Annex 1. Terms of reference

Midterm review of the project "Strengthening Marine Protected Areas to Conserve Marine Key Biodiversity Areas in the Philippines"

I.   INTRODUCTION

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of the full-sized project entitled, "Strengthening Marine Protected Areas to Conserve Marine Key Biodiversity Areas in the Philippines" (PIMS# 4389), implemented through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR-BMB) which started on August 2014 and currently on its third year of implementation. In line with the UNDP-GEF Guidance on MTRs, this MTR process is initiated before the submission of the second Project Implementation Report (PIR). This ToR sets out the expectations for this MTR. This MTR process follows the guidance outlined in the document Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects[1].

II.   PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Philippines is located within the Coral Triangle, which is considered a global centre of marine diversity, with diverse coral reefs, sea grass beds, mangrove and beach forests, fisheries, invertebrates, seaweeds, and marine mammals. The Philippine waters have been identified as the "center of centers" of marine shorefish biodiversity because of a higher concentration of species per unit area in the country than anywhere in Indonesia and Wallacea (Carpenter et al. 2005). The country has nine marine biodiversity corridors, which were identified based on their position as transition areas between the marine biogeographic regions and their strategic importance as gateways for the exchange of propagules and energy.

The primary government response to protect this important biodiversity has been the establishment of marine protected areas or fish sanctuaries as mandated by the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) and Fisheries Code. At present, there are only 33 MPAs under National Integrated Protected Area System (NIPAS) and are managed by the national government, and 1,620 under Fisheries Code which are Local Government Unit (LGU)-managed. However, overfishing and illegal fishing, pollution from coastal and commercial development, domestic and industrial wastes, land conversion, extractive industries and many other adverse factors continue to pose environmental threats to the country's fragile coastal ecosystem. The impending effects of climate change can further exacerbate the current situation.

Despite the number of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) from both state and LGU-managed, the assessment is that the current spatial coverage of the MPAs is ineffective in improving species habitat to enhance fishery productivity and biodiversity. Similarly, effective MPA management is still hindered by inadequate bio-geographic representation and spatial coverage, insufficient and unpredictable funding levels for the long-term sustainability of MPAs and an MPA network

---

[1] http://web.undp.org/Review/documents/guidance/GEF/mid-term/Guidance_Midterm%20Review%20_EN_2014.pdf

system; and weak institutional framework for the identification, establishment and management of a national marine PA system and incoherent policy frameworks, mandates and strategies amongst central and local actors that inhibit the sustainable management of marine resources on a seascape basis.

In this regard, the project directly addresses these barriers through an integrated approach aimed at strengthening the conservation, protection and management of key marine biodiversity areas in the Philippines. This will be achieved through partnerships with key national government agencies, national and local conservation NGOs and LGUs. Three major outcomes are derived from this approach:

Outcome 1: Conservation effectiveness of existing and new MPAs/MPANs is enhanced through improvements in spatial coverage and representativeness (particularly coverage of under-represented KBAs), strengthening of the national system for MPA identification, designation and management under the NIPAS legislative framework, and quantifiable improvements in management of at least 10% of identified Marine KBAs nationwide, with concomitant increases in local stakeholder participation and support.

Outcome 2: Financial resources available for the management of MPAs and MPANs are sufficient to meet all critical management needs and are growing in line with the expansion of the MPA system. Sources of revenue for MPA management are being progressively diversified, with the percentage of revenue being derived from Government fiscal sources declining to less than 50% by end- project.

Outcome 3: A comprehensive policy framework in place and effectively implemented for the conservation, protection and management of the country's marine ecosystems and fishery resources, that harmonizes mandates, plans and activities amongst all key MPA stakeholders including BMB, BFAR and relevant Local Government Units.

The Project is being managed by the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB, formerly PAWB) which has established a Project Management Unit (PMU) to implement certain outputs and coordinate the work of partners in pilot sites. Below is the project summary.

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE MTR

The MTR is expected to assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document, and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR will also review the project's strategy, its risks to sustainability.

IV. MTR APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The MTR must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The MTR team will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Environmental & Social Safeguard Policy, the Project Document, project reports including Annual Project Review/PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review). The MTR

team will review the baseline GEF focal area Tracking Tool submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement, and the midterm GEF focal area Tracking Tool that must be completed before the MTR field mission begins.

The MTR team is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach[2] ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), the UNDP Country Office(s), UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisers, and other key stakeholders.

V.   DETAILED SCOPE OF THE MTR

The MTR team will assess the following four categories of project progress. These categories are: project strategy, progress towards results, project implementation and adaptive management, and sustainability.

For extended descriptions of the abovementioned categories, it can be seen in the "Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects".

A. Project Strategy

Project design:

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.
- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?
- Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country projects)?
- Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account during project design processes?
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design. See Annex 9 of *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for further guidelines.
- If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement.

Results Framework/Logframe:

- Undertake a critical analysis of the project's theory of change as indicated in the results framework, assess how "SMART" the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific,

---

[2] For ideas on innovative and participatory Monitoring and Review strategies and techniques, see UNDP Discussion Paper: Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results, 05 Nov 2013.

> Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary.

- Are the project's objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame?
- Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e. income generation, gender equality and women's empowerment, improved governance etc.) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.
- Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively. Develop and recommend SMART 'development' indicators, including sex-disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits.

B. **Progress Towards Results**

Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:

- Review the results framework indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix and following the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*; colour code progress in a "traffic light system" based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as "Not on target to be achieved" (red).

Table 2. **Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of outcomes against End-of-project Targets)**

Project Strategy	Indicator[3]	Baseline Level[4]	Level in 1st PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target[5]	End-of-project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment[6]	Achievement Rating[7]	Justification for Rating
Objective:	Indicator (if applicable):							
Outcome 1:	Indicator 1:							
	Indicator 2:							
Outcome 2:	Indicator 3:							
	Indicator 4:							
	Etc.							
Etc.								

Indicator Assessment Key

Green= Achieved	Yellow= On target to be achieved	Red= Not on target to be achieved

In addition to the progress towards outcomes analysis:
- Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool at the baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review.
- Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project.
- By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.

---

[3] Populate with data from the Logframe and scorecards
[4] Populate with data from the Project Document
[5] If available
[6] Colour code this column only
[7] Use the 6 point Progress Towards Results Rating Scale: HS, S, MS, MU, U, HU

C. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

<u>Management Arrangements:</u>

- Review overall **effectiveness of project management** as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective and efficient? Is the structure of the PMU responding to the demands of the Project? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement.

<u>Work Planning:</u>

- Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved.
- Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?
- Examine the use of the project's results framework/ logframe as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start.

<u>Finance and co-finance</u>:

- Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.
- Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.
- Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?
- Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out, provide commentary on co-financing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans?

<u>Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems</u>:

- Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Is the system results-based? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?
- Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?

<u>Stakeholder Engagement:</u>

- Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?
- Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?
- Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?

Reporting:

- Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board.
- Assess how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated PIRs, if applicable?)
- Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

Communications:

- Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?
- Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?)
- For reporting purposes, write one half-page paragraph that summarizes the project's progress towards results in terms of contribution to sustainable development benefits, as well as global environmental benefits.

D. Sustainability

- Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Management Module are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why.
- In addition, assess the following risks to sustainability:

Financial risks to sustainability:

- What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project's outcomes)?

Socio-economic risks to sustainability:

- Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

<u>Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:</u>

- Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.

<u>Environmental risks to sustainability:</u>
- Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?

Conclusions & Recommendations

The MTR team will include a section of the report setting out the MTR's evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings.[8]

Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. A recommendation table should be put in the report's executive summary. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for guidance on a recommendation table.

The MTR team should make no more than 15 recommendations total.

Ratings

The MTR team will include its ratings of the project's results and brief descriptions of the associated achievements in a *MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table* in the Executive Summary of the MTR report. See Annex E for ratings scales. No rating on Project Strategy and no overall project rating is required.

---

[8] Alternatively, MTR conclusions may be integrated into the body of the report.

Table 3. **MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for Strengthening Marine Protected Areas to Conserve Marine Key Biodiversity Areas in the Philippines**

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	N/A	
Progress Towards Results	Objective Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 1 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 2 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 3 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Etc.	
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
Sustainability	(rate 4 pt. scale)	

VI.   TIMEFRAME

The MTR consultancy will be for 40 working days over a time period of approximately 17 weeks starting 20 October 2017 and shall not exceed five months from when the consultant(s) are hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

TIMEFRAME	ACTIVITY
6 October 2017	Application closes
9-13 October 2017	Review and selection process of MTR Team composition
20 October	Consultants are officially on board
23 October – 03 November	Preparations for the MTR Team (handover of Project Documents)
6-17 November	Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report Finalization and Validation of MTR Inception Report- latest start of MTR mission
20-01 December	MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits
01 December	Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of MTR mission
4-15 December	Preparing draft MTR report
15 December	Presentation of the first draft of the report to the BMB and UNDP
18 December 2017 to 12 January 2018	Feedback and comments from the UNDP, BMB and other partners
15-19 January 2018	Preparation & submission of the 2nd draft of the MTR report
22 January	Submission of the 2nd draft of MTR report
23-29 January	Feedback and comments from the UNDP, BMB and other partners
30 January – 05 February	Preparation of the final MTR report
06 February	Submission of the final MTR report
7-16 February	Preparation & Issue of Management Response
28 February	Presentation to the Project Steering Committee

Options for site visits should be provided in the Inception Report.

VII.   MIDTERM REVIEW DELIVERABLES

#	Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
1	**MTR Inception Report**	MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review	No later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission	MTR team submits to the Commissioning Unit and project management
2	**Presentation**	Initial Findings	End of MTR mission	MTR Team presents to project management and the Commissioning Unit
3	**Draft Final Report**	Full report (using guidelines on content outlined in Annex B) with annexes	Within 3 weeks of the MTR mission	Sent to the Commissioning Unit, reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFP
4	**Final Report***	Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report	Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft	Sent to the Commissioning Unit

*The final MTR report must be in English. If applicable, the Commissioning Unit may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into a language more widely shared by national stakeholders.

VIII.   MTR ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's MTR is UNDP Philippines.

The commissioning unit,will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of DSAs and travel arrangements within the country for the MTR team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the MTR team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

IX.   TEAM COMPOSITION

A team of two independent consultants will conduct the MTR - one team leader (with experience and exposure to projects and evaluations in other regions globally) and one team member, from the Philippines. The consultants must not have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.

For the International Consultant who will be the team leader should possess the following qualifications:

Qualifications
At least 5 years experience in coastal and marine resource management, policy and institutional work
At least 3-5 years working experience in conducting UNDP, GEF or GEF-programme or project evaluations
At least 3-5 years working experience in the Philippines or in Southeast Asian countries with more or less similar socio-economic and environmental context like the Philippines
Work experience in relevant technical areas for at least 10 years
A Master's degree in marine science, ecology, economics, environmental management, community development, or other closely related field

The International Consultant, as the team leader, will primarily cover the tasks, but not limited to the following:
1.   Prepare the MTR Inception Report including a detailed plan of the mission with an interview schedule, evaluation questions and provide it to the UNDP and CPMU no later than 2 weeks before the MTR mission
2.   Ensure the conduct of evaluation activities as agreed on with BMB, PMU and UNDP;
3.   Consolidate and analyse data and information gathered during the evaluation;
4.   Work closely with the National Consultant in the conduct of evaluation activities;
5.   Infuse new ideas based on best practices of other countries in project implementation to ensure progress towards the project's development objectives;
6.   Lead the finalization of the MTR Report;

The Review Team is expected to discuss among themselves their detailed division of work ensuring that each section of the report will be responded to. These should be clearly articulated in the MTR Inception Report.

SMARTSeas PH PMU will provide office space and access to office services such as, Internet and printing. Evaluator/s should provide their own computer and communications equipment.

In consultation with the Review Team and as requested, the PMU personnel will make available all relevant documentation and provide contact information to key project partners and stakeholders, and facilitate contact where needed. The team will also assist in organizing any briefing de-briefing meetings including coordination of stakeholders' input in the review draft report.

X.   PAYMENT MODALITIES AND SPECIFICATIONS

Consultants will be contracted by UNDP and remunerated according to the reviewed and accepted financial proposal. The contract will be output-based and payment issued only upon delivery of satisfactory outputs/milestones.

Table 6. Payment Schedule

%	Milestone
10%	Following submission and acceptance of the MTR mission Inception Report
30%	Following submission and approval of the 1ST draft MTR report
20%	Following submission and approval of the 2nd draft MTR report addressing comments from IP, UNDP-CO and UNDP-GEF RTA
40%	Following submission and approval () of the final MTR report

XI.   APPLICATION PROCESS[9]

Applicants are requested to submit applications to procurement.ph@undp.org

The application should contain a current and complete C.V. in English with indication of the e-mail and phone contact. Please submit a price offer indicating the total cost of the assignment (including daily fee, per diem and travel costs—use the ATTACHED FINANCIAL PROPOSAL). Make sure the email does not exceed 4MB.

UNDP applies a fair and transparent selection process that will take into account the competencies/skills of the applicants as well as their financial proposals. Qualified women and members of social minorities are encouraged to apply.

---

[9] Engagement of the consultants should be done in line with guidelines for hiring consultants in the POPP: https://info.undp.org/global/popp/Pages/default.aspx