**Management response to the recommendations of MTR Report**

 **Strengthening Marine Protected Areas in SE China to Conserve Globally Significant Coastal Biodiversity (C-PAR 4)**

UNDP Project ID: 5379

GEF Project ID: 9463

MTR Time Frame: February to April 2022

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Cleared by: Position: Unit/Bureau:

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

**Overall comments:**

The project is rated as ‘Satisfactory’ through the Mid Term Review (MTR). The MTR team’s affirmation of C-PAR4 project is much appreciated.

Since the project launched at the end of 2019, with the joint efforts of all parties concerned, we have overcome various difficulties caused by the Covid-19, and actively implemented the project. Generally, the project has progressed smoothly. After 2 years of project implementation, the effects of project begin to reveal. During the remaining phases of the project, the PMO will strengthen the advantages, overcome difficulties and improve the weakness to work with all parties and continue to implement project activities in accordance with the approved work plans. Meantime, the project will focus on sharing, dissemination, and radiation of project lessons to ensure delivery of project results and realization of project objective.

We agree with the conclusions of the MTR Report. This is a very objective and clearly thought-out report. For the affirmative part, the project team will continue to maintain and strive to improve. For problems and suggestions, the project team will carefully analyze, check for omissions, optimize the plan, and improve in time.

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| **Recommendation 1:** **Undertake a targeted assessment and identification of management measures in accordance with the process outlined in the ESMF for the project** |
| **Management Response[[1]](#footnote-1): Fully Accept** |
| **Key Action(s)**  | **Timeframe (Y.M.D)** | **Responsible Unit(s)**  | **Tracking [[2]](#footnote-2)**  |
| **Status[[3]](#footnote-3)**  | **Comments** |
| 1.1 Selection of suitable short-term safeguard expert with UNDP assistance | 2022.Apr-Jun | PMO, UNDP | Initiated |  |
| 1.2 The targeted assessment and identification of management measures undertook by the expert and the report drafted | 2022.Jul-Dec | PMO, safeguard expert, subcontractors | Not initiated |  |
| **Recommendation 2:** **Review all project outputs and activities (including those completed, underway and future) as part of the targeted assessment and identification of management measures, make any necessary changes to the design of activities and identify any required remedial actions, and have the findings endorsed by the PSC and RTA** |
| **Management Response: Fully Accept** |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Timeframe (Y.M.D)** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 2.1 Review all project outputs and activities against the ESMP to ensure risks are appropriately managed, take any required remedial actions and have the findings endorsed by the PSC and RTA | 2022.Jul-Dec | PMO, CTA, safeguard expert, subcontractors, PSC,UNDP CO/RTA | Not initiated |  |
| **Recommendation 3:** **Participate in a programmatic review of the processes followed in environmental and social risk management in C-PAR projects 1, 2, 3 and 4 since CEO endorsement, including considering the requirements for this Moderate-risk project, to identify lessons learned and opportunities to improve safeguards outcomes in these projects and future projects (including identifying roles, responsibilities and resources required to oversee and implement the requirements)** |
| **Management Response: fully accept** |
| **Key Action(s)**  | **Timeframe (Y.M.D)** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 3.1 Liaise with C-PAR1,2 and 3 to gain an in-depth understanding of their work processes on environmental and social risk management and to learn lessons and share experiences | 2022.Apr-Jun | PMO, UNDP | Initiated |  |
| 3.2 The lessons learned will be analyzed and included in the reports of safeguard expert and project implementation as important reference future work and even for other/future projects | 2022.Jul-2024.Oct | PMO, NFGA, UNDP | Not initiated |  |
| **Recommendation 4:** **Update the SESP for the project** |
| **Management Response[[4]](#footnote-4): fully accept** |
| **Key Action(s)**  | **Timeframe (Y.M.D)** | **Responsible Unit(s)**  | **Tracking**  |
| **Status**  | **Comments** |
| 4.1 The SESP of C-PAR4 updated and cleared by the UNDP CO safeguards officer.  | 2022.Jul-2013.Mar | PMO, CTA, safeguard expertUNDP CO/RTA  | Not initiated |  |
| 4.2 UNDP CO to provide safeguards oversight during the implementation period, specifically focusing on the updated SESP and pertinent risk management plan.  | 2022.Jul- 2024.Oct | UNDP CO safeguards officer | Not initiated  |  |
| **Recommendation 5:** **Drive a new focus on female participation and optimising gender mainstreaming outcomes, by 1. developing annual gender action plans in accordance with relevant activities under different components, 2. updating the gender action plan that was developed during project preparation (Annex G of the project document) after the SESP has been updated, and 3. reporting annually on progress against these action plans and the project’s gender action plan** |
| **Management Response: Partially Accept**Reasons: 1. The gender action plan has been updated during the project implementation, and an online training has been conducted for five demonstration protected areas, which is the guidance of gender mainstreaming in project implementation, PMO is responsible for fulfil the gender action plans based on different project activities instead of by year; 2.As an important part of the SESP, the gender action plan will be reviewed and updated during the SESP update; 3. The gender mainstreaming is part of the PPR and PIR and is updated and reported annually related issues in each project activity on progress.  |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Timeframe (Y.M.D)** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 5.1 During the SESP update, review and update the existing Gender Action Plan again under expert guidance. Submit to the UNDP CO safeguards officer and the RTA for review.  | 2022.Juy-Dec | PMO, CTA, gender specialist, safeguard expert, subcontractors, UNDP CO Safeguards Officer, RTA | Not initiated |  |
| 5.2 Actively learn from other GEF projects and participate in activities such as gender mainstreaming-related training organized by UNDP and other projects | 2022.Apr-2024.Oct | PMO, UNDP | Initiated |  |
| 5.3 Implement updated Gender Action Plan and the Stakeholder Engagement Plan | 2022.Dec-2024.Otc | PMO, CTA, subcontractors, demo. MPAs | Not initiated |  |
| **Recommendation 6:** **Develop and implement an Internal Communication and Coordination Action Plan to enhance the efficiency of information exchange, prevent duplication or conflict in work undertaken, and optimise delivery of all project components; this plan should identify all internal stakeholders, analyse their role in the project, map the relationships between stakeholders and their roles, and identify communication solutions and methods** |
| **Management Response: Fully Accept** |
| **Key Action(s)**  | **Timeframe (Y.M.D)** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 6.1 Develop an internal communication and coordination action Plan to enhance the efficiency of information exchange, prevent duplication or conflict in work undertaken, and optimize delivery of all project components  | 2022.May-Aug | PMO, CTA, subcontractors,demo. MPAs | Not initiated |  |
| 6.2 Implement the action plan and give full play to the role of the PMO as a link  | 2022.Aug-2024.Oct | PMO, CTA | Not initiated |  |
| **Recommendation 7:** **Set baselines for Indicators 10b (using 2021 data) and 10c (using 2020 data) as soon as possible** |
| **Management Response: Fully Accept** |
| **Key Action(s)**  | **Timeframe (Y.M.D)** | **Responsible Unit(s)**  | **Tracking**  |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 7.1 Revise and submit the revised indicator 10 of project results t framework to the PSC and RTA for approval  | 2022.Mar29-Dec31 | PMO, CTA, PSC, UNDP CO/RTA | Initiated |  |
| **Recommendation 8:** **Use data from 2021 to set the baseline for Indicator 10b (illegal fishing), because the levels of enforcement activity were very low during 2020 due to COVID-19, and remove the midterm target for Indicator 10b** |
| **Management Response: Fully Accept** |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Timeframe (Y.M.D)** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 8.1 Revise and submit the revised indicator 10 of project results t framework to the PSC and RTA for approval | 2022.Mar29-Dec31 | PMO, CTA, PSC, UNDP CO/RTA | Initiated |  |
| **Recommendation 9:** **Remove Indicator 8a, because Sanniang Bay NNR has not been established and a baseline cannot now be set at this stage of the project** |
| **Management Response: Fully Accept** |
| **Key Action(s)**  | **Timeframe (Y.M.D)** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 9.1 Revise and submit the revised indicator 8 of project results t framework to the PSC and RTA for approval | 2022.Mar29-Dec31 | PMO, CTA, PSC, UNDP CO/RTA | Initiated |  |
| **Recommendation 10:**  **Develop a plan to address the impacts of COVID-19 that identifies potential solutions that are specific for different actions and that enhance project implementation; this should be integrated with the proposed Internal Communication and Coordination Action Plan** |
| **Management Response:** Fully Accept |
| **Key Action(s)**  | **Timeframe (Y.M.D)** | **Responsible Unit(s)**  | **Tracking**  |
| **Status**  | **Comments** |
| 10.1 COVID-19 response plan will be drafted as part of the internal communication and coordination action Plan, rather than a separate COVID-19 response plan | 2022.May-Aug | PMO, CTA, subcontractors,demo. MPAs, PSC | Not initiated |  |
| **Recommendation 11:** **Develop a sustainability plan to identify how the project’s results can be continued beyond the GEF funding, including identifying institutional roles and responsibilities for the continuing operation of key project deliverables after the GEF project**  |
| **Management Response: Fully Accept** |
| **Key Action(s)** | **Timeframe (Y.M.D)** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 11.1 Develop a sustainability plan | 2022.Jun-Dec | PMO, CTA, PSC | Not initiated |  |
| **Recommendation 12:** **Review key activities in the context of climate change after the project SESP has been updated, identify any changes or new opportunities, and present the findings to the PSC and RTA** |
| **Management Response: Fully Accept** |
| **Key Action(s)**  | **Timeframe (Y.M.D)** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 12.1 Review key activities in the context of climate change after the project SESP has been updated, identify any changes or new opportunities | 2023.Jan-Apr | PMO, CTA, subcontractors,demo. MPAs | Not initiated |  |
| 12.2 Present the findings to the PSC and RTA for approval  | 2023.May-Aug | PMOUNDP CO/RTA | Not initiated |  |
| **Recommendation 13:** **Ensure that the Coastal Biodiversity Action Plans (CBAPs) all include climate change impacts and adaptation as** **core content.** |
| **Management Response: Partially Accept****Reasons: 1. The project Objective is to conserve globally significant coastal biodiversity in South-East (SE) China through integrated seascape planning and threat management, MPA network expansion and strengthened MPA operations. The main project activities are aimed at achieving the objective of conserving coastal biodiversity. 2.The Coastal Biodiversity Action Plans are under preparation by the Coastal Biodiversity Partnership subcontractors in three project provinces on the basis of marine conservation needs and priorities of coastal biodiversity on their own. Climate Change impacts and adaptation is one of the important elements for coastal habitats and human livelihoods, so relevant analysis in this area will be included in the action plan; 3. It is also feasible to reassess the risk of climate change impacts once SESP is updated and we will make sure that re-assessment and adaptation strategies will be included in the Coastal Biodiversity Action Plans. However, this analysis cannot be guaranteed as " core content" unless the climate change factor is identified as one of the core reasons that seriously affected marine species and species diversity.** |
| **Key Action(s)**  | **Timeframe (Y.M.D)** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Status** | **Comments** |
| 13.1 Review the Coastal Biodiversity Action Plans of three project provinces after the SESP of C-PAR4 is updated and cleared  | 2023.Apr-Aug |  PMO, CTA | 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)
4. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)