**UNDP Management Response**

Developing and Implementing the National Framework on Access to and Benefit Sharing of Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge **Terminal Evaluation**

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Input into and update in ERC: Position: Unit/Bureau:

**Overall comments:**

The PMO is thankful to the TE team for ranking the project Highly Satisfactory and will especially take these 10 recommendations into consideration for concrete actions to be taken before project closure and after. These actions will include drawing on ABS project results to make specific recommendation to MEE policy development & implementation and cross sectoral coordination with other departments.

Here are the responses of the PMO to TE Report recommendations respectively on how to embed into project management for improvement:

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| 图形用户界面, 文本, 应用程序  描述已自动生成**Evaluation Recommendation 1:** While the Project developed a custom and purpose-built platform (<http://www.absch.org.cn>) to enable the sharing of technology and knowledge resources with Chinese stakeholders, coined “ABS Clearing-House”, this is different than the CBD Secretariat’s [ABS Clearinghouse Mechanism](https://absch.cbd.int/en/), which is the key international tool to facilitate the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. One of the requirements of accession is to populate it and maintain current information. As a Party to the Nagoya Protocol, the Project must ensure this is undertaken before operational closure.  |
| **Management Response[[1]](#footnote-1):**  Fully Accept |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Timeframe** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking[[2]](#footnote-2)** |
| **Status[[3]](#footnote-3)** | **Comments** |
| 1.1 report on ABS project outcomes and recommendations will be submitted to MEE, which will bring up the issue of clearinghouse updating and meeting SCBD’s relevant requirements- submission of report in April | March- June 30, 2022 | Division II, FECO  | Initiated |  |
| 1.2 continuously provide ABS related information to the technical service provider that is commissioned to maintain the portal | April - Dec. 31, 2022 | Division II, FECO | Initiated |  |
| **Evaluation Recommendation 2:** The Project needs to elaborate a **detailed** exit strategy, establishing the steps to be taken and pending issues post-project. It is recommended therefore, to augment the Project’s existing exit strategy per best practice example provided by the TE consultant team. This should explore the following pillars / sub-topics:* Ongoing activities and operational strands of work should explicitly note whether they will be “phased down”, “phased out” or “phased over”;
* Transition plan explicitly noting what each of the core members of the legislative expert team will continue to own and promote as part of their ongoing work, what activities are likely to lose momentum and what gaps are foreseen in the near-term;
* An inventory of different aspects of the Project, including implementation of regulations and contracts, which need to be monitored, how often, by whom and at what cost;
* Viability strategies for any interim management / coordination support that might be necessary;
* A compilation of sources of funding and potential future investment(s) by key stakeholders involved, external third parties and / or international donor community.
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| **Management Response:** Fully Accept  |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Timeframe** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 2.1 7th PSC meeting on March 15th, 2022 was convened and decided how to exit the program in detail with requirement set out on ongoing activities.  | March 2022 | Division II, FECO | completed |  |
| 2.2 summarize and draw further on legal experience accumulated at project pilots to provide policy recommendation to relevant departments, promote the process of ABS legislation at national level and facilitate achievement of pertinent outcomes of post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework | March- December 31, 2022 | Division II, FECO | Initiated |  |
| 2.3 Take the opportunity of COP15 Part II and the commemoration event of “May 22nd The International Day for Biological Diversity” to promote ABS project results, with raised social awareness and enhanced GEF program impact. | March-September 30,2022 | Division II, FECO | Initiated |  |
| 2.4 project result compilation to be published, by August, 2022 | March-August 31, 2022 | Division II, FECO | Initiated |  |
| 2.5 ABS training textbook to be published, by August, 2022 | March-December 31, 2022 | Division II, FECO | Initiated |  |
| **Evaluation Recommendation 3:** The Project is developing a compilation of deliverables to systematically document experiences and lessons from the Project’s different components, including from the pilot activities and demonstrations. It is also compiling a book on ABS expected to be published shortly after operational closure. Public awareness and information management need to be approached as over-arching aspects of the ABS framework that require longer-term attention. The Project should consider the inclusion of the following in these deliverables:* Specific case studies which have emerged from implementation, not only related to ABS legislation per se, but also operational issues such as essential functions and composition of PMOs and a retrospective on what can be achieved within certain timelines based on the Chinese context;
* Linkages to lessons of this Project to the broader portfolio of UNDP projects within the region;
* Assessment of the Project’s contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals, to global environmental benefits and possible entry points for the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework;
* Important or interesting areas that have either gone underexplored or not explored at all, such as protection of microbial genetic resources and microorganisms;
* Opportunities arising from the study of Digital Information and Big Data.
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| **Management Response:** Partially Accept  |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Timeframe** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 3.1 close communication will be maintained with experts in compilation of the two publications to ensure that these deliverables put forward by the TE team are embedded fully | March- August 31, 2022 | Division II, FECO | Initiated |  |
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| **Evaluation Recommendation 4:** The three pilots and demonstrations between local communities and the private sector have left their mark through a legacy of legislation, provincial and municipal regulations, as well as through 6 inclusive ABS contracts. With little to no previous experience and benchmarking prior to the UNDP-GEF ABS project, things have not always been smooth and there have been challenges and hiccups along the way. Insufficient readiness and preparation resulted in a slow start and a number of inefficiencies during the first Annual workplan. Learning from past mistakes are instrumental in setting new provinces on the right footing so they can hit the ground running. Already there are several provinces, (including Hebei, Jiangsu, Shandong) and municipalities (the city of Guangzhou in Guangdong province) which have expressed their willingness to develop specific ABS measures.It is recommended that a readiness package / starter kit is prepared for new stakeholders embarking on ABS regulatory discovery and implementation, including model contract(s), sample regulations, an indicative work plan / roadmap and a checklist of near-term priorities and critical questions to be answered at the outset. This kit, based on the experience accumulated by the Project and challenges met in the process, will serve as a valuable reference point and should be accompanied by a list of learning and training resources. While a legislative expert team has agreed to provide provinces with professional support, such a resource will help make the process more self-directed in light of insufficient financial resources. |
| **Management Response:** Fully Accept  |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Timeframe** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 4.1 embed existing elements fit for toolkit into the upcoming publications | March- December 31, 2022 | Division II, FECO | Initiated |  |
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| **Evaluation Recommendation 5:** The Project has underscored the importance of capacity when it comes to complex issues such as ABS. While the Project has delivered robust institutional and professional training, the TE consultant team believes it has only scratched the surface on what is necessary going forward. Consultations have corroborated this observation and surfaced the need for ongoing training to different target audiences, including academia, local communities, companies and government personnel - to internalize core concepts. Continued technical support and funding is needed to consolidate institutional capacities for assuming ABS roles and responsibilities, functions, and provide guidance and ongoing refresher training for the implementation and refinement of national and sub-national ABS frameworks. The Project should explore different avenues for bridge funding until a follow-up initiative is incubated. |
| **Management Response:** Fully Accept  |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Timeframe** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 5.1 communication is in progress with MARA administered GEF Partnership Program for Sustainable Agricultural Development on how to use ABS project results to generate more opportunities/funding /training  | March- December 31, 2022 | Division II, FECO | Initiated |  |
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| **Evaluation Recommendation 6:** The UNDP-GEF ABS project has certainly demonstrated the value and benefits of neutral outside management support. Future projects should prioritize external recruitment of a PMO not represented by members of the Implementing Partner or executing entities. The recruitment process should prioritize seasoned management with best practice certification (Prince 2 or PMI). |
| **Management Response:** Fully Accept  |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Timeframe** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 6.1 consult UNDP China for properly putting into practice. | March- Dec. 31, 2022 |  | Not initiated |  |
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| **Evaluation Recommendation 7:** Plan for and carry out a “reality check” re-thinking and adjustment phase before implementation begins. Recognizing that there may be a lapse of a year or more between project design and implementation, it would be advisable for the designers of future projects to specifically build in an inception phase that requires a critical review of project design at start-up, with substantive input from all project partners. During such a substantive inception phase, future projects would do well to:* Update the actual situation in participating countries against the context at the time the project document was written;
* Assess the time and funding proposed for implementation against actual national capacity to deliver;
* Revise project components and deliverables accordingly; and
* Develop work plans on this basis.
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| **Management Response:** Fully accept. |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Timeframe** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 7.1 PMO will take this into one of the major lessons and include it into the project closure report as lessons learnt for future reference by other project teams. | Apr.-Aug. 31, 2022 | Division II, FECO | Not initiated |  |
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| **Evaluation Recommendation 8:** The Project has strong prospects for replication and upscaling, and there is an enabling environment for ABS made possible through clear signals within the updated China National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan on priority actions related to ABS, as well as through the Fourteenth Five-Year Plan. The Project therefore, should vigorously pursue a follow-up initiative. Regarding the design and programming of similar interventions in the future, the TE consultant team also recommends establishing the specific problem to be solved from the beginning, with a theory of change according to where the route is visualized from the inputs, activities, and products to the expected results or effects. Possible thematic areas for follow-up include:• Alignment and harmonization between international negotiation and implementation of domestic ABS issues;• Documenting issues arising from implementation of regulations and pursuing subsequent refinements and amendments;• Supporting and allocating sufficient time for R&D of genetic resources;• Greater inter- and intra-ministerial mainstreaming; and • Resolving potential conflicts among overlapping authorities over natural resources, as well as rights-holders of Traditional Knowledge;• Through pilots, greater exploration of domestic legal recognition and protection of genetic resource rights assigned to not only ethnic minorities, but also local communities of all ethnic groups. |
| **Management Response:** Fully accept  |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Timeframe** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 8.1 Most of the core members of the legislative expert team of the National ABS regulation have participated in the ABS project in the past six years. They expressed that they are to consistently promote the National ABS regulation with the project legacies and exchange with relevant departments for enhanced coordination and further support  | March- June 30, 2022 | Division II, FECO | Initiated |  |
| 8.2 organize seminar to promote project result to be drawn on by experts from across sectors especially legislation | April 30, 2022 | Division II, FECO | Initiated |  |
| **Evaluation Recommendation 9:** Strengthen cooperation among multiple ministries or departments to improve the integrity and consistency of ABS data and information, especially the cooperation with the Ministry of agriculture and rural affairs of China in future projects, so as to strengthen the support of existing agricultural research data for ABS basic research and database construction. |
| **Management Response:** Fully accept |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Timeframe** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 9.1 FECO is now involved in a NFGA initiated GEF-7 project on transformational wildlife conservation management in China | March- June 30, 2025 | Division II, FECO | Initiated |  |
| 9.2 FECO is currently executing a MARA administered GEF Partnership Program for Sustainable Agricultural Development | March- June 30, 2025 | Division II, FECO | Initiated |  |
| **Evaluation Recommendation 10:** Article 18 of the CBD and Article 23 of the Nagoya Protocol underscore the need for technical and scientific cooperation between Parties to the Convention and to the Protocol. Specifically, Article 23 of the NP encourages Parties to:“…*collaborate and cooperate in technical and scientific research and development programmes, including biotechnological research activities, as a means to achieve the objective of this Protocol. The Parties undertake to promote and encourage access to technology by, and transfer of technology to, developing country Parties, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States among them, and Parties with economies in transition, in order to enable the development and strengthening of a sound and viable technological and scientific base for the attainment of the objectives of the Convention and this Protocol.*”With this in mind and given the Project’s exemplary performance and achievements, it is encouraged that FECO and the core legislative expert team which has supported implementation should register as a “Provider” of technical assistance on the CBD’s [Bio-Bridge Initiative](https://www.cbd.int/biobridge/) [platform](https://www.cbd.int/biobridge/platform) in order to support requests from Parties that have a dearth in capacity and knowledge on ABS issues in general. China has a lot to offer and ought to take a leadership role globally based on the outcomes of the Project and what has been achieved in a short period of time. |
| **Management Response:** Fully accept  |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Timeframe** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 10.1 make the recommendation to the responsible department of MEE | April 30, 2022 | Division II, FECO | Not Initiated |  |
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1. Select one: Fully Accept, Partially Accept, Reject [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Status of implementation is tracked electronically in the Evaluation Resource Centre (ERC). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Select one: Not initiated, Initiated, Completed, Completed, No longer applicable [↑](#footnote-ref-3)