared and the presentations. Expressed belief that these are a reflection of the events that have taken place so far. He would like to take this opportunity to thank the Global Team for facilitating Botswana in the ABS project implementation. Mentioned they had a very successful Inception workshop held last month (25th October 2017) with a full house and are grateful for the support from the team more especially Dr. Claudio Chiarolla. They look forward to making this project a success.

The Chair wanted to go to the Comoros Country Office but they were having technical problems so he gave the floor to the Dominican Republic.

- Dominican Republic (CO) – Maria Eugenia Morales
Shared some advances of the project. Make synergies with previous existing projects from other agencies such as GIZ and their Regional Programme. They were able to use some of the outputs of that project and moved them up to some stages of this current project. As of this moment they already have guidelines for ABS and now are preparing a Ministerial Resolution, so that they can have it legally established. They have also completed the ABS policy, understanding that with the Biodiversity National law as the framework and these other tools the ABS issues will be appropriately addressed in the country. They also wanted to mention that they already have as a baseline a technical group which is the National Biodiversity Committee Interinstitutional that have been working together from day one and have given them good advices. They have 2 key stakeholders within this committee, the National Industrial property office who are completely relevant for them because they are the ones that provide the legal framework, they are engaged and are part of the project. Something that they have been doing this year is engaging communities so today they understand now that they have all the key stakeholders engaged in this project. Another relevant achievement mentioned was the negotiating of the first commercial contract for access to genetic resources with an American company and now they are planning to have a research contract and a benefit distribution contract based on the Blue

Scorpion. They look forward to sharing good experiences and stories on how this is working in the country. It has been a good year and they are making progress and advances. As a challenge, they want to strengthen the participation in the committee and in the project activities of the academy and the research sector, even though they are participating in the country they have not been providing their knowledge and experience in this sector.

- Comoros (CO) – Ms. Anliyat Mze Ahmed Abdallah

The project had its inception workshop in Moroni in May 2017, it did achieve however significant progress considering the archipelago nature of the Union of Comoros and given that ABS is a relatively new topic in the country. Ms. Anliyat highlighted in fact that during the last 6 months the ABS country team in Comoros was able to finalize the administrative processes required to initiate the project activities at national level, conduct the necessary procurement processes and hire a team of 5 experts including the project national coordinator, 2 national consultants and 2 international consultants. National delivery reached about 60%, and a first country wide training benefited some 150 participants representing a large spectrum of stakeholders from Government entities, private sector, local communities, researchers, professional groupings and media. To ensure a smooth delivery in 2018, the national annual work plan will be finalized in December 2017 and the experts already started their work to deliver a national legal instrument on ABS, to draft TK access guidelines and conduct inventories of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge. Mrs. Anliyat expressed her thanks to the Government counterparts in Comoros and the Global ABS project team for their continuous support.

- Kazakhstan (CO) – Firuz Ibrohimov – UNDP Kazakhstan

Mr. Ibrohimov shared a powerpoint presentation which highlighted that the Country Office conducted regional project board meeting for Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Belarusia – to review country's specific work plans and future activities. Prioritized regional cooperation mechanism and exchange experience events. First draft of the legal mainstreaming report is produced. Established task force group consisting of national ministerial representatives, who will be prioritizing principles of the Nagoya protocol. Conducted training at the community level to improve their knowledge and capacity on principles of the Nagoya protocol. 12 different publications and handouts for the communities how to meet/integrate the principles of the ABS and Nagoya to secure their genetic resource management deals. Developed road map following national stakeholder's consultation meeting to review the progress made to date and develop a roadmap for the remaining years of implementation. Based on the results of the meeting, the project has explored the possibility to strengthen the following community based capacity building activities:

The economics and marketing aspect – including mechanism to set up ABS CHM

How to strengthen the capacity of Extension Services. Measures to reinforce the institutionalization of project achievements. How to advice MOA on genetic resource based environmental incentives Online permit and monitoring mechanism

The Key Challenges presented were: Implementation of the 1st component of the project had a significant delay due to long agreement process with the GoRK as well as contracting of international legal expert on ABS. The 4th component of the project remains unclear in regards how to best plan or agree tentative activities with the state counterparts. Regional integration and activities through annual regional meetings, if it is possible?

At this moment, 17:00, Ms, Ekaterina Paniklova took over as Chair as Mr. Gerd Trogeman had to step out to another meeting.

- Myanmar (NC-MoNREC) – Dr. San Oo

As the lone representative for Asia-Pacific region, Dr. Oo thanked UNDP and GEF for this project, especially, the Global ABS Project Team with the relevant and timely support by the Regional Project Advisor for Asia-Pacific. The general objectives of the project are very much in line with national priorities and it is also an opportunity for countries to refine the project activities to suit the unique requirements of countries;

For Asia-Pacific, highlighted key achievements on the Global ABS Project by the region: The region is in the process of procuring legal consultants to initiate the development of draft ABS national instruments, with the exception of a project participating country of which has an ABS legal framework in place through its Biological Diversity Act, 2002, Biological Diversity Rules, 2004, Guidelines on ABS Regulations, 2014, among others. The region has a participating country that has sui generis systems for protecting TK, innovations and practices and customary uses of biological and genetic resources. All countries can learn from this leading country while most of the countries in the region has initiated activities to gather data on TK and protecting it. The region has a participating country that has registered 28 Internationally recognized certificates of compliance at the ABS Clearing House between July and October 2017. All countries can learn from this leading country while most project participating countries in Asia-Pacific has yet to initiate partnerships for bio-discovery; A project participating country in the region has initiated drafting ToR for a service provider to translate ABS information materials to local language and to design information materials. All countries in the region has yet to implement a campaign to raise awareness on the ABS national frameworks in addition through Inception Workshop.

Some key challenges of the project at the national level were about: Lack or limited availability of local experts or firms knowledgeable on NP-ABS; There is a need for technical support from Global ABS Project Team; National counterparts are overwhelmed with other national priorities that has caused delay in project decision making and/or implementation; There is a need to cooperate with CO to find ways to facilitate timely decision making; Country Offices are overwhelmed with other projects and that ongoing UNDP restructuring have resulted to downsizing of UNDP staff making the availability of human resources more limited to manage projects. There is a need to seek technical support from Global ABS Project Team in project implementation; and Low delivery rates against planned work plans; There is a need to cooperate with Country Office, National Consultant, and the Global ABS Project Team to enhance WP to be more strategic and practical in achieving the deliverables.

Finally, invited all project participating countries specifically Country Offices and National Counterparts, with the technical support from the Global ABS Project Team particularly the Regional Project Advisor/Specialist, to provide the necessary support to effectively and efficiently implement project activities within scope, schedule, and budget.

- Panama (NC-UNARGEN) – Dario Luque – UNARGEN

Among the activities of the project that we have carried out in Panama, the completion of the training workshop for lawyers, initially planned as a national activity, extended its organization to a regional scope, which was excellent, to exchange experiences with other countries. In addition, this workshop helped us to identify gaps in national regulation, and some options on how to overcome such gaps.

Panama has made progress in reviewing its ABS regulation to update it in accordance with the Nagoya Protocol, a draft of new decree is in its final stage of preparation, the necessary changes in the previous regulation were identified and progress has been made in making the adjustments on requirements and procedures under the Nagoya Protocol and national legislation, we are just in time to hold a workshop to review and validate draft new national decree on ABS.

Panama, Dominican Republic and Honduras, we are also part of the ABS CCAD-GIZ Regional Program Promotion of the economic potential of biodiversity in a fair and sustainable manner to implement the Nagoya Protocol in Central America and the Dominican Republic, supported by the German cooperation agency, This Program has activities very similar to the global project ABS UNDP GEF, and we have been able to make synergies between Projects to take advantage of both initiatives. For example, in the ABS regional training workshop for lawyers, the participation of representatives from other Central American countries, Costa Rica and El Salvador, who could benefit from the workshop, was supported. Synergies between ABS projects is possible in this case because they are the same coordinators in the countries, and they know the activities of both projects, to reinforce the activities, but avoid duplicating the efforts, rather complement the activities where appropriate.

Usually, we try to place few activities at the beginning of the projects, considering the usual delays while organizing the work teams and collaborators, so we think that within the planned we march well, but in Panama we must make a big effort in the year 2018 carry out the activities, since the national elections and change of government is approaching, which could affect the execution of the project at national level in 2019.

- Sudan (NC- HCENR) Dr. El Khitma Mohamed

Dr. Khitma, speaking on behalf of Sudan, highlighted the strong political profile of ABS in Sudan with the national ABS inception workshop held in the parliament. A multi stakeholders national committee was established, chaired by H.E the Minister of environment with the participation of representatives from the parliament, the private sector and other stakeholders. Two national consultants were hired to draft a legal instrument and develop a national biodiversity strategy. So far, consultation workshops were held to raise awareness about ABS and conduct a gap analysis of the existing ABS related legislation. In terms of cooperation with the private sector, an important workshop took place to explore potential partnerships. In terms of challenges, the process of hiring the international ABS consultant delayed activities initially scheduled for 2017 which budget is now rephrased to 2018. Dr.

Khitma recommended to accelerate the procurement process of the international consultants and to encourage training events and exchange platforms to enable the participating countries to exchange experiences and lessons learned. She concluded by conveying her special thanks to the Global ABS project team especially Mr. Lago and Mr. Bergigui for their constant and continuous support.

- Tajikistan (NC-NBBC) – Dilovarsho Dustov

To implement the objectives of ABS Project Tajikistan for 2017, an agreement was signed between UNDP Tajikistan and the National Biodiversity and Biosafety Center as of June 6, 2017. During the reporting period, a project team and national ABS expert group on plant and animal genetic resources, legislation, awareness and information technology was established. As for the official launch of the project in Tajikistan on September 14, 2017 an Inception Workshop was held with the participation of stakeholders and project partners. In this workshop, changes and adjustments were made to the project activities in accordance with the proposed recommendations of the stakeholders and project partners as well key project partners were identified among scientific, environmental and government agencies and local communities.

During the reporting period, the following results were achieved:

Review of legislation on genetic resources; A draft law on genetic resources in accordance with the ABS principles is under development; • Concept database with the use and adaptation of National biodiversity CHM with ABS CHM is under development; Priorities for interaction between users and owners of genetic resources identified; About 200 representatives of stakeholders and project partners were informed about the principles of ABS and Nagoya Protocol; Over 30 stakeholders were trained on principles of ABS and in the context of use of genetic resources. Priorities for interaction between users and owners of genetic resources have been identified.

The challenges that project had faced during the implementation are: Lack of clear understanding of ABS principles in national legislation and regulations; Lack of understanding of genetic resources and traditional knowledge among farmers and local community; Lack of permitting system with the requirements of Nagoya Protocol and principles of ABS.

6. Concluding remarks

Dr. Santiago Carrizosa, Senior ABS Advisor thanked the participants and IRH and expressed his full support to the project. The Chair congratulated all countries on their presentations and recommended the Project Manager and team to follow up with the remarks made by the participating countries.

7. Project Board decision

- The ToRs of the project steering committee were endorsed
- The global Annual Work Plan for 2018 was approved
- The recommendations will be addressed during the 2018 implementation period

Prepared by:




Jose Antonio Rayos Díaz, UNDP-GEF Global ABS Project Associate

Cleared by:



Alejandro Lago UNDP-GEF Global ABS Project Manager

Cleared by:



Ekaterina Paniklova, Senior Programme Coordinator, IRH

Approved by:



Gerd Trogemann, Manager, Istanbul Regional Hub, Chair