

Project on Enhancing Biodiversity Conservation and Sustenance of Ecosystem Services in Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA)

MINUTES OF THE SECONDBOARD MEETING OF THE ESA PROJECT

Date: 25.08.2016

Time: 2.00 p.m. – 3.30 p.m.

Venue: Conference Hall, Ministry of Mahaweli Development & Environment, No. 500, T.B. JayahMawatha, Colombo 10

Chaired by Mr. Udaya R. Seneviratne, Secretary, Ministry of Mahaweli Development & Environment

Attendees:

1. Ms. LovitaRamaguttee, Deputy CountryDirector, UNDP
2. Dr. Vishaka Hidellage, Assistant Country Director-ESDR, UNDP
3. Mr. D. Somirathna, Dy. Project Director (ESA Project)/Asst. Secretary (HRD), MoMDE
4. Ms. P.N.D. Abeyrathna, Finance Manager (ESA Project)/Accountant, MoMDE
5. Mr. SenakaRatnayake, Finance Analyst, UNDP
6. Ms. DilkiPalliyaguruge, M & E Specialist, UNDP
7. Ms. ShyaraBaztians, Programme Associate, UNDP
8. Ms. LathikaHapuarchchi, Environment Management Officer, MoMDE
9. Ms. NiroshaKumari, Environment Management Officer, MoMDE
10. Ms. Sugandhi Samarasinghe, Technical Coordinator (ESA PMU), UNDP

Absentees

1. Representative from ERD
2. Representative from NPD

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Mr. Udaya R. Seneviratne, Secretary, Ministry of Mahaweli Development & Environment, welcomed all the members who represented the senior beneficiary and senior supplier of the “Enhancing Biodiversity Conservation and Sustenance of Ecosystem Services in Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA)” Project. He noted that the Project Director is on leave and covering arrangements are on progress.

Ms. LovitaRamaguttee, Deputy Country Director, UNDP noted the importance of monitoring physical&financial progress of AWP’s and identifying, managing & monitoring project risks on

time. Further, she appreciated the valued support and guidance of Mr. WasanthaDissanayake, Addl. Secretary,(Environment Policy & Planning),during the absence of Project Director.

2. Project Progress and revision of ESA Annual Work Plan 2016

Ms. SugandhiSamarasinghe, Technical Coordinator, presented a brief overview of the project, and the progress achieved in overall with respect to each outcome and a summary of financial progress as at 25th August 2016. Financial progress for 2016 as of date was 30% of the annual budget. Balance of approximately USD 234,350 to be liquidated by Dec' 2016.

A board paper was presented on revision of Annual Work Plan 2016. This revision was based on the suggestions made at the National ESA committee which was held on 19th May 2016 and the subsequent, Consortium meeting held on 15th August 2016.

- Original budget for outcome 1 was USD 128,357.91 and changed to USD 119,628.61
- Original budget for outcome 2 was USD 167,232.62 and changed to USD 166,345.30
- Original budget for outcome 3 was USD 32,592.77 and changed to USD 20,968,13
- Total original budget was USD 328,183.31 and changed to USD 306,942.04

The reduction of AWP is USD 21,240.95. The change in AWP is resulted from the reduction of USD 54,600.95 from Ministry allocation and increase of USD 33,360 in UNDP allocation.

According to simultaneous agreement of Project Board, the chair approved the revised AWP 2016.

3. Discussion

- **ESA and W&IZMP Overlaps:**The chair inquired on the status of the discussion on possible overlaps between, Wilpattu&Influence Zone Management Project (W&IZMP) which is to be funded by GIZ and the Environment Sensitive Area Project and Dr. VishakaHidellage stated, as per the meeting among stakeholders of both projects held on 24th August 2016, Mr.R.M.D.B. Meegasmulla, Secretary/Ministry of Sustainable Development & Wildlife acknowledged the importance of both interventions. It was agreed to complement results of both projects and hence ESA project will develop strategic framework for management plan for Wilpattu NP and W&IZMP can build based on the framework which has been developed by ESA project. Officials from Respective ministries, GIZ & UNDP agreed to this suggestion. Advised ESA Project to keep minutes of above meeting on record with regard to this agreement in understanding.
- **Baseline survey:**Procurement process in recruiting Local Experts for Baseline Survey experiences delays since the shortlisted bidders have quoted above the prescribed budget for this activity. Allocated budget is revised under proposed revision. MoMDE highlighted that all four bidders are technically qualified and possibility of negotiating with lowest bidder on quoted price, if it is needed. ACD, UNDP suggested that, it need to be negotiated with four

bidders if there is a discrepancy on scope and scale of ToR. Then, Secretary advised that if there is discrepancy of ToR, negotiate with four bidders and request them to re-submit the proposals.

- Urgency of obtaining this baseline information was highlighted to the board, since the ongoing land use planning exercise is dependent on this baseline information. (Land use planning exercise to be completed in Jan'17).
- It was noted the need of red list data (collected in 2012) for the Kalaoya basin to be released to the project. The Chair informed to liaise with Director/ BDS on this. This data to be used in ongoing exercises until baseline data is received.
- **Hiring of vehicles for project:** It is observed delays in the process of hiring of vehicles for the two field offices and PMU via external sources. Travel allowances permitted are also deemed insufficient. Secretary will consider temporarily assigning two vehicles to the project, for a limited time period. Project to follow up with Secretary's office to obtain a solution to the issue and Finance Manager will look in to means of accelerating hiring the vehicles.
- Director for the Environment, Planning & Economics Division will assume duties from 01st Sep 2016.
- Secretary noted that it is important for a representative from the BDS to be present for the board meetings as and when required.
- Slow liquidation of NIM advance was tabled. Delays accounted as a result of spaced out expenditure by funds advanced to agencies (FD, DWC, MASL, LUPPD and CEA) across the full year work plan. Time constraints of reporting back to UNDP on NIM advances reiterated. Project to look at issuing advanced to agencies based on MOU/LOA, to avoid delays. Ministry PMU to report to UNDP on current liquidated expenses by end Aug.

4. Other matters

- Cabinet paper has passed to declare 3rd week of Sep as Marine and Environmental Protection week. Project to make use of this opportunity to raise awareness on project initiatives (awareness session on ESA plans, media promotional material, etc).

Approved By:

Mr. Udaya R. Seneviratne,
Secretary, Ministry of Mahaweli Development & Environment

Date: 9/9

Udaya R. Seneviratne
Secretary
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Battaramulla.

Approved By:

Ms. Lovita Ramaguttee
Deputy Country Director, UNDP

Date: 28/9/2016

