**Minutes**

**Local Project Appraisal Committee (LPAC) Meeting**

**Sustainable Management Models for Local Government Organisations to Enhance Biodiversity Protection and Utilization in Selected Eco-regions of Thailand**

Wednesday, 2 December 2015, 14.00-16.00 hrs

Suphamitr Room, Royal Princess, Larn Luang, Bangkok

1. **List of participants**

**Biodiversity-based Economy Development Office (BEDO)**

Mr Veerapong Malai, PhD Director General - Chairperson

Mr Samer Limchoowong Senior Advisor

Mr U-thai Aue-areechit Deputy Director General

Mr Tanit Changthavorn, PhD Acting Deputy Director General

Mr Suphasit Champawong Director, Conservation and Sustainable Utilization Group

Ms Chalisa Narktabtee Head - International Affairs Group

Mr Rachai Cholsindusongkramchai Project Manager, SMB

**Department of Local Administration (DLA)**

Mr Kobchat Vichieansri Plan and Policy Analyst, Division of Environmental Management and Public Participation

**Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP), Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)**

Ms Patama Domrongphol National Focal Point of the Convention of Biological Diversity

**Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR), MONRE**

Mr Sombat Poovachiranon Marine Biodiversity Specialist

**Royal Forestry Department, MONRE**

Mr Suchat Kalyawongsa Director of Forestry Research and Development Office

**Department of Fisheries**

Ms Jutamas Jivaluk Fishery Biologist, Inland Fisheries Resources Research and Development Institute

Mr. Prasert Singsuwan Fishery Biologist, Inland Aquaculture Research Institute

**Provincial Offices**

Ms Pornthip Dechatad Local Administration Officer, Samut Prakan Provincial Office

Mr Nares Vongsarojana Local Administration Officer, Samut Songkhram Provincial Office

**Provincial Natural Resources and Environment Office (PONRE)**

Mr Arthit Laieddee Director, Samut Prakan PONRE

Ms Kwannet Vayuvach Environementalist, Samut Songkhram PONRE

**Kasetsart University**

Mr Chongrak Wachrinrat, PhD Dean, Faculty of Forestry

**United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

Ms Sutharin Koonphol, Ph.D Programme Specialist, Inclusive Green Growth and

Sustainable Development (IGSD) Unit

Ms Vipunjit Ketunuti Programme Analyst, IGSD

Ms Kwanruen Seub-am Programme Associate, IGSD

Ms Yenta Nungvaewdaeng Project Assistant, IGSD

Mr Pituck Jongnarangsin Independent Consultant

1. **Introduction**

Mr. Veerapong Malai, PhD, Executive Director and CEO of BEDO, welcomed the participants to the Local Project Appraisal Committee (LPAC) Meeting of the “Sustainable Management Models for Local Government Organisations to Enhance Biodiversity Protection and Utilization in Selected Eco-regions of Thailand” Project or “BEDO LGOs” in short, and thanked UNDP Thailand for hosting the event. This is the second time that BEDO has been in collaboration with UNDP Thailand to implement a project under the Global Environment Facility (GEF). This project was formulated based on the values of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in Thailand, focusing on an important role of local government organizations. The project intends to mainstream biodiversity conservation priorities into the performance management, development planning and budgeting systems of local government in Thailand. Therefore, it is a good opportunity that the Department of local Administration has joined hands as the key responsible party of the project.

The Chair saw the LPAC as a good occasion for the key stakeholders to meet to review and comment on the project document and its methodology of implementation. The main issues to consider were the project rationale, objectives and strategy, delivery mechanism, and management arrangement. He concluded by thanking the participants for participating in the meeting to play an active role in the country’s efforts to conserve and protect biodiversity.

1. **Presentation**

Ms. Sutharin Koonphol, PhD, Programme Specialist, Inclusive Green Growth and Sustainable Development (IGSD) Unit, UNDP Thailand, gave a presentation on the project background, component, rationale and conceptual framework, objectives and expected outcomes, budget allocation and management arrangement.

This is a GEF-5 project, developed in partnership with Biodiversity-based Economy Development Office (BEDO) from October 2014 to March 2015. The budget is USD 1.75 M for 4 years with co-financing of USD 7.56 M (in kind) from the Thai Government. While BEDO is the implementing partner, DLA, who has been involved since the project formulation phase, is the key responsible party. The Project Document was approved by GEF in June 2015.

The project focuses on providing a framework for the inclusion of biodiversity into the development planning, management and performance assessment mechanisms of local government organisations (LGOs). This will be achieved through working on the development of a national level framework to guide LGOs as well as developing the tools (including a Biodiversity Health Index) and capacity to implement it. The project will also demonstrate how this approach can be achieved within the two pilot project locations:

* Don Hoi Lord (Ramsar No 1099) in Samut Songkhram Province: 4 Sub-district Administration Offices (SAOs) – Laem Yai, Bang Chakreng, Bang Kaew and Klong Kone
* Bang Krachao an “urban oasis” within Samut Prakan Province: 6 Sub-district Administration Offices (SAOs) – Bang Krachao, Bang Gor Bua, Bang Yor, Bang Nam Pheung, Bang Krasorb and Songkranong.

### The criteria in selecting the project locations are:

* Don Hoi Lord, as a Ramsar site, is a unique wetland within Thailand with the presence of threatened species.
* Bang Krachao is considered the last of the remaining green belt of the Greater Bangkok Metropolitan Area which is a good example of urban biodiversity.
* BEDO has worked and established networks with SAOs in Bang Krachao, which can be scaling up.
* UNDP has supported projects implemented in Banag Krachao

Ms Koonphol presented the indicators, baseline and targets of the project as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| INDICATORS | BASELINE | END OF PROJECT TARGETS |
| Hectares of landscape with enhanced conservation security | Currently only 204 hectares are managed with a focus on environmental considerations:   * Bang Krachao - 204ha being acquired within Bang Krachao for management by RFD with 32ha managed as parkland. * Don Hoi Lord - no area currently protected. | At least 69,618 hectares of land and coastal area has biodiversity considerations mainstreamed into its management through development of regulations providing stricter management arrangements for land/coastal use within these areas to ensure the conservation of target species and habitats. |
| Number of provinces with important biodiversity areas within eco-regions where the BHI is used as an annual performance measure for LGOs by the DLA. | None | Two provinces – Samut Songkhram and Samut Prakan |
| Numbers of populations of the following species at target sites;   * Eurasian Curlew * Flying Earthworm | Eurasian Curlew – Baseline to be established during year 1 of project.  Flying Earthworm – baseline to be established during year 1 of project. | No decline in population. |

The project has two outcomes to achieve, which are:

**Outcome 1: Enabling framework for LGOs to plan, monitor and adapt land management for biodiversity conservation.**

This outcome focuses on strengthening the institutional framework for the inclusion of biodiversity conservation priorities into the performance management, development planning and budgeting systems of local government within Thailand. The outcome is targeted at strengthening the policy framework and institutional capacities of key ministries and agencies as well as local governments to integrate biodiversity in local development plans and the adoption of the decision making hierarchy to avoid, mitigate, and offset, with regard to impacts on biodiversity during the planning process. It will also strengthen compliance to new and existing guidelines through enhancing the management, monitoring and enforcement capacity of key government agencies at national, provincial and local levels. This will be achieved through the development of a Biodiversity Health Index (BHI) and its inclusion along with other environmental indicators in the performance assessment processes of local governments and the performance management agreements between provinces and LGOs. The expected outputs are as follows:

* Output 1.1: LGO decision-making processes on development planning and infrastructure placement integrate biodiversity conservation considerations
* Output 1.2: Increased management and compliance monitoring capacity of DLA and LGOs

**Outcome 2: Local government development programmes based on biodiversity mainstreaming principles are demonstrated in two pilot areas**

This outcome focuses on operationalizing the mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation into local development planning in two key locations as well as supporting the sharing of lessons learned and opportunities for scaling up of activities. It will address the major threats to the areas by increasing information and knowledge on biodiversity within target areas and establishing mechanisms to monitor it, strengthening coordination, information availability and management practices, building capacity for the on-going implementation of management practices that conserve biodiversity and supporting livelihoods that both exemplify the links between biodiversity and economic growth and further strengthen the contribution of livelihoods to the conservation of key species including the Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) and Razor Clam (*Solen regularis*) (through sustainable harvesting) and the Flying Earthworm (*Glyphidrilus sp.*) (through sustainable mango production). The expected outputs are as follows:

* Output 2.1. Development of Biodiversity Health Indices for Bang Krachao and Don Hoi Lord
* Output 2.2 Local development plans that incorporate conservation values are implemented for Bang Krachao and Don Hoi Lord
* Output 2.3: Capacity building support to implement participatory land/coastal use plans
* Output 2.4. Sustainable livelihood activities that support conservation of biodiversity supported

Ms Koonphol ended the presentation by listing the inception phase (January to April 2016)

plans and activities:

* Set up the Project Management Unit and Arrangement
* Establish Project Board
* Appoint Project Director
* Recruit Project Manager and Coordinators
* Set up project site teams
* Organize the Inception Workshop
* Organize the Project Board Meeting

1. **Summary of Discussion**

**4.1 On Project Objective and Outcomes**

* Ms Patama Domrongphol, National Focal Point of the Convention of Biological Diversity, referred to ONEP’s involvement in the Sustainable Management of Biodiversity in Thailand’s Production Landscape Project (GEF 4 BEDO). She suggested that the BEDO LGOs project use “City Biodiversity Index” to complement to “Biodiversity Health Index”, as ONEP has used this index for “Healthy (and Sustainable) Cities”. She further commented that the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) should be involved in the project from the outset in order to link the project’s ecotourism component with existing TAT’s campaigns in the project sites (such as bicycle riding). She added that the project was in line with Aichi Biodiversity Targets 10 and 15 which relate to climate change.
* Mr Arthit Laieddee, Director, Samut Prakan PONRE Samut Prakan, informed the participants that Bang Krachao will be designated as an environmental protected area. This project should focus on conserving areas of environmental significance of Bang Krachao, enduring economic growth and urbanisation. In doing so, the project should work with local groups with strong community initiatives and create linkages with “Natural Resources and Environment Protection Village Volunteer Network”. He further suggested that the project indicators should be set in a way that can be measured by the general public. The indicators should be related to biodiversity-based development which covers local plant, fish and other species. Ms Koonphol clarified that Flying Earthworm was selected as an indicator, as at the time of project formulation it was a new species discovered in Thailand and locally endemic. However, the project will look into the possibility of adding more indicators, i.e. what lost biodiversity has been brought back to the project sites.
* Mr Samer Limchoowong , Senior Advisor - BEDO, seconded the suggestion on project indicators and lost biodiversity. He added that in order to measure such indicators, quality and systematic database should be developed and in place. To do this, we should have good database, making it more systematic. He also agreed that TAT should be in the Project Board as both project components have ecotourism dimensions. Furthermore, the project needs support from DLA and SAOs in the project sites to work with TAT on the ecotourism component, making it more tangible. Ecotourism at the community level can also be used as an indicator for the project. Lastly, he raised concern over uncontrollable factors such as an influx of seawater that damages to agriculture. Therefore, an indicator on the agriculture sector or water management is also important.
* Mr. Sombat Poovachiranon, Marine Biodiversity Specialist from the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) agreed that Flying Earthworm and Mango could be project indicators. However, further clarifications and more details are needed to elaborate such indicators, and value additions of local products should also be taken into account to provide more options. In terms of database, DMCR has baseline data on razor clams. The most update data is 4 per square metres (reducing from 10). It would be good if the clam population could increase.
* Ms Jutamas Jivaluk, Fishery Biologist, Inland Fisheries Resources Research and Development Institute, Department of Fisheries, seconded the clarity of indicators. Ms Koonphol explained how biodiversity index and health index were merged to reflect ecosystem services and livelihoods. The template will be shared with the Department of Fisheries.
* Mr Tanit Changthavorn, PhD, Acting Deputy Director General, referred to BEDO’s assessment on the geographic and economic importance of “Nam Dok Mai” Mango (*Manaifera Indica Linn*) of Bang Krachao. In addition, he pointed out that the importance of mainstreaming biodiversity into national and local policy. Referring to the advice obtained from DLA, the project should design the timeframe to coincide with the cycle of local development planning. The project will design a planning template to ensure the coherence.
* Mr Chongrak Wachrinrat, PhD, Dean of the Faculty of Forestry, Kasetsart University, pointed out that 60 percent of Bang Krachao are green spaces and 30 percent are deserted areas. Agriculture areas may accumulate up to 30 percent but those who rely purely on agriculture are very few. While ecotourism may not be the main source of local incomes, the project should look into supporting the agriculture sector by enhancing capacities of farmers and their participation. He further informed the participants that Kasetsart University has a full research master plan on Bang Krachao (in cooperation with Chaipattana Foundation) which will be ready in one or two months’ time. He will be willing to share the master plan with project stakeholders for wider use.
* Mr Suchat Kalyawongsa, Director of Forestry Research and Development Office, Royal Forestry Department, indicated that Bang Krachao is the area under the responsibility of the Royal Forestry Department under MONRE. RFD is willing to collaborate on the project and the project is able to use RFD’s facilities in Bang Krachao. He urged the project to involve RFD as it manages the area. In addition, he suggested the project also look into the potential of Amphawa on local fruits.
* Mr Rachai Cholsindusongkramchai, Project Manager, SMB – BEDO, shared experienced from the GEF 4 BEDO project and how the lessons learned and good practices could be carried forward to this project. He asked ONEP to help clarify the channel to obtain the national endorsement of the project document, whether it has to go to cabinet. He informed that participants that the Project Management Unit (PMU) will be established during the inception phase to work on key activities in project document in order to achieve the outcomes and meet the indicators. Experience from the GEF 4 BEDO project shows that some lost species have returned to the project sites such as *Thaiphusa sirikit* and barking deer. He was certain that the project will be able to assess and measure the BHI i.e. standard harvesting of razor clams. BEDO has developed many standards that can be use. He concluded by seeking collaboration of project stakeholders.
* Ms Kwannet Vayuvach Environementalist, Samut Songkhram PONRE mentioned that Don Hoi Lord is a sensitive area, and some local people wish to have Don Hoi Lord withdrawn from the Ramsar Site list as it affects the livelihoods of the people. She sought clarification from ONEP on the actual size of Ramsar Site as it seems to be bigger than the whole province. Ms Domrongphol agreed look into the actual area size and revert. Ms Koonphol gave further clarification on sustainable harvesting standards and pointed out that the project will conduct sustainable surveys before developing any certificates/standards.
* Ms Jutamas Jivaluk, Fishery Biologist, Inland Fisheries Resources Research and Development Institute, Department of Fisheries, suggested that the output 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 should cover both land and coastal areas as Bang Krachao is not a coastal area.
* Mr Samer Limchoowong , Senior Advisor – BEDO, suggested to draw a mapping of local mangoes in 6 sub-districts in Bang Krachao and focus on enhancing capacities of farmers such as setting up community business enterprises. The successful incentive schemes from the GEF 4 BEDO project can be applied in this project.
* Ms Pornthip Dechatad Local Administration Officer, Samut Prakan Provincial Office, provided a copy of Three-year Development Plan (2016-2018) of six SAOs in Prapadaeng District: Bang Krachao, Bang Gor Bua, Bang Yor, Bang Nam Pheung, Bang Krasorb and Song Kranong. The project will make good use of the documents especially on how to mainstream the project components into those plans

1. **Conclusion**

Mr Veerapong Malai, PhD, Chair of the LPAC, concluded that the key implementing partner and the key responsible party will work in partnership on the project. While DLA focuses on policy related issues, BEDO will design and use tools in order to move the mechanisms forward. The project will implement according to the approved framework, and works with local communities to ensure better understanding of local people on the true values of biodiversity and capacities to achieve biodiversity conservation goals. The meeting endorsed the project document with minor adjustments on indicators. The Chair thanked to the participants for their valuable inputs and addressed that the comments and suggestions will be recorded in the minutes to guide the inception phase. More comments can be submitted to the project after the LPAC meeting.

*The meeting closed at 16.00 hrs.*