

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Mid Term Review of Linking and Enhancing Protected Areas in the Temperate Broadleaf Forest Ecoregions of Bhutan (LINKPA) Project

Project Number: BT0873

BACKGROUND

Linkpa is a tripartite project of Royal Government of Bhutan, GEF/UNDP, and WWF. It is also the first project where GEF/UNDP and WWF Bhutan work together as partners in the country. The project area covers Thrumshingla National Park (TNP) and two corridors connecting it to Jigme Singye NP and Royal Manas NP. TNP is one of the nine protected areas of Bhutan and was gazetted in 1998. It is located in the central part of Bhutan and contains spectacular mountainscape with rich cultural and biological diversity. The park is unique as it has a combination of all different vegetation zones of Bhutan. It contains some 622 species of the plants belonging to 140 families including 152 medicinal plants species, and 21 species that are endemic to Bhutan, and one globally threatened species. It has more than 68 mammals and some 341 species of birds that include globally threatened, restricted, and rare species. It is also the centerpiece for the contiguous distribution of the tiger population in the country. Elevation ranges from less than 1000 m in the south and more than 4000 m in the north. The park and its peripheral areas are settled by the communities of nine geogs (blocks) of four districts who subsists on farming and livestock rearing. The park is widely used by these communities.

Goal:

The goal of the project is Sustainable Conservation and Management of the Temperate Forest and Mountain Ecosystem in the newly established Thrumshingla National Park and its biological corridors.

Objectives:

The overall objective is to strengthen effective landscape management of the protected area network and biological corridors in the cool broadleaf forest ecoregion.

The project has three components. The expected project outputs are arranged by components.

Component I

Develop conservation and management guidelines, regulatory framework, and capacity of implementers at project level. There are four expected outputs under this component.

- Output 1-1. Develop guidelines and/or regulatory framework for the management of biological corridor
- Output 1-2. Organize annual workshop/meeting among the central and local government staff to discuss, share experiences, and plan effective biological corridor management
- Output 1-3. Develop management capacity
- Output 1-4. Develop a sustainable financial plan

Component II

Develop model pilot initiatives for biological corridor conservation by the local authorities and communities in selected critical sites. This component has three expected outputs.

- Output 2-1: Develop a management action plan in two selected biological corridors by the local government and communities
- Output 2-2: Implement integrated conservation and development initiatives in the two critical bottleneck sites of the biological corridors
- Output 2-3: Establish effective biological database and monitoring system of the biological corridor and protected area networks

Component III

Strengthen conservation and sustainable use of biological resources in the TNP. This component has five expected outputs.

- Output 3-1: Enhance management framework and capacity
- Output 3-2: Strengthen law enforcement in and around the park
- Output 3-3: Improve sustainable use of biological resources in and around the park
- Output 3-4: Develop alternative livelihood options in and around the park
- Output 3.5: Conduct information, communication, and education programs to support planning and awareness raising in and around the park

MTR OBJECTIVES

The purpose of mid term review is to assess if the project concept and design, including implementation mechanism adopted, are appropriate in realizing its immediate objectives and expected outputs by implementing the activities identified. The findings and lessons learnt will be incorporated into the project to enable necessary adjustments in the work plan and the project document.

SCOPE OF MTR

General scope

The mid-term review (MTR) will assess operational aspects, such as project management and implementation of activities and also the extent to which objectives are being fulfilled. It will focus on corrective actions needed for the project to achieve desired impact. It will be a decisive review to evaluate whether the components or activities within a component are relevant in the present and should be continued for the rest of the project period.

Cross cutting issues

Considering that both UNDP and WWF are concerned about poverty reduction, local governance and promotion of gender equity, the review will be required to look at these cross cutting issues.

1. Poverty reduction

How has the LINKPA project contributed to poverty reduction of communities living in and around the park?

2. Governance

How has the project facilitated the participation of the local communities in natural resource management and decision making processes?

3. Promotion of gender equity

Has the project considered gender sensitivity or equal participation of man and women and boys and girls in decision making processes?

Broad Responsibilities

Under the guidance and close consultations with WWF Bhutan Program, UNDP and NCD/TNP, the consultants will be responsible in desk research of existing management plans, survey/research/evaluation reports and database. Besides, the consultants will consult all the partners and institutions and gather information and opinions on implementation processes like management and coordination; fund release mechanism and project management capacity and see whether each of them has been supportive to the project delivery. They will visit field sites and consult extension agents and communities and directly record issues, benefits and gaps and relate them to the project achievements. Finally, they will compile them into a report highlighting both constraints and opportunities suggesting recommendations that will enable both donors and implementers to realign their remaining programs and activities for the next two years. The consultants will finally make a presentation of their findings to all the relevant institutions/organizations.

The international consultant will sign an agreement with UNDP and the local consultant will sign an agreement with WWF Bhutan Program. They will be bound by its terms and conditions set in the agreement.

COMPOSITION OF MTR MISSION

The MTR mission for Linkpa project will comprise of an international and a local consultant. The international consultant will be the team leader and coordinate the consultancy to ensure quality of the report and timely submission. The local consultant will provide supportive roles both in terms of professional back up, translation and

QUALIFICATIONS

The candidates should have at least MSc or higher degree in Natural Resource Management or related fields and should have adequate experience in evaluation of GEF project. The candidate should be physically fit and be willing to walk and work in remote locations.

International consultant

1. Professional background in natural resource/protected area management or related fields with experience in terrestrial biodiversity conservation with in-depth understanding of landscape ecology conservation approaches. A minimum of 10 years of working experience is required;
2. Highly knowledgeable of participatory monitoring and evaluation processes, and experience in evaluation of technical assistance projects with major donor agencies;
3. Familiar with conservation approaches in Asia either through management and/or implementation or through consultancies in evaluation of conservation projects. Understanding of local actions contributing to global benefits is crucial;
4. Demonstrated ability to assess complex situations, succinctly distills critical issues, and draw forward-looking conclusions and recommendations;
5. Ability and experience to lead multi disciplinary and national teams, and deliver quality reports within the given time.
6. Writing and communication will be in English, and must be excellent in English and communication skills. The consultant must bring his/her own computing equipment.

Local consultant

1. Professional background in natural resources management, conservation and community development, and related fields with a minimum of 8 years of relevant experience;
2. Demonstrated skills and knowledge in participatory monitoring and evaluation processes;
3. Extensive experience in monitoring and evaluation of conservation and development projects, supported by major donor agencies;
4. Knowledgeable on conservation institutions and projects in the country, conservation issues and priorities, and related policies and legislations;
5. Proficient in writing and communicating both in English and in Dzongkha. Ability to interpret to the international counterpart and also to translate necessary written documents to English;
6. Fluency in any of the local dialects (Sharchop and Bumthang) will be given preference.
7. Should hold a valid Bhutanese consultancy license

Specific Tasks

In particular, the consultants will be responsible for:

International Consultant

- (i) Desk research of existing management plans, survey/research/evaluation reports and database.
- (ii) Conduct fieldwork together with counterpart and interview stakeholders, extension agents and communities to generate authentic information/opinions.
- (iii) Write and compile reports.
- (iv) Make a presentation of the entire findings highlighting achievements, constraints and realistic recommendations to decision makers and stakeholders.
- (v) Finalise the evaluation report

Local Consultant

- (i) The local consultant will assist and collaborate with the team leader in all the tasks mention above and in translations, documentation and arranging logistics.

Consultancy period and its timetable

The duration of the mid term review mission shall be for 21 working days and shall commence from 10 July to 5 August 2006. The tentative program is as follows:

Dates	Item	Remarks
10 July 2006	Arrive Thimphu	Halt at Thimphu
11 July 2006	Meetings with local stakeholders 10.00 - Meet with WWF team 11.30- Meet with UNDP team 12.30- Meet with Dr. Sangay Wangchuk, NCD 2.00- Meet Dasho Sangay Thinlay, Secretary, MoA 3.00- Meet with Dasho Dawa Tshering, DG, DoF	Halt at Thimphu Mincha to coordinate all the meetings
12 July 2006	Travel to Bumthang	
13-21 July 2006	Field work and meetings with beneficiaries, park	Field program as

	staff and district stakeholders	prepared by the PM/ see annex
22 July 2006	Travel back to Thimphu	Halt at Thimphu
23-25 July 2006	Work on first draft report with the local consultant	Halt at Thimphu Circulate report to PSC members by 26 July 2006
27 July 2006	Debriefing at the MoA	MoA Conference hall
28 July 2006	Day off	
29 July 2006	Travel to Bangkok	
2 August 2006	Share first draft with UNDP, WWF and NCD electronically	From Bangkok
5 August 2006	Submit final document	Electronically from Bangkok

Focal persons

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MTR DELIVERABLES

The MTR mission will deliver 2 hard copies and 2 soft copies of the final and approved MTR report as per the agreed timeframe.

MODE OF PAYMENT

International consultant

The payment for the international will be based on the existing UN rate. UNDP will pay him 50% of the fee on arrival and the rest after the delivery of the products. The payment is inclusive of fee and DSA. However, the cost of transport will be borne by WWF.

Local consultant

The payment for the local consultant will be based on the quote they submit in their quotation. The consultant will share transport with the international consultant and meet their own food and lodge costs. The 50% of the payment will be made on signing of the contract agreement and the rest will be made after delivery of the products.