

Enhancing Biodiversity Conservation and Sustenance of Ecosystem services in Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA)

MINUTES OF THE FIRST BOARD MEETING OF THE ESA Project

Date: 26.02.2016

Time: 4.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Venue: Auditorium of the Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority

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

Attendees

1. Ms. Deepa Liyanage, Director(Sustainable Environment) & Project Director
2. Ms. Lovita Ramaguttee, Deputy Country Director, UNDP
3. Dr. Vishaka Hidellage, Assistant Country Director-ESDR, UNDP
4. Ms. Keshini Wijesundara, Assistant Country Director- Operations, UNDP
5. Ms. Dhanushki Abhayarathne, Programme Analyst, UNDP
6. Ms. Tashya De Silva, Programme Management Analyst, UNDP
7. Ms. Sugandhi Samarasinghe, Technical Coordinator, UNDP
8. Ms. Nirosha Kumari, Environment Management Officer, MoMDE
9. Ms. Lathika Hapuarchchi, Environment Management Officer, MoMDE

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 stressed that the conserving biodiversity in protected areas and outside the protected areas is timely important as the environment is depredating due to rapid development activities of the country.

2. Project Progress, implementation arrangements and Annual Work Plan 2016 with budget

Ms. Deepa Liyanage, Project Director presented a brief overview of the project, institutional arrangement and the progress achieved during last three months.

- Two Sensitization meetings in Anuradhapura and Puttalam districts were held to create awareness among District level stakeholders and to obtain their views on project strategic plan appointed two Field Coordinators and located them in Anuradhapura & Puttalam districts.
- The Internal Inception workshop was held to assist the project team to understand and take ownership of the project's goal and objectives as well as to understand log-frame, GEF Procedures and Guidelines and Monitoring & Evaluation requirements. It was noted that log frame need to be revisited and revised soon in order to finalize the five year work plan. Considering the importance of achieving targets timely, the AWP 2016 has been prepared based on the tentative 5 years work plan of the ESA Project.
- The external Inception workshop was held to inform relevant stakeholders about the ESA project, objectives, outcomes, implementation arrangements, their roles, and to facilitate a platform to discuss important technical issues as well as finalize the AWP 2016. The Inception Workshop Report is yet to be received.
- Initiated recruitment process of PMU staff.

The Annual Work Plan 2016 along with the respective budget allocations has been presented by the Project Director.

3. Discussion

- The progress against the quarterly plans was assessed by the secretary and advised to accelerate the balance work due for the first quarter and the planned activities for the next quarters.
- The chair suggested that get the participation of Coast Conservation Department and Provincial Agriculture Departments at local levels. It was informed that these institutions are already representing and involving in district and the local level committees of the project.
- Further the chair advised the project team to create awareness among general public on the importance of ESA management and to ensure grass-root level community consultations prior finalization of policies on ESA and Human Wildlife Conflicts.

- Ms. Lovita Ramaguttee highlighted the importance of having a risk log for the ESA project for effective management and requested to present the risk log at the next Project Board meeting. Accordingly, Dr. Vishaka Hidellage stated that a workshop on the Theory of Change (ToC) for key stakeholders is schedule to be held within this quarter to finalize the log frame including the risk log.
- It was suggested to check the possibilities in adopting the vehicle voucher system for the PMU instead of getting services of a vehicle rental company for the full time.
- It was noted that upgrading “KahallaPallekale reserve” in to the National Park status will be challenging. It was suggested to take up this issue at the National ESA Committee.
- Ms. Lovita Ramaguttee proposed to invite relevant District Secretaries for the future Board Meetings. If we need their participation, either for Board Meeting or National ESA committee, the Secretary advised to adhere to the schedule of monthly GAs conference.
- It was informed that the Inception Report will be submitted by early March 2016.
- In principal, the project board agreed with the AWP 2016.
- The date of the next Project Board meeting will be mutually agreed and held within next three month.

Approved By:  **Udaya R. Seneviratne**
 Secretary
 Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment
 "Sampathpaya" Rajamalwatta Road,
 Battaramulla.

Date: 23/03/2016

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

Approved By: 
 Ms. Lovita Ramaguttee
 Deputy Country Director, UNDP

Date: 5/4/2016

