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Strengthening Sustainability of Protected Area Management in Myanmar
The 4th Project Board Meeting
Tuesday, 29th January 2019
Summit Park View Hotel, Yangon

Meeting Minutes of the 4th Project Board for Strengthening Sustainability of Protected Areas
Management in Myanmar (GEF-5 Project)

1. The Forest Department (FD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) signed the five-year term project document for the 'Strengthening Sustainability of Protected Area Management in Myanmar' Project in June 2015. In line with the project document, the Project Board (PB) was formed in October 2016 to ensure that the project is implemented in a timely and effective manner. The first Project Board Meeting was held at the Forest Department Director General's Office in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 30th November 2016. The 2nd Project Board Meeting was held on 22 September 2017 in Nay Pyi Taw. The 3rd Project Board Meeting was held on 14th September 2018 in Nay Pyi Taw. The 4th Project Board Meeting was held on 29th January 2019 in Yangon.
2. **Meeting participants included** Project Board members, representatives from FD, ECD, UNDP, and WCS. The list of the participants is attached as Appendix 1.
3. **The summary of the meeting is as below:**
 - a. Project updates and management responses for Mid Term Review (MTR) and 3rd Project Board decisions
 - b. Project Board approval for 2019 work plan and budget
 - c. Project exit strategy for adaptive management for conservation issues in northern project sites
 - d. Further process for the Conservation on Biodiversity and Protected Area Rules development, Myanmar Biodiversity Fund and capacity development
 - e. Sustainability of project activities after the termination of project period
 - f. Agreement on next Project Board Meeting date in second half of 2019
4. **In his opening remarks, the Director General of FD emphasized the following:**
 - a. GEF-5 Biodiversity Project is well-aligned with national policies and strategies for biodiversity conservation and protected area management
 - b. Achievements of project especially on legislation of protected areas, development of the national IUCN red list species, reviewing the national protected species listed by the law, and capacity development strategy along with ongoing trainings
 - c. Significant progress on developing the Myanmar Biodiversity Fund that will play an important role for biodiversity conservation in the future
 - d. Difficulties of project implementation in northern project sites
 - e. Local communities' concerns on their customary rights and space for communities mentioned in the new law

5. **In his opening remarks, the UNDP Resident Representative a.i highlighted the following points:**
 - a. Reflect on the significant achievement of the legal process and impressive exercise for the *Conservation of Biodiversity and Protected Areas Rules development process through public consultation* led by FD cooperating with WCS, WWF, FFI, LCG, and UNESCO.
 - b. Progress of capacity development and the institutionalized training programs addressing the non-existence of no formal/certified trainings and curriculum development focused on wildlife and protected areas in CFDTCs, MFS, Popa Mountain Park and UFES.
 - c. Challenges on security issues in the project sites and conflict with local communities
 - d. Need for adaptive management of the project activities for the remaining 18 months of the project period
 - e. Initiate planning for the project terminal evaluation in Q4 2019. Evaluation to be conducted in early 2020)
 - f. Sustainability of the project activities after the termination of project period

6. **Update on Actions Taken against 3rd Project Board Meeting Recommendations**
 - a. **"Conservation of Biodiversity and Protected Area Rules":** Consultation process for "Conservation of Biodiversity and Protected Area Rules" in consultation with Forest Department and UNDP has conducted and updated in timely manner. The draft CBPA Rules were presented to the PB.
 - b. **NPM:** Internal meeting minutes documentation to FD and UNDP on National Project Manager transition was provided.
 - c. **QRWP & SRF:** Revised 4th Quarter 2018 work plan and budget with explanations for significant changes, and revised Strategic Result Framework in electronic format to UNDP were presented for the Board's endorsement.
 - d. **Joint Monitoring Trip To Project Sites:** Trip to Htamanthi WS had been conducted by Director General of FD along with Permanent Secretary and WCS Representatives from NY and Yangon on 5th -7th December. Also in January 2019, DG FD and Director of NWCD have conducted monitoring trip to Hkakaborazi National Park.
 - e. **TAGPA:** The second TAGPA meeting was held in September 2018. The next TAGPA meeting will focus on experience sharing and reflections on lessons learnt.
 - f. **Purchasing Vehicles:** Vehicles are expected to be delivered end of February 2019
 - g. **MTR:** Recommendations from the MTR and key management responses were presented for endorsement of the PB
 - h. **AWP:** The draft 2019 AWP was presented in the meeting and endorsed by the PB with few considerations to be accommodated (refer point c, d, h, I, l under Section 8: Action Points below)
 - i. **NCE:** No Cost Extension was not requested for GEF 5 SSPAMM.
 - j. **Hiring Project Staff:** Two Project Staffs will be recruited and placed with FD.
 - k. **ICCA Study Tour:** Study tour relating to ICCA and CCA practiced in other countries (e.g., Australia or the Philippines) was not conducted last year. This PB Meeting was reviewed in the discussion.

7. Summary of discussions in the 4th Project Board meeting

- a. **"Conservation of Biodiversity and Protected Area Rules":** The process has been impressively conducted with the collaboration of the conservation partners led by FD. The development of important SOPs (i.e. buffer zone management, community PA establishment, FPIC process for community PA) should be started while the official procedures are being processed for final approval of the rules.
- b. **Myanmar Biodiversity Fund:** The 1st Steering committee meeting for Myanmar Biodiversity Trust Fund was conducted on 28th Jan 2019. It is an independent trust fund that will play an important role for conservation activities in the future. It is mainly focused on establishing an endowment fund to build interest from investments to be able to sustain future funding sources.
- c. **Capacity Development Strategy and Training Programs:** The strategy has been developed and the institutionalized training programs are being conducted for PA staff concurrently. The curriculum for Myanmar Forest School and CFDTTC has been developed while the course module for 4th year students of the University of Forestry and Environmental Science is still being developed.
- d. **National Red List on Endangered Species:** This is running in accordance with the first training on the national red list assessment procedures since 2017. As a result, the draft assessment for some species of reptiles and amphibians and mammals has been developed in July 2018 and January 2019, respectively. The next assessment for bird species will be conducted in late March 2019 and it is proposed to finalize the assessment of three taxon groups by the end of 2019.
- e. **Promotion on ICCA in Myanmar Context:** The new law on PAs highlighted the role of community participation in PA management. This identified the category Community Conserved Area (referred to as ICCA). The FPIC process should be strengthened for ICCA and its SOP needs to be developed. In order to understand more on community participation and management, the study tour to the Philippines will be conducted to understand existing experiences for ICCAs and other community mechanisms in relation to conflict areas.
- f. **Protected Area Expansion:** There are many key biodiversity areas (KBA) with high potential for new PA in Myanmar. In order to be aligned with project activities, the effort on PA expansion should support the FD process. The PA gap analysis should be updated using the ecosystem information, which will be delivered by this project.
- g. **Adaptive Management:** As the project has been challenged for community concerns on land tenure and security issues particularly in the northern sites, it is very important to make necessary adjustments to support the sustainability of project activities during the remaining project period. The management responses on the mid-term review will be considered for follow up action.
- h. **Project Exit Strategy:** The project will end in June 2020; all activities will need to be completed and finalized. Each activity will be reviewed for sustaining the ongoing activities after the end of the project. The strategy will be documented for review in the 5th Project Board meeting.

8. The following action points were agreed by the Project Board:

- a. The AWP 2019 was endorsed by the Project Board meeting with a few considerations to be made.

- b. Conduct training for social and environmental safeguards screening procedures in Q1 2019. Training to be facilitated by UNDP.
- c. Adequately plan for project closure which should include a Project Exit Strategy
- d. Initiate planning for project terminal evaluation in Q3 2019. Evaluation to be conducted in Q1 2020
- e. Myanmar Biodiversity Fund to be established end of 2019 and implementation in 2020.
- f. Convene TAGPA for reflection sharing process of project activities.
- g. Recruit Two Project staff at National Project Director Office in Q2 2019.
- h. Undertake ICCA study tour to Philippines in Q2 or Q3 2019
- i. Adjust flexibility of budget between Component 1 and 2 for the remaining project period.
- j. Pilot FPIC in PAs using synergies with UN-REDD programme (SOP for FPIC)
- k. Explore private sector partnership in PA activities (e.g., ecotourism, value-added products).
- l. Proceed with the submission of revised SRF (in line with MTR recommendations) to GEF Secretariat for approval
- m. Plan to establish new PAs under the existing KBAs and information from ecosystem gap analysis during the remaining project period.
- n. Develop SOP for Buffer Zone Management and Community PA at the end of 2019.
- o. Finalize the National Red Lists for Reptiles, Mammals and Birds at the end of 2019.

9. The next Project Board meeting will be held in second half of 2019

Appendix 1: Participant List

No.	Name	Designation	Organization
1	Dr. Nyi Nyi Kyaw	Director General	Forest Department
2	U Soe Naing	Director	Environmental Conservation Department
3	Dr. Naing Zaw Htun	Deputy Director	Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division, Forest Department
4	Daw Khin Nyein San	Staff Officer	Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division, Forest Department
5	U Zin Phyto Han Tun	Range Officer	Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division, Forest Department
6	Mr. Peter Batchelor	Resident Representative a.i	UNDP
7	Dr. Biplove Choudhary	Chief of Sustainable and Inclusive Growth (SIG) Unit	UNDP
8	Ms. Pem Wangdi	Programme Specialist, SIG	UNDP
9	Daw Phyu Phyu San	Programme Analyst, SIG	UNDP
10	U Saw Htun	Country Program Director	WCS
11	U Hla Naing	Deputy Country Program Director	WCS
12	Mr. Robert J. Tizard	Senior Technical Advisor	WCS
13	Dr. Naw May Lay Thant	National Landscape Coordinator	WCS
14	U Kyaw Moe	Sagaing Landscape Coordinator	WCS
15	Daw Thazin Phyto	Research Officer	WCS

Appendix 2: Meeting Photos



