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|  | 2015  Project Implementation Review (PIR)  of |  |

**PIMS 3013**

**Strengthening capacity to control the introduction and spread of alien invasive species in Sri Lanka**

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# A. Basic Project and Finance Data

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| Project Implementing Partner: | State Ministry of Environment |
| GEF Focal Area: | Biodiversity |
| Country(ies) | (SRL) Sri Lanka |
| Project Start Date: | 23-Feb-2011 |
| Planned Project Closing Date: | 28-Feb-2015 |
| Revised Planned Closing Date: | 31-Mar-2016 |
| Dates of Project Steering Committee/Board meetings during reporting period: | August 2014 October 2014 February 2015 |
| Total GEF Grant (U$S) | $ 1,955,000 |
| GEF Grant Disbursed as of 30 June (U$S): | $ 434,627.27 |
| Total Co-financing (as planned in CEO endorsement request): | $ 2,000,000.00 |
| Overall Risk Rating | Moderate |
| Overall DO Rating | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Overall IP Rating | Moderately Satisfactory |

# B. Project Contacts and Links

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Partner | Contact Name | Email Address |
| Project Coordinator / Manager | Vajira Hettige | vajira.hettige@undp.org |
| UNDP Country Office Programme Officer | Dhanushki Ahayaratne | dhanushki.abhayaratne@undp.org |
| Project Implementing Partner | Padma Abeykoon, Director Biodiversity Secretariat | biodiversitysl@gmail.com |
| GEF Operational Focal Point | Secretary, Ministry of State Environment | secretary@environmentmin.gov.lk |
| Other Partners | NIL |  |
| UNDP Technical Adviser | Doley Tshering | doley.tshering@undp.org |
| UNDP Programme Associate | Pakamon Pinprayoon | pakamon.pinprayoon@undp.org |

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| Project website, etc. |  |
| Links to media coverage | 1. 25 November 2014, Page 17 http://epaper.divaina.com/index.php?option=com\_flippingbook&amp;view=book&amp;id=1817&amp;page=1 2. 09 December 2014, page 18 http://epaper.divaina.com/index.php?option=com\_flippingbook&amp;view=book&amp;id=1845&amp;page=1 3. 16 December 2014, Page 19 http://epaper.divaina.com/index.php?option=com\_flippingbook&amp;view=book&amp;id=1859&amp;page=1 4. 20 January 2015, Page 5. 10 February 2015, Page 6. 17 March 2015, Page 7. 07 April 2015, Page 20 http://epaper.divaina.com/index.php?option=com\_flippingbook&amp;view=book&amp;id=2093&amp;page=1 https://www.dropbox.com/sh/syzr5bh8mtlwect/AADSS7LRnLmmRxMISE4jvTtja?dl=0 |

# C. Project Summary

Significantly reduce economic and ecological damage caused by spread of alien invasive species

# D. Progress toward Development Objective

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Objective/Outcome** | **Description** | **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Target Level at end of project** | **Level at 30 June 2013** | **Level at 30 June 2014** | **Level at 30 June 2015** |
| Objective | To build capacity across sectors to control the introduction and spread of invasive species in Sri Lanka, in order to safeguard globally significant biodiversity | % of relevant agencies meeting minimum standards to enable the implementation of IAS act provisions | Less than 5% of relevant agencies have all staff trained in IAS control | 80% of relevant agencies meet minimum standards [a. SOPs in place; b. All relevant staff trained in IAS control] | Not applicable, as this work is scheduled for 2013-2014 | As the IAS Act is yet to be finalised, therefore, minimum standards are not yet operational. Preliminary awareness necessary for implementation of IAS Act has been started | Capacity building programme on IAS identification and management was conducted for 372 officers in key government institutions including Department of Forest and Wild Life Conservation, Sri Lanka Customs and Mahaweli Authority. Also local level administrative officers ( Divisional Secretariat officers) in some of the areas impacted by invasive species were also educated through these programmes. Work related to SOP's and minimum standards hasn't happened during this year since work related to IAS Policy and Act were not progressed. A the project consolidation phase, It was highlighted that training and education will not be sufficient if quick access to information, required skills and equipment will not be provided. |
|  |  | Number of joint initiatives between Agencies, Private Sector and NGOs formulated through the NISSG &amp; NFP on IAS control | Four (joint) joint activities implemented through inter-agency participation, with no private sector involvement | At minimum 10 joint initiatives are organized involving Agencies, Private Sector and NGOs through the NISSG/NFP on IAS control | 0 conducted to date. Discussions, planning and ownership building on joint activities for IAS control are on-going with identified local authorities such as Matara, Vaunia District Secretariats, and Balapitiya Pradeshiya Sabha. | Four joint initiatives were initiated during the reporting period; 1. Awareness programs were conducted with the support of the Ministry of Education 2. Three best practice IAS control models are being developed in collaboration with District Secretariats, Local Administrative Authorities, Government Departments local community and CBO participation. 3. Stakeholder capacity building programs were conducted in Jaffna district in collaboration with the District Secretariat | 1. Biodiversity Secretariat has started a National Coordinating committee for IAS Control and Management which will be backed by the IAS policy. This forum has members from key government departments mandated for IAS management, NGO's, and research organizations. National Coordinating Committee is the key institutional platform responsible for implementation of IAS Strategy and Action Plan for Sri Lanka. 2.Partnerships developed with 13 organizations ( government, non government and private sector) to field test IAS best practices programmes for selected priority species in five provinces. Five research programmes started with university researchers to fill the data gaps on priority invasive. |
|  |  | Total targeted environmentally sensitive area preserved with community participation | Less than 100 ha of Protected Area currently preserved with community participation | At minimum 50,000 ha of globally important PAs benefit directly from IAS management programme, including 3,000 ha of protected area in Sri Lanka cleared of IAS with community participation. | 0 to date. Discussions with the Private Sector and communicites are on-going. Inter-agency partnership building and related implementation has been finalized. Discussions have also been conducted with National Park Wardens of selected sites. | Eighty ha in Jaffna, Polonnaruwa (Hurulu Forest Reserve) and Matale (Bowatenna catchment area) districts initiated | Under the IAS best practice programme nearly 300 hectares are restored with community and partner agency involvement. This area includes lands within and outside the protected areas from Western, Southern, Central, Northern and North Central Provinces. |
| Outcome 1 | A comprehensive national regulatory framework for the control of IAS in Sri Lanka is in place | Number of environmental management (including climate change adaptation) policies, and strategies developed | A working draft of the National IAS policy A working draft of the National IAS Strategy and Action Plan | 1.1. A comprehensive National IAS Policy adopted 1.2. National IAS Strategy and Action Plan is finalized and adopted | Both target documents, the National IAS Policy and the National IAS Strategy and Action Plan were finalized, after stakeholder consultations. The documents have now been translated into both local languages, Sinhala and Tamil as well. Both documents are yet to be adopted. | IAS Policy was opened for public consultation and the comments received are being addressed. IAS Strategy and Action plan was also made available for public comments and these are being addressed. | Mid Term Review (MTR) of the project has recommended to review of the final draft of the policy document before submission to the Cabinet a (as it had been originally drafted few years back). Reviewing process has been started with consultation of key stakeholders. |
|  |  | Presence of a national IAS control act | National IAS Control Act does not exist Drafting of a National IAS Control Act approved by the Cabinet of Ministers | 1.3 National IAS Control Act is formulated, and enacted | The National IAS Control Act was drafted and is with the legal draftsmans office. A discussion is ongoing with the legal draftsmen. | Discussions held with the Legal Draftsman Department has revealed gaps and are accordingly being revised. Document needs to be redrafted. | IAS act was not yet drafted.Different aspects to be covered by the IAS act was identified at the one to one consultations of the Project Consolidation Phase. Also changes required to amend the existing regulations of other institutions for IAS management was identified. |
| Outcome 2 | A well-coordinated institutional mechanism is in place for integrated planning and decision making at national and local levels with greater access to information on the status, threat and means of controlling IAS | Presence of an institutional coordination mechanism for IAS control | No formal national expertsÃ¢ committee to advise the stakeholders on IAS related matters National Focal Point (NFP) or mechanism for effective implementation of the IAS control activities does not exist | 2.1 NISSG established and mandated for advising Government of Sri Lanka on IAS control 2.2 A National Focal Point (NFP) in place | No change. This work has been prioritized for 2013-2014 period at the steering committee meeting held in July 2013. | NISSG established and mandated for advising Government of Sri Lanka on IAS control Biodiversity Secretariat of the Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy has been designated as the National Focal Point to implement IAS control activities | Two government officers from BDS are appointed for National Focal point (NFP). It coordinates 25 Stakeholder agencies that represent National Coordinating Committee (NCC). This is the key national level decision making body which will be continuing after the project period to implement the National IAS Action Plan. Key stakeholders of NCC ( such as Forest, Wild Life and Mahaweli Authority) have there own district level operational mechanisms which implemented the field projects and provide feedback to the national level. Educational materials developed by the project has details of IAS identification, impacts/ threats and management methods. 16 profesionals from universities, government departments and technical agencies are members of NISSG have become very active during the year and provided technical expertise during the year. |
|  |  | Number of knowledge products developed | Draft set of scientifically valid IAS Risk Assessment Protocols available Ad hoc national lists of invasive alien flora and fauna No national level database on IAS Limited information on ecology, biology and control of IAS No national level interactive website on IAS | 2.3 IAS pre-entry and post-entry Risk Assessment Protocols developed and used by the stakeholders 2.4 National lists, potential lists and black lists of invasive alien flora and fauna in place and updated every 3 years 2.5 Web-based interactive and user-friendly IAS database developed and regularly updated 2.6 Two catalogues of IAS of Sri Lanka with detailed information on ecology, biology and related international knowledge 2.7 A website on IAS is developed and regular update mechanism in place | A number of knowledge products have been developed. - One very important product is the Pre- and Post Entry Risk Assessment Protocols, which have been finalized through stakeholder consultation. - National Lists, Potential Lists and Black lists of IAS Flora and Fauna have also been compiled. A risk assessment will be carried out again in 2 years time. - An IAS database is designed, information uploaded and nearing completion and launch. - Fact sheets identifying the Top 10 Invasive Alien Flora and Fauna has been compiled and is to be finalised. Two case studies have been developed on 2 of these IAS Top 10 species. - The national IAS website was developed, launched and regularly updated | 2.3 Training program is being developed for stakeholder on the use of the Pre and Post entry risk assessment protocols. 2.4 Completed 2.5 The designed database was found to not be practical and user friendly and is now being reviewed. 2.6 Initial activities for consultancy assignments to prepare two catalogs (on IAS flora and fauna) and IAS awareness creation manuals have been done. 2.7 The website designed earlier is being adapted as per current information and a new structure is being developed. In the process of setting up a domain. | IAS Risk Assessment process was started to update the National, Potential and Black lists. AT the one to one consultation of the stakeholders it was realized that utilization of existing risk assessment protocol is limited and stakeholders ( eg ; plant quarantine) would like to use more upgraded version. During the year, 10 types of educational materials ( out of 10, 6 are translated to local languages) are produced that can be used for training and public awareness programmes. This includes IAS Catalogs (2), Training manuals (3), Pictorial guides (2), Fact Sheets (50), Posters (2), Brochures (2), Digital photo album (1), newspaper articles (9), data base(1). Also information collated to develop 10 case studies on IAS best practices. IAS website that has been developed few years back was not able to update due to technical problems. Discussions held for hosting the site by the ministry. |
| Outcome 3 | Decision makers at national and local levels are aware of cost-effective IAS controls being implemented at national and local levels, best practices are shared and stakeholdersÃ¢ capacities strengthened | Presence of a National IAS Communication Strategy | No national communication strategy on IAS | 3.1 National IAS Communication Strategy introduced and dialogue on IAS Control enhanced | The National IAS Communication Strategy was developed and finalized, after stakeholder consultation. | IAS communication strategy was opened for public comment and comments are being addressed. | MTR recommended to review the existing communication strategy and develop a more focused communication plan as per the revised project outcomes.During the project consolidation phase, communications needs and target audiences were identified. A workshop conducted on strategic communications for BDS and project staff. Discussion started with IUCN - Communication and Education Commission (CEC) for technical assistance to develop a communication plan. |
|  |  | % of trained technical, enforcement and customs agency staff applying skills 6 month after training | Poorly coordinated IAS control and quarantine mechanisms in place with inadequate staff trained and in a limited number of fields | Awareness programmes conducted for at least 500 government officers in agencies such as Forest, Wild Life, Customs, and Local Administration. However evaluation is yet to be conducted. | The training schedule and material has been prepared. Training has been scheduled for 2014. | Training activities completed for 200+ officers from customs agencies, police, forest and wildlife department and village administrative officials on IAS detection; risk assessment and legal restrictions on IAS import, export. | Project has conducted capacity building programmes on IAS control and Management for 372 officers from key organizations including Custom, Wild life, Agriculture and Forest department. This includes 2 days residential TOT programme (50 participants) coonducted in Colombo |
|  |  | % participants in public awareness and workshops that report greater knowledge of IAS management efforts | &lt;5 % of political leaders, &lt;20% of secondary level school children and general public, 0% of media institutions are aware of the threats of IAS and the need for their control | 3.3. 80% of participants indicate increased awareness of the threats of IAS and the need for their control post training. | Initial arrangements have been taken to conduct awareness work on IAS through the mass media. Draft copies of the information leaflets on IAS have been prepared with the collaboration of the Central Environmental Authority. | Awareness creation on IAS was done for over 3000 secondary level school children and over 500 school teachers. | At least 600 people benefited from public awareness programmes. They are teachers, media and government officers who educate others on IAS control and management. Overall feedback from the participants says programmes is useful. Series of News paper articles ( 10 ) have reached a larger number of general public. In addition one TV programmes on IAS was conducted. . |
|  |  | Presence of financial incentives and disincentives support for IAS control | No market-based instruments and financing mechanisms to support IAS control | 3.4 Financial incentives and disincentives to support IAS control are developed and endorsed by the government for their use | Work has been scheduled for 2014. | Activities not commenced. | This activity was not conducted. Information on type and nature of costs involved in IAS control have been collected though IAS best practices projects. However,development of the financial incentives and disincentives( endorsed by the government) should backed by the IAS policy and act. IAS policy was not yet adopted and act is also not yet prepared. |
|  |  | Number of knowledge products developed and piloted | No best practice toolkits or participatory mechanisms in place | 3.5 Site specific, cost-effective, best practice toolkits developed for 4 cases each of priority invasive alien fauna flora are piloted at selected sites through public-private-NGO partnerships. | A number of knowledge products were developed as described earlier. Discussions were held with NGOs working on IAS control, to determine a model of best practice. | Two best practice toolkits have been initiated. Action has been taken to develop a few others | 13 Best Practice pilot projects conducted in selected locations within and outside environmentally sensitive areas.Different methods and tools for controlling IAS with the involvement of government, private sector and CBOs have been identified. Some of the appropriate and innovative IAS control methods and ground issues related to IAS management was identified. Data collected to develop best practice guidelines. |

# E. Progress in Implementation

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| Project Outcomes | Description | Outputs Reported as of 30 June 2015 |
| Outcome 1 | A comprehensive national regulatory framework for the control of IAS in Sri Lanka is in place | Output 1.1 and 1.2 MTR has proposed to review IAS Policy document before submitting to the Cabinet since it was drafted few years back. At the Project Consolidation Workshop there was a session to consult key stakeholders to update the draft Policy.One of the key comment received was IAS Policy is not sufficiently cover the grass root level. It was also proposed to re written the Policy more user friendly manner. Output 1.3 IAS Act has not been drafted. Several attempts taken to recruit legal adviser and this process was delayed since there was no consultant having both legal and technical background of the subject. As a result it was planned to recruit a team of advisers.During the stakeholder consultations of the project consolidation, further information to draft the IAS act was collected.At these meetings,stakeholder agencies suggested to amend the existing regulations such as species lists of Plant Protection and Fisheries Act to strengthen the IAS regulatory mechanism in the country. Also there were some discussion happened on who will be the enforcement agencies of the IAS act. Some of the key regulatory agencies such as customs said that they would able to enforce the act if custom regulations are amended as a result of the IAS act. |
| Outcome 2 | A well-coordinated institutional mechanism is in place for integrated planning and decision making at national and local levels with greater access to information on the status, threat and means of controlling IAS | Output 2.1 During the year 4 NISSG meetings conducted. NISSG provided technical inputs for preparing project action plan, field monitoring of IAS best practices. NISSG also evaluated the best practice and gap filling research proposals received in 2015. Output 2. Also National Focal Point (NFP) conducted 4 national steering committee and one IAS national coordination meeting during the year. NFP conducted capacity building programmes (1 on ecosystem approach, 1 on strategic communication for BDS officers/ project staff). Officers appointed by BDS for NFP provided active support for project implementation. Output 2.3 Process of updating the existing IAS risk assessment protocols has been started. Series of stakeholder consultations conducted to identify the level of usage of existing protocols and identify the data requirements of key stakeholder institutions.One international consultant and 3 local consultants have commenced the work. At the consultations, it was proposed to develop a appropriate definition for IAS and risk assessment protocol for Sri Lanka. Output 2.4 Process started to review existing priority and potential species lists. It was agreed to develop sectoral as well as eco system based Invasive Alien Species lists which will help to devise ecosystem based management approaches. Set of criterion was developed for scoring process. Output 2.6 Five data gap filling research has been started with university based researchers on selected priority flora and fauna species. These research covers socio-economic impacts and biological interactions among species. Knowledge and research gaps have also been identified at the stakeholder consultations of the project consolidation phase. Stakeholders such as Marine Environmental Protection Agency has requested to have focused research programmes on marine IAS which have not been covered before. Two Catalogs on IAS fauna and Flora are prepared with the technical assistance of IUCN and guidance of from NISSG. |
| Outcome 3 | Decision makers at national and local levels are aware of cost-effective IAS controls being implemented at national and local levels, best practices are shared and stakeholdersÃ¢â¬â¢ capacities strengthened | Output 3.1 Project MTR has recommended to develop a strategic communication plan following a proper stakeholder consultation process. Discussion started with IUCN - Education and Communication Commission for technical assistance and arrangements have been made to recruit a local consultant for communications. Output 3.2 Project has conducted capacity building programmes on IAS control and Management for 372 officers from key organizations including Custom, Wild life, Agriculture and Forest department, including 4 filed study tours. This includes international training conducted in Bangkok ( 20 participants) and national level residential TOT programme (50 participants) in Colombo. IAS training manuals for policy makers and managers, school teachers and students and farmers and community members have been prepared. Also fact sheets have been produced for priority and potential fauna and flora. Output 3.3 Four IAS awareness Programmes for School Children (336 students) and 2 programmes for research and academia (100 participants) and 2 media programmes (60 participants) have been organized. More than 12 newspaper articles and one TV programme on impacts, threat and management of IAS were published. A demonstration plot is being developed in the national Botanic Garden of Peradeniya for make aware general public on IAS species, threats and control methods. Set of educational materials developed by the project includes brochures, posters, national symposium materials, book marks, pictorial guide and picture album, video documentary. Output 3.5 Best Practices programme is implemented in priority geographical locations as well as selected other locations in the country focusing on priority IAS species.13 projects are being implemented by government and non-government agencies and private sector. A review programme was conducted to identify the lessons learnt and challenges faced by these projects and also information compiled to develop 10 case studies. |

# F. Ratings and Comments on Project Progress

**Project Progress toward Development Objective**

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| Role | 2015 Rating | 2015 Comments |
| Project Manager/Coordinator | Moderately Satisfactory | During the year project has shown rapid progress in terms of achieving intended objectives and financial progress was also significant. However, due to presidential elections, mid term review and project consolidation phase progress of the latter part of the project was less. Following sections summarizes the progress made during the year. Project has able to build the capacity and interest among key institutions relevant to IAS control and management across sectors. There are 25 key government and non government agencies which are mandated for IAS control and they represent the national steering committee and coordinating committee. IAS coordinating committee will continue after the project period and it will serve as the national level platform. Since most of the government agencies in the national coordinating mechanism have district and local level systems, project has mainly focused them in conducting capacity building programmes focusing these agencies. BDS act as the National focal point and actively involve in IAS work. During the year IAS policy and act was discussed at several discussions including project consolidation. This dialog was very useful and it was also able to identify avenues in existing regulatory mechanisms for IAS control and management. MTR has recommended to consult each stakeholder one to one basis to identify their mandate and support needed from the project. NISSG was very active and provided technical support for the project on voluntary basis.BDS has been actively involved in carrying out functions of national focal point. Two officers have been appointed and there supported national level coordination and capacity building. Also project has significantly contributed to build awareness on identification, impacts and management of IAS at the local level for key officials who manage environmental sensitive areas to conserve the globally significant biodiversity. Most of these officers are from Forest and Wild Life departments. As a result forest department and other institutions such as Marine Environment Protection Agency has agreed to establish IAS cells within the organizations and this shows some progress in institutionalization. TOT programmes conducted for officers in these key agencies. Regulatory agencies such as Sri Lanka customs, department of agriculture and animal production and health have been heavily involved in project consolidation phase which reflects the interest for future IAS work. During the year project has developed set of IAS educational materials that can be used for training and awareness programmes in future. These materials were reviewed by NISSG to ensure quality. During the year local level awareness and interest also build in areas that have high impacts from invasive species.Series of awareness programmes also conducted for teachers and students in several provinces. There were several lessons learnt from IAS best practices filed projects. Although some of them are very challenging and not very successful, identification of cost and benefits of these progrmames were very useful. These projects were reviewed at the national level and field inspections to capture the lessons. |
| UNDP Country Office Programme Officer | Moderately Satisfactory | The project was rated moderately satisfactory since the project is expected to achieve its major objectives with limited results. During this reporting cycle, compared to previous years of implementation, the project performed well. Annual Workplan activities were rapidly implemented during the year. Progress against the 1st outcome was poor, with the policy, strategy, action plan and act not having progressed beyond what was completed at the early stages of the project. Progress was made towards outcome 2 the setting up of an institutional coordination mechanism with the project facilitating the National Invasive Species Specialist Group to provide technical guidance towards the project; and the setting up of the National Coordination Committee, which will facilitate and enable joint actions between stakeholders to control and manage IAS. Against outcome 3 progress was also made towards increasing the awareness and capacity building related outputs with large numbers of training programmes conducted and large numbers of officials trained. While overall this progress has been good, UNDP notes that due to the collected pressure of slow delivery over the last few years, project activities was not conducted as per the plan but in a hasty piecemeal manner. The IP conducted activities focusing on delivery of certain activities. For example training was conducted by the IP without having generated any new knowledge or updated IAS lists. Thus on the whole the activity serves the purpose of basic introduction to IAS and issues related to IAS, but did not provide further indepth knowledge to the officials trained. The best practice toolkit development was not managed effectively and ultimately the information generated was mostly on the manual and mechanical method of removal. The gap analysis studies also did not generate the knowledge necessary for effective management and control of IAS. The NISSG support and guidance towards the project as well, though provided, has not been strategic and not provided the IP with a greater vision of what can be achieved through the implementation of project activities. Overall delays in achieving project results was experienced due to delays in administration processes of the IP and numerous layers of decision making being in place. UNDP, using its own funds, installed a technical adviser to support the project and ensure rapid implementation. This greatly boosted the project capacity, and facilitated the delivery of activities. Following this, UNDP also requested the PMU to be further strengthened and accordingly a number of staff were recruited by both the IP and UNDP. Details have been provided in the Implementation Rating Comments. Accordingly activities progressed rapidly in the 3rd and 4th quarter of 2014, however slowed down in 2015 due to the change of government and resulting effect on the Ministry of Environment. However UNDP notes that more support is needed from UNDP's side to enable faster administration. In March- April 2015, the project carried out its MTR, which provided valuable guidance to move forward. The MTR report provides a detail description of the findings, issues, and recommendations.It idenfied the failings of the project with clarity and insight, and recommended a clear course of action that could out the project back on track. It recommended a 'consolidation' process, where the project redesigned its activities and outputs to enable it to achieve the major objectives and global goals of the project. This consolidation process was carried out from May- June, and a new workplan has been developed with more realistic targets and indicators of progress over an extended 1 year period. If the extension of 1 year is granted and with more support from UNDP's side the project is in a good position to carry out the new AWP and achieve the targets and outputs and wider goals of the project. |
| Project Implementing Partner |  |  |
| GEF Operational Focal point |  |  |
| Other Partners |  |  |
| UNDP Technical Advisor | Moderately Unsatisfactory | comments forthcoming |

General Comments

Recently concluded Mid Term Review of the project recommended to revise the strategic results framework (SRF) of the project with revised indicators. The SRF is being changed through the theory of change approach. Inline with revised SRF, Project Work Plan was developed through series of stakeholder consultations assuming one year of project extension will be granted.

**Project Progress in Project Implementation**

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| Role | 2014 Rating | 2015 Rating | 2015 Comments |
| Project Manager/Coordinator | Moderately Satisfactory | Moderately Satisfactory | Project actions are accelerated significantly within the first half of reporting period due to establishment of project management unit.Project manager and two project assistant was recruited for the project.Project had a technical adviser until December 2014 and therefore project activities.Technical coordinator was recruited in December 2014 and project associate was recruited in May 2015.Therefore project management unit was strengthened during the year. Financial progress was also significant compared to previous years. However, project progress of project activities of the second half of they year was hampered by the presidential election and subsequent changes happened in the ministry. Some of the project staff regularly worked for the project have also been transferred internally. However, due to heavy workload accumulated over the last years, capacity of the project management was not sufficient to deliver a intensive programme. As a result set of short term and long term consultants were planned to recruit by the project. Project MTR started in end March has recommended to stop recruitment of consultants as the project management unit has to be further strengthened in the first place. As proposed by the MTR,technical adviser and project management specialist ( similar level as deputy project director) have been planned to recruit. Following paragraph summerizes the progress made by the project under each outcomes. Project had a little progress on setting up the IAS regulatory mechanism. This is because project management unit and BDS had to depend on external legal advises to carry out the task. Short term legal consultant was not able to recruit until first quarter of 2015. IAS policy was also ready for Cabinet approval however, due to changes happened in the government has delayed the process. During the year national level stakeholders were actively coordinated with the project and basis laid for institutional level involvement. National coordination committee was established to continue beyond project period. NISSG was very active and provided technical guidance for IAS best practice projects and gap filling research components. BDS has allocated dedicated staff for National Focal Point and with the support of project staff capacity building progrmmes conducted by NFP. In terms of knowledge and awareness building, project has conducted several programmes at the national and local level. Series of capacity building programmes were conducted at the national level. These includes 2 day residential TOT programmes and one media workshop and symposium for academics. District level awareness programmes were mainly targeted 3 categories. There were Wild Life, Forest and School Teachers. Feedback from the participants were positive. IAS best practices projects started in 2014 shows mixed results. However, learning from these projects were very important. Ministry was able to gain experince of adopting various IAS control methods, assess the cost and benefits of these progrmames and challenges in implementation. Although species wise management was not appropriate in some of the cases, there were some innovative and cost effective methods of controlling IAS was identified. Also it was realized the need for strong partnerships and long term approach for IAS control. MTR has identified the gaps in the methods and proposed to adopt ecosystem based approach for IAS pilot implementation. Five gap filling research has been started in 2015 on priority IAS species. However, MTR also recommended to shift for more proactive research approach rather than open proposal calling method. As a result both IAS best practices and gap filling research proposals received in 2015 were paused until project consolidation is over. |
| UNDP Country Office Programme Officer | Moderately Unsatisfactory | Moderately Satisfactory | The project implementation is rated as moderately satisfactory over the 2014/15 reporting period. During the period, great initiative and energy was demonstrated by the Implementing Partner. The beginning of the reporting period was marked with the complete transfer of the Project from the previous National Project Director (NPD) to the current NPD. Till this transfer was completed, implementation was effected due to the ambiguity of the designation of responsibility. While this transfer was initiated in the latter quarter of 2013, it was completely effected only by July 2014. From February - November 2014, UNDP recruited a technical adviser using internal UNDP resources to support rapid implementation of the project. This management decision was made by UNDP due to the poor progress of the project thus far, and to ensure risks were mitigated and the project stood a chance of delivering its stated goals at the end of the project. The UNDP technical adviser played a crucial role, catalyzing activities, speeding up delivery, setting up the PMU, addressing bottlenecks, supporting decision making and with effective follow up. Project activities were rapidly implemented during this period, especially from July to Dec 2014. Most of the project progress reported in this PIR is from this period of implementation. The project board tasked the project with an ambitious work plan of 557,625 of which by the end of 2014, the project had delivered 333,409.95 USD. In the 3rd quarter of 2014, UNDP made strong repeated representations to the project board and the IP, and made the case for the strengthening of the PMU. Till then, the project was being managed by a single official of the IP, with interim support from other staff. Based on this the Project managed to secure full time cadre allocations from the Government Management Services Division. Normally cadre is allowed only for projects over USD 5 million. Given the special circumstances of the project, the delayed implementation, MSD approved the position of 1 Project manager and 2 assistants. These positions were recruited by the 3rd quarter. In addition the project board relented and approved 1 technical UNDP position in September. This position was recruited in Dec 2014, and subsequently another management support position was approved in Dec 2014, and recruited in April 2015. The strengthening of the PMU greatly supported the rapid implementation of activities. However delivery of project outputs, was not systematically undertaken. Activities that were less complicated to carry out such as training, awareness, protected area clearance, best practice development, etc were undertaken. Complicated activities such as in outcome 1 and 2 such as the development of the Act, finalization of the strategy and action plan, development of an institutional coordination mechanism was pushed back. The IP also had a limited perspective and understanding of the scope of activities and accordingly activities such as the development of best practices were conducted in a limited manner. The results of the best practice work conducted, has provided limited improvement of knowledge in the best practices for control and management of IAS. Manual methods mainly were successfully tested. The awareness and training conducted were not developed based on a database of knowledge and information, and thus is based on very basic introductory information about IAS species. This information though valuable, could have been better structured. In January 2015, the change of Government affected the project. The Ministry subject area changed a couple of times, and the Secretary was also changed. The IP is now the State Ministry of Environment, which is also a part of the Ministry of Mahaweli and Environment. Staff within the ministry was also transferred to other departments, and the officer engaged in the project was changed. The Ministry was also given a 100 day agenda to deliver by the new President, which distracted from the implementation of activities both within the ministry and amongst other partner ministries. While these changes were being affected, the MTR was commissioned in March - April 2015. The findings of the MTR mission were insightful, and recommended the project to redesign the project outputs to achieve the main objectives, and a 1 year extension. A two month consolidation process was enacted from May to June 2015. This involved the undertaking on an in-depth theory of change process and stakeholder engagement process. UNDP believes that the redesigned project will enable the project to achieve most of the intended global results, in a more engaging collaborative manner, and will prove to be more sustainable in the long run. If the extension is made available to the project, as it stands now with its more realistic design, strengthened PMU and mobilized stakeholders, the project is bound to be able to deliver on its intended global objectives. |
| Project Implementing Partner |  |  |  |
| GEF Operational Focal point |  |  |  |
| Other Partners |  |  |  |
| UNDP Technical Advisor | Moderately Unsatisfactory | Moderately Satisfactory | comments pending |

# G. Project Planning

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Key project milestone** | **Status** | **Original Planned Date (Month/Year)** | **Actual or Expected Date (Month/Year)** | **Comments** |
| **Inception Workshop** |  | **-** | **December - 2012** | **Inception workshop has been conducted on 20/12/2012 with the presence of the ministers. But no inception report was found at the time of MTR.** |
| Mid-term Review | delayed/completed | 12 - 2014 | 3 - 2015 | Substantial amount of work happened in 2014. There was a heavy work load and targets for end 2014. Therefore MTR was rescheduled for March 2014. |
| Terminal Evaluation | on schedule | February - 2016 | February - 2017 | If, one year of project extension is granted, expected date of the Terminal Evaluation will be shifted to February 2017 |

# H. Critical Risk Management

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Critical Risks Type(s) | Critical Risk Management Measures Undertaken in 2015 |
| Operational | Due to delays in project implementation during first 3 years of the project, very unrealistic work load and financial target have been accumulated for the final year. This was also created a risk of meeting financial targets compromising the quality of the work. Therefore MTR has recommended to apply for a one year of project extension and announce a project consolidation phase to develop a realistic work plan which will be implemented through the strengthened project management unit (PMU)and grater involvement of BDS and key stakeholders. As a result project consolidation phase has been conducted during the month of May-June and project plan has been developed by stakeholder consultations. |

# I. Environmental and Social Grievances

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Related environmental or social issue |  |
| Status |  |
| Significance |  |
| Detailed description |  |

# J. Communicating Impact

|  |
| --- |
| Tell us the story of the project focusing on how the project has helped to improve peoples lives. |
| Bellanwila , Atthidiya wild life Sanctuary is located at the periphery of Colombo.Spreading two Invasive species Anona gabra (locally called as 'Wel Atha') and Eichhornia crassipes (Water hyacinth) has led loss of birds and other animas in the sanctuary and also negatively impacted on the local livelihoods such as tourism, fishermen and native flower industry.one of the IAS best practices project was granted for this site and lead implementing partner of the project was one of the environmental NGO ( Jana Aruna Foundation).Other key partners of the project were department of Wild Life Conservation and farmers and community members live within/outside the sanctuary. Project has pilot tested novel methods to control invasive species and restore the environment. Anona trees removed used to create thin wooden planks and wooden craft shop owners who bought the planks paid sufficient amount for removal of trees.Additionally, Anona fruit is used to make a fruit tonic.The project is promoting this fruit tonic with farmers, as this has a very good effect in increasing the production.This will ensure the farmers themselves will remove Wel Atha fruits before the seeds will have opportunity to spread. Currently, the project is working and negotiating with 69 farmers on this, and plans are underway to make this a viable commercial venture. The project is also making plans to promote Wel Atha shades as camping sites for local and foreign tourists. This is targeted for people who would like to go on boat tours, and relax under the shades afterwards. The removal of Eichonia brings in an extra steady income for the villagers. Some villagers earn an additional income by taking foreigners on boats through the canal. Others fish in the canal and fishing has increased by 10 â 12 KGs per day.Control of Eichonia in the streams prove space to grow flowering plants (Lotus, Water Lilies etc. at the Bellanvila Temple) . Also a sponsorship programmes is planned for interested individuals to pay LKR 500 for planting and maintaining a native tree in the restoration area with the support of local people. All these activities are mutually benefit environmental restoration and livelihood improvement. |
| What is the most significant change that has resulted from the project this reporting period? |
| IAS best Practices was one of the most important and significant component of the project. There were 13 IAS best practice pilot projects that have been implemented by the project aiming to develop cost effective, site specific IAS best practice tool kits.There were 13 pilot projects conducted by government, non government and private sector organizations and approach was to remove invasive flora using innovative, cost effective methods with the involvement of local communities. Out of 13, there were 5 pilot projects within protected areas. In each project, there was a plan to restore the area cleared by invasive species with native plant species/ vegetation. However, as a whole this approach was not very successful due to many reasons. Removal of species for a shorter period is not sufficient and at least it needs at least 3 years of maintenance. Six months of project period given for these pilot projects were not sufficient and therefore implementing partners have tried to show the project impact in terms of land area cleared. Also in some of the locations, clearing the lands led to establish new invasive plants in the environment. In some locations, removed invasive plants have been used for alternative use such as Prosopis for fire wood, Eichornia for handicraft production, Anona for fresh juice production.However, sustainability of some of these enterprises which use raw materials from cleared invasive plants were questionable and marketing potential was also limited. However some of the projects such as Bellanvila and Hurulu reserve and Bundala were able to identify some innovative and cost effective practices for IAS control. Also those projects of IAS control while securing some funds to maintain the cleared areas for few more years by exploring new partnerships. Therefore, it was realized that we need to look at the issue more holistic manner taking to account social, economic and ecological aspects of invasive control. Also MTR recommended to shift from species approach to ecosystem approach of IAS management during rest of the project period. |
| Describe how the project supported South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation efforts in the reporting year. |
|  |

# K. Partnerships

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Partners | Innovation and Work with Partners |
| Civil Society Organisations/NGOs | Bellanwila - Attidiya was one of the IAS best Practice Project Site. Implementation partner of the project was a local NGO called Jana Aruna Foundation.This site is located inside the Wild Life Sanctuary which is controlled by Department of Wild Life Conservation. Primary objective of the project was to pilot test some of the innovative methods of controlling Eichonia and Anona species. Jana Arauna foundation was working with government department, private sector, CBO's and community members as well as private individuals to minimize the impacts from invasive plants and restore the lands. The combination of partnerships Jana Aruna was trying to developed was innovative because they were able to harness strengths of each partner to achieve a common objective of IAS control to safeguard the biodiversity inside the one of the most important wild life park threatened by IAS as well as encroachment by people. Since most of the projects failed due to lack of sustainability aspects, Jana Aruna was trying to mobilize local resources to continue activities. For example, a sponsorship programme has been developed by Jana Arula foundation to pay for native trees which is planted inside Anona removed areas. In addition they have able to mobilize some funding from corporate sector ( One of the company called Access Engineering) for restoring the lands cleared by the project. This shows how the Jana Aruna Foundation was able to build some innovative partnerships to sustain the IAS control work in Bellanwila Attidiya. |
| Indigenous Peoples | N/A |
| Private Sector | MAS Linea Aqua is one of the leading textile company promote environmental management under their social corporate responsibility component. They have been doing IAS control in Boondala national wild life park since 2008. Project has awarded a contract for them to remove Prosopis and Opuntia in 10 Ha in Bundala national park with the guidance and supervision of Wild Life Conservation department. Wood log coming out from removal of Prosopis have been used as a source of fuel wood by another company. Also Mas Linea Aqua has able to secure funding from private sector for next few years. |
| GEF Small Grants Programme | N/A |
| Other Partners | N/A |

# L. Progress toward Gender Equality

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Has a gender or social assessment been carried out this reporting period? | No |
| If a gender or social assessment has been carried out what where the findings? | N/A |
| Does this project specifically target woman or girls as direct beneficiaries? | No |
| Please specify results achieved this reporting period that focus on increasing gender equality and improving the empowerment of women. | IAS best practice projects have been implemented with the involvement of the local communities. They have been involved in different ways. For example in Wahakotte and Bellanvila, Eichonia removed from the water have been used to produce handicrafts by local women. This was an additional income source for them. In Boondla project implemented by Wanasarana, a local NGO , provided wood log of Prosopis as a source of fuel wood for neighboring communities. These community members also provided voluntary labor for Prosopis removal. As a result time and energy of local women is saved who will otherwise spent considerable time to collect firewood. In projects operated by Forest department, used women labor for Lantana and Mimosa removal. |

# M. Annex 1 - Ratings Definitions

**Development Objective Progress Ratings Definitions**

*Highly Satisfactory (HS):*  Project is expected to achieve or exceed all its major global environmental objectives, and yield substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings. The project can be presented as 'good practice'.

*Satisfactory (S):* Project is expected to achieve most of its major global environmental objectives, and yield satisfactory global environmental benefits, with only minor shortcomings.

*Moderately Satisfactory (MS):* Project is expected to achieve most of its major relevant objectives but with either significant shortcomings or modest overall relevance. Project is expected not to achieve some of its major global environmental objectives or yield some of the expected global environment benefits.

*Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU):* Project is expected to achieve of its major global environmental objectives with major shortcomings or is expected to achieve only some of its major global environmental objectives.

*Unsatisfactory (U):* Project is expected not to achieve most of its major global environment objectives or to yield any satisfactory global environmental benefits.

*Highly Unsatisfactory (HU):* The project has failed to achieve, and is not expected to achieve, any of its major global environment objectives with no worthwhile benefits.

**Implementation Progress Ratings Definitions**

*Highly Satisfactory (HS):* Implementation of all components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised implementation plan for the project. The project can be presented as 'good practice'.

*Satisfactory (S):* Implementation of most components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan except for only few that are subject to remedial action.

*Moderately Satisfactory (MS):* Implementation of some components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan with some components requiring remedial action.

*Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU):* Implementation of some components is not in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan with most components requiring remedial action.

*Unsatisfactory (U):* Implementation of most components is not in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan.

*Highly Unsatisfactory (HU):* Implementation of none of the components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan.