



Ministry of the Presidency Department of Environment

68 High Street Kingston, Georgetown, Guyana. Telephone Numbers: 223-6313-4 email: ddoe.motp@gmail.com

2020.4. 29

Mr. Jairo Valverde
Resident Representative
Att: Astrid Lynch
Programme Specialist
United Nations Development Programme
107-108 Duke Street,
Kingston,
GEORGETOWN

Dear Mr. Valverde,

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF THE UNDP: <u>00096369</u>: STRENGTHENING TECHNICAL CAPACITIES TO MAINSTREAM AND MONITOR RIO CONVENTION IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH POLICY COORDINATION

The Department of Environment (DoE) under the aegis of the Ministry of the Presidency is implementing the Project strengthening technical capacities to mainstream and monitor Rio convention implementation through policy coordination during the period 2016-2020.

The goals of the project are for Guyana to improve capacity to make better decisions as it relates to management of the natural resources and sustain its global environment obligations. The objective of the project is to strengthen technical capacities for mainstreaming and monitoring achievement of Rio Convention objectives.

The main strategies for achieving these goals are:

- Strengthening of the technical and institutional arrangements of sectoral agencies for data and information management and dissemination, through a national platform, the Environmental Information Management and Monitoring System (EIMMS);
- Building awareness and capacity for mainstreaming the Rio Conventions into sectoral plans, programmes and policies; and
- Updating of the National Capacity for Self -Assessment, which is geared to assess Guyana's, capacity and progress towards meeting these obligations.

The Project Management Unit (PMU) is working assiduously to complete the project in the expected timeline. Notwithstanding that fact, a decision was made by the DOE/PMU to request an extension of the project which was endorsed by the Project Board based on the following:

- Late implementation of the project: The project commenced implementation one year later than scheduled as a result of it being handed over from the Ministry of Natural Resources to the Government of Guyana's new and important Policy Division, DOE. The DOE's main role is to coordinate the implementation of the Green State Development Strategy and manage the environmental sector, including the national repository for laws, policies, guidelines and programmes;
- **Delayed recruitment of staff**: The recruitment of staff, consultants and the setting up of the PMU commenced in late 2016 and first half of 2017;
- Procurement of EIMMS equipment: There was an interruption in the procurement of the EIMMS equipment as a result of it being sourced and purchased overseas. This was compounded by the lengthy government procurement system;
- Lack of technical skills: There was a hiatus in the configuration of the EIMMS hardware as a result of lack of technical skills in Guyana;

- Delay by some Agencies to sign MoA: Given the novelty of the EIMMS, there was a pause in the development of the national platform due to the delay of some agencies to sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOAs) to share data. The Project therefore had to conduct numerous consultations to reduce the data sharing silo that exists among agencies. The consultations also improved interagency collaboration within and among agencies, including the public, private and civil society sectors. There are several critical activities relating to networking and building capacity to support, maintain and manage the EIMMS. These will ensure a rigorous testing and management of the platform to eliminate errors and provide a sound system to the DOE and by extension the Government of Guyana;
- Sufficient funds to cover extended workplan: Given that the project had
 only three years of implementation (2017-2020), there are sufficient funds
 remaining to cover an eighteen month annual workplan and budget (AWPB) from
 July 2020 to December 2021 (see activities timeline attached for the 18 month
 extension);
- Politics: There are uncertainties surrounding the results of the General and Regional Elections that were conducted in March, 2020. No winner has been announced. A national recount is pending. This can result in further disruptions in the implementation of the project;
- **COVID-19 Pandemic**: The COVID-19 global pandemic has placed a pause on the activities of the project. The project already lost six months of implementation as a result of this pandemic from January to June 2020. To date, Guyana has implemented a number of interventions in an effort to curb COVID-19, including locking down, only allowing for essential services operation and implementing social distancing.

The DOE proposes that the Project Management Costs (PMC) be covered by the project's resources. It is acknowledged that the budget allocation for the Project Management Component would not have sufficient resources to satisfy the PMC for the extension period. Given that there are no other supportive funding sources to this end, the PMU staff have committed to executing technical tasks from Components 1 and 2 and to utilize associated budget lines to offset said PMC.

This extension will allow for the project to complete its full four years of implementation and fully achieve its overall goals and objectives.

To this end, we are seeking your approval and the consideration of your kind office to extend the Project from July 2020 to December 2021. We anticipate your usual favourable response to our request.

Yours sincerely,

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Project Extension Activities

Activities	2020								2021								
	J F	M A	W F	7	JA	00	Z O	Q	J.	FM	A	M	ſ	J A	S	Z	P
Revision of January to June 2020 AWPB. Finalizing January- March 2020 quarterly. Prepare extension AWPB July 2020-December 2021.																	
Meeting with technical working group to revise EIMMS timelines and workplan.										-					-		
Develop, design, implement, monitor and maintain the EIMMS														l	+	1	
Networking the EIMMS with existing data bases. Information Technology Managers in the different departments and agencies to network the EIMMS and website with their information systems																	
A structure to improve data and information management arrangement is completed																	
Data Standards and management Procedures completed			_														
Development of a resource mobilization strategy for the long-term operation (e.g., 15 years) of the EIMMS to be approved by Cabinet																	
Developing and testing a data protocol system that allows data, information, and knowledge to be tracked through the life cycle of their creation to																	
informing policy and plans to the latter's adaptive management.																	~
Cull lessons learned and best practices from activities to inform the EIMMS																	
Piloting of the Feasibility study and test the EIMMS									+							1	T
Preparation of a new training manual and test it based on lessons learned in															-		T
the learning by doing workshops and conduct training with technical government staff that have responsibilities related to the collection and use																	
of environmental data to test the manual																	
Building technical capacity of stakeholders to support the EIMMS including piloting, training and testing the EIMMS for errors and finalizing system to hand over to hand over to DOE																	
Conduct Learning-by-doing workshops to strengthen line ministries ability to network the EIMMS and Website																	T
Assess and strengthen existing consultative and decision-making structures and mechanisms to make more effective and integrated decisions on the global environment. Conduct learning by doing workshops to foster greater critical thinking among social actors and environmental stakeholders on																	
environmental management and governance.				1	1		-		1								
Outreach sessions on the Kio Conventions and other MEAs, target stakeholder representatives, government staff, NGOs, academia and research community to discuss and agree on best practicable approaches to																	
collaborate and coordinate their respective activities with a view to maximize the utility of high quality data, information and knowledge																	
Work with a suitable lawyer to strengthen stakeholders monitoring and compliance of the environmental laws through the EIMMS, targeted																	T
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Organize up to date legal environmental texts into a compendium of documentation for wide distribution and procedures accompanied by skills	
training. The skill training should include exercises to mainstream the global environment into development planning frameworks. These should focus on critical analysis of existing policies, plans and other initiatives with a view to better understand their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and gaps and to strategically integrate innovative approaches to the Rio Convention mainstreaming	
Build capacity to interpret data and information and use of knowledge to better inform more holistic resilient and institutionally sustainable development constructs. Policies, plans, programmes, legislative and regulatory frameworks, and natural resource management regimes Wemoranda of Agreement based on lessons learned and finalize for post project agreement	
Organize and convene a one-day Results Conference	I
Preparation of a Gender Action Plan for DOE and the environmental sector in keeping with the Rio Conventions and GSDS	
Erection of bill board in Berbice	
Rio Mainstreaming Community Meetings (23)	
Converting of environmental articles into brochures and posters	
Training of trainers in the principles/concepts of Rio Conventions mainstreaming the Rio Conventions and better environmental management	
and environmental information management - DoE to share the results of the EIMMS Consultancy - to 3 Civil Service Institutes: (1) Public Service Institute, (2) Critchlow Labour College, (3) Cvril Potter College of Education	
Training of trainers session so that 5 Universities can implement the Training Module/Environmental Education Module – use UG + 4 private Universities	
Publish and distribute brochures at key events and across Guyana	F
Air public service announcement	
Convene round table	
Preparation for Project Closure – Final Evaluation	