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**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE 1ST MEETING OF THE NAMIBIA PROSOPIS MANAGEMENT PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE (PSC)**

**Venue:** Arebbusch Travel Lodge**,** Windhoek , Namibia and Virtual

**Date:** 18th AUGUST 2022

**TIME:**  09H00 -13H00

1. **Welcoming Remarks** :

 Mr. Michael Otsub the interim chairperson welcomed everyone and gave a brief summary of the process taken thus far before the full implementation of the *Prosopis* *spp*. Demonstration Project in Namibia. This processes include the various stakeholder engagements held , the drafting of Terms of References (TORs) for the consultants to develop the *Prosopis* Demonstration Sites Forestry/Vegetation Management Plans, theselection and evaluation of the consultants, the establishement of the PSC and finally the appoitment of the the two consultants; **Mulela Investiment cc, assigned to** develop FVMP for Lot A (//Kharas Region /Ai -/Ais National Park and Dreikhoek sites); and **Nevunduko Consulting Services** for Lot B in the Hardap region (Gibeon and Mariental sites).

1. **Opening Remarks:**
2. **Ministry of Agriculture Water, and Land reform**

Mr.Mattheus Hambabi from the Ministry of Agriculture Water and Land Reform( MAWLR) and part of the Project Steering Committe( PSC) members , thanked everyone for attending the inaugural meeting of the PSC.

He recalled that from the Transboundary Diagonist Analyis (TDA) of ORASECOM that was carried out during 2007-2013, its targets and objectives informed the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) of the Orange Senqu basin and the NAP of the four riparian states. Land degradation was one of the four environmental concern that was identified ,which is a concern for the member states particularly Namibia. He further stated that the *Prosopis* Invasive Alien Species (IAS) is one of the challenges encountered in Namibia and continues to threaten the groundwater resources and general biodiversity in the Orange -Fish Basin.

Mr Hambabi further reminded the meeting that in 2016 , efforts were made with the aim to address the issue of *Prosopis,* referring to the case study of Gibeon, where a Prosopis demonstration project was carried out under the IUCN Ecosystem Approach initiative, and that to date the issue of *Prosopis* is still persiting and continues to affect the groundwater resources. He added that currently, with the assistance of the UNDP GEF funding to support the implementation of the ORASECOM SAP , *Prosopis* demonstation projects are planned for implementation at four(4) pilot sites in Namibia which are: Ai-Ais, Gibeon , Dreihoek and Mariental.

The demonstration projects will focuse on addressing land degradation environmental concerns by clearing the *Prosopis* and also provide an opportunity for the affected communities to derive livelihood benefits from the harvesting of the Prosopis in addition to the environmental benefits..

He concluded by saying that in order to successfully implement these new projects, there was a need to form leadership in the form of a Project Steering Committee (PSC) that will spearhead and guide the project activities in Namibia, hence the meeting of today that will result in the election of the PSC. He wished the meeting fruitful deliberations.

1. **ORASECOM SECRETARIAT**

In her opening remarks, Ms Vivian Kinyaga, the ORASECOM UNDP - SAP Project Coordinator(PC) indicated that the *prosopis* clearing is not an easy task. The project is trying to solve the problem, however , if  *prosopis* are not properly cleared , it will exacerbate the current problem. The project has passed the mid term point ,and there is a need to show evidence that the project has started with harvesting. Consequently there are economic and envoronmental benefits that communities are obtaining from the project. These benefits are the main targeted outcomes for component 4 of ORASECOM UNDP - SAP project. Half of the project life span was spent understanding the resourse base, to develop models for communties engagements and economic opportunities. Now, the project is moving towards the stage of clearing the *prosopis.*

The PC was glad that the key role players are represented in the Project Steering Committe.It was a novel idea that the PSC members comes together to review and fast track implementation of the project to be able to obtain the anticipated benefits. In addition , part of the PSC is the UNDP Country Office in Namibia, that will give guidance and provide oversight functions which will motivate to accelerate implementation of theproject.

The PC appreciated the leadership shown by the goverment of Namibia, and specifically the two ministries, the Ministry of Environment , Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) and Ministry of Agriculture Water, and Land Reform (MAWLR) which are coordinating ministries in addition to the two regional councils, being the //Kharas and the Hardap. She wished everyone a fruitful meeting and deliberation throughout the day.

1. **Introduction of participants, Attendance and apologies**
2. Each participants introduced themselves

 **b) Attendees in term of the project steering commitee memberships**

1. Mr. Michael Otsub: Directorate of Forestry (DOF),(MEFT)

2. Mr .Mattheus Hambabi, Department of Water Affairs (DWA): (MAWLR)

3. Mr. Nicco Masule Directorate of Environmental Affairs (DEA); MEFT

4. Mr.Tobias Linus : DWA, MAWLR, Orange-Fish Basin Management Committee (OFBMC)

5. Ms. Andrea Aakre : United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-Windhoek Namibia

**c) Attendees from the Secretariat**

 1. Ms. Viviane kinyanga - ORASECOM UNDP SAP project Coordinator

 2. Ms. Lusia Kalipi ORASECOM Communications intern

d) **Apologies were delivered on the behalf of the following PSC members**

1. Ms. Sima Luipert: Hardap Regional Council (HRC)
2. Mr. Ralph Sachika: //Kharas Regional Council (KRC)
3. Mr. Harry Tjihukununa: Southern Regions, Directorate of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP), MEFT
4. **Adoption and Confirmation of agenda**

MEFT adopted and MAWLR seconded adoption of the draft agenda.

1. **PSC Terms of Reference (ToR) : Presentation and Approval**

The draft ToRs were presented by Mr Tobias the Basin Support Officer of the OFBMC. The PSC members discusssed further on ToRs and asked questions for futher clarity. The presentation was well noted with minimal interventions. A question was raised on who the Project management unit (PMU) is as contemplated in Sections 4.2 (ii) and 6 of the ToRs. The Project Coordinator (PC) clarified that PMU refers to the ORASECOM PMU unit which comprises of the Ms. Monica N. Rakhuhu: Finance and Administration Officer; Mr. Michael Ramaano: Water Quality and Environment Manager and Ms. Viviane Kinyanga, theProject Coordinator.

**Key Actions**:

The ToRs were recommended for approval with the inputs from the PSC members.

1. **Election of Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Secretary (Committee Composition)**

The PSC elections were held and the positions were filled by the voted candidates as follows:

1. **Chairperson**: As per Section 4.1 of the ToRs, the Ministry of Agriculture Water and Land Reform (MAWLR) will be the Chair of the PSC. In this regard, **Mr. Mattheus Hambabi** from the Department of Water Affairs was elected as the Chairperson.
2. **Deputy chairperson:** TheMinistry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) is the Deputy Chair and **Mr. Michael Otsub** from the: Directorate of Forestry will be the Deputy Chairperson.
3. **Secretary:** The Project Management Unit (PMU) at the ORASECOM secretariat will be the secretary to the PSC.
4. **Project work plan : August to December 2022**

Mr Tobias gave a brief presentation of the work plan (**Annexure 1)**. The PSC suggested that the following documentations be added at OUTPUT 4.1.1 as means of Verification:

* draft reports of Forest Management Plans (VPM) for the pilot areas
* and EIA documendations.

There was also a request at OUTPUT 4.1.2: re-establish indigenous or native vegetation; that this activity should commence as early as possible and would entail engaging with the communities to find out what are the indigenous vegetations are in their area such that after harvesting the *prosopis* these indigenous species maybe utilized in the revegetation efforts. Related to this, PC informed the meeting about a recommendation from the mid-term evaluation of the project – that the project should engage Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) in implmeentation of activities. PSC suggested that PMU should explore a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with NUST on research components of the project.

In addition, the PC proposed for the procurement of an intern to assist with project activties and that such a person would preferably be based in Keetmashoop close to the project sites and stakeholders. It was agreed that the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform (MAWLR) would draft ToRs for the procurement of the intern and share with the ORASECOM Secretariat.

Further, the PSC recommended a trip to RSA in October 2022, with the aim of visiting similar initiatives to learn and possible recommend for replication in the Namibian projects. The chairperson and the Basin Support Officer were tasked to update the PSC members on the schedule of activities to help with the fast tracking of the project.

**Key Actions:**

* PMU to explore engage NUST on a MoU for research components of the project
* MAWLR to draft ToRs for the recruitment of *Prosopis* project intern and share with ORASECOM Secretariat.
* Chairperson and BSO to update PSC Members on schedule (Work Plan) and Project Activities.
1. **Project Budget and Expenditure**

The PC presented the Financial report from 2019 to July 2022 , which is the budget assigned to **COMPONET 4 - OUTCOME 4.1: Invasive species controlled through integrated management in pilot areas in the Orange–Fish River basin and livelihood options based on invasive species control developed.**

The PSC member indicated that the budget need to be assigned to each specific project activities for better management of available resources.

**Key Actions:**

* That the Seceratiriat, Chair and Deputy Chairperson takes lead on the breakdown of budget and alignment to project activities for reporting at planned PSC Budget meeting on 09th September 2022.

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| Total Budget | Total Expenditure | Remaining budget |
|  U$ 1 094 999,58  |  U$ 345 199,54  |  U$ 749 800,04  |

1. **Any other business**

9.1 Social Impact Assessment/Environmental Safeguard:

From the validation meeting that took place in Mariental, farmers are requesting that a Social Impact assessment / Envrionmental safeguard should be carried carried out through EIA before the physical activiteis happen at Mariental Irrigation Scheme.

-Clearing of 12.5 ha for each pilot area and scale up after EIA process.

-Monitoring of haversting and the regrowth (funds) need to be explored in order to achive the project sustainability.

-2023 Work plan must be drafted.

1. **Date of the next meeting**

11.1 A special Budget Meeting is proposed for the 09th September 2022 to be held at DWA, Windhoek and virtual.

11.2 The ordinary meeting of the PSC will be held in November 2022 at a venue and date to be announced via email closer to time.

1. **Closing**

The chaiperson thanked all for participants for a fruitful meeting.

**12. AFTERNOON SESSION WITH TWO CONSULTANTS APPOINTED TO CONDUCT FORESTRY/VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR PROSOPIS PILOTS SITES LOT A (//KHARAS REGION) AND LOT B (HARDAP REGION).**

**Venue: Arebbusch Travel Lodge, Windhoek , Namibia**

**Time: 13h00-17h00**

**Presentations By Consultants**

The selected consultants, Mulela Investments cc and Nevunduko Consulting Services presented their technical proposals highlighting how they understood the assignment before them and the consideration for the Forest/Vegetation Management Plans development for each of the selected demonstration sites.

**The consultant, Mulela Investiment cc is assigned to** develop FVMP for Lot A (//Kharas Region /Ai -/Ais National Park and Dreikhoek sites); while **Nevunduko Consulting Services** has to develop same for Lot B in the Hardap region (Gibeon and Mariental sites).

The summary of comments, actions and way forward emanating from the two presentations are captured below:

* ORASECOM is to share reports on previous work done on Prosopis in Namibia with consultants, e.g. literature on Gibeon Prosopis Demonstration Project of 2016.
* Nevunduko Consulting Services was requested to formally introduce their team should that team differ from what has been submitted to the Secretariat.
* Nevunduko is to enrich its literature review in the inception report by providing Advantages and Disadvantages of the Prosopis Management methods cited, and also examples of lessons learnt and case studies in the SADC for reference.
* For both consultants, the emphasis should be on reducing prosopis and restoring the area with indigenous species as opposed to utilization (harvesting).
* The Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) should come out clearly from the technical proposals.
* Both consultants should enrich Table of Contents and adopt a practical, standardized format. The Directorate of Forestry is to provide such a format to ORASECOM by 23rd August 2022.
* The consultants are to submit the inception reports by end of August 2022.
* The seceratariat faciliate the introduction letters for the consultants.
* Both consultants should hold a stakeholders workshop

**Annexure 1:** Project Work Plan (Updated version after the meeting)

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| **COMPONENT 4: Addressing Land Degradation through Community-based ecosystem management** |
| **Outcome 4.1: Invasive species controlled through integrated management in pilot areas in the Orange-Fish River basin and livelihood options based on invasive species developed** | Timeline  |
| **Outputs** | **Annual targets** | **Activities** | **Means of verification** |  | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |   |
| Output 4.1.1: Distribution and abundance of Invasive species in the basin determined and mapped | Clearing of Prosopis is underway | Develop Forest Management Plans | Committees, Working Groups, ToR, minutesDrafted report of V/FMP and EIA documement |  Consultant to support implementation  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Undertake EIA and obtain ECC |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Output 4.1.2: Prosopis in pilot areas cleared. Management options for Prosopis in pilot areas demonstrated | Familisation trip to Working for Water Programmer (RSA) for the Committees | Trip report  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Clear Prosopis invasions in selected pilot sites  | Ha cleared |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Re-establish indigenous or native vegetation  | Vegetation planted |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Follow-up on regrowth of Prosopis in selected pilot sites  | Reports on regrowth (M&E reports) |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Output 4.1.3: Economic opportunities based on alien clearing created | Income generating activities agreed and started | Establish and support implementation mechanisms pilot activities on socio-economics (e.g. creation of SMMEs) | Report on implementation arrangements |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Determine profitable uses of Prosopis and identify options for the pilot project | Report on incomes from pilot |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Strengthen capacity of community members and local enterprises in skills required for implementation of the pilot; training, exposure visits, mentoring etc. | Training reports |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Explore the establishment of a sustainable financing mechanism aimed at supporting sustainable management of IAP (e.g. endowment fund, revolving fund) | Concept note and draft agreements on financing options |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Produce and disseminate lessons learnt and best practices | Reports and products |   |   |   |   |   |   |

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|  | planned activities  |
|  | on-going activities  |
|  | month target activities missed  |
|  | month target activities achieved  |