

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Environment and Forests
Planning Section – 2
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Subject: Meeting Minutes of the 1st Project Steering Committee (PSC) of UN-REDD Bangladesh National Programme

Chaired by: Mr. Istiak Ahmad, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF)
Meeting Date: 28th November 2017
Meeting Time: Noon 2:30 p.m.
Meeting Venue: Conference Room, Ministry of Environment and Forests
Participants: : Annex – A.

1.0 Introduction: The Chair welcomed all participants to the meeting. Upon approval from the Chair, the Deputy Secretary (Development), MoEF gave a brief introduction of the project and requested National Project Director (NPD) to present Power Point Presentation. The NPD in his presentation elaborated project's objective, main activities, progress made so far, and upcoming important activities. The NPD also sought strategic guidance from the PSC on some critical issues.

2.0 Discussions:

2.1 The NPD apprised the members of the PSC that UN-REDD programme – partners with developing countries to support them in establishing the technical capacities needed to implement REDD+ and meet UNFCCC requirements for REDD+ result based payments. Accordingly, to facilitate implementation of REDD+ Readiness Roadmap in Bangladesh, the Ministry of Environment and Forests, initiated UN-REDD Bangladesh National Programme (NP) for implementation by Bangladesh Forest Department with grant support through UNDP and FAO. The total budget of the NP is BDT 1794.39 lakh (US\$ 2.3 million). Total expenditure as of to date is BDT 939.65 Lakh (US\$ 1.2 million approx.) which is 52% of total budget. The project has four (4) targeted outcomes, i.e., (1) improved stakeholder awareness and effective stakeholder engagement; (2) National REDD+ Strategy preparation; (3) preparation of National Forest Reference Emission Level (REL) and/or Forest Reference Level (RL) and (4) establishment of National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS).

2.2 With regard to awareness and engagement, the project using existing FD's website to make all information available. The project developed awareness materials in local language, distributed these in various meetings and workshops, used various activities, events, days observations as launching pad to disseminate information and raise awareness materials. The project developed a communication and engagement plan which is being followed. Especial attention is given to ensure active participation of Indigenous People (IP) and NGOs/CSO communities by provisioning of memberships in committees and invitation to meetings, workshops and training events. The project at this moment, is carrying out Gender Analysis to ensure gender sensitivity is maintained in the upcoming Policies and Measures vis-a-viz REDD+ strategy.

2.3 To support preparation of National REDD+ Strategy, the project completed Drivers of Deforestation and Forest Degradation (D&D) study and submitted the report to MoEF for further review. The project followed up with more analysis on land tenure and governance issue raised in the D&D report as per the suggestions of the stakeholders. The NP also launched development of Policies and Measures study to address the identified drivers. In all cases, the project thoroughly consulted with stakeholders – from grass root to regional and national levels using Key Informant

Interview, Focus Group Discussions and Consultation workshops. The NPD informed that once the PAMs are agreed upon / prioritized, subsequent future activities will be to estimate costs, benefits, emission removal potentials and develop financing plan of the suggested activities. In addition, transparent system for national level REDD+ fund management and local level distribution of incentives needs to be identified too.

- 2.4 To estimate baseline emission and removals (FREL/FRL) from forestry sector, the NP took series of capacity building training programs and workshops on various technical issues and engaged relevant stakeholders and/or institutions. For estimation of historical emissions, two (2) national Land cover maps were developed for the period 2000 and 2015, assessment was made and GHG emissions and removals was calculated. Based on input from MoEF, the draft report on FREL/REL will be finalized through national consultation.
- 2.5 For monitoring of changes (NFMS) in forest land cover to assess performance against baseline emission, the NP carried out capacity building programme in the form of training and workshops to relevant national institutions. To make all spatial and tabular data available and facilitate analysis, the NP is working on a web portal Bangladesh Forest Information System (**BFIS**).
- 2.6 The NPD stressed that although the project duration in approved Technical Project Proposal (TPP) is from July 2015 to June 2018, and the same in the National Programme Document is from May 2015 –April 2018, but the actual operations started after TPP approval on 30th June 2016. The NPD sought a no-cost time extension of the project for about a year, during this period critical activities like facilitation of National REDD+ Strategy formulation, re-structuring of REDD+ management structures, finalization of FREL/FRL, operationalization of BFIS, and continued effort will be taken for strengthening capacities on GHG-Inventory, FREL/FRL, NFMS, institutional arrangement for data sharing, data archiving, and management.
- 2.7 The Additional Secretary (Development), MoEF, informed the PSC members that while implementing activities, structure of TPP has not been followed. For example, he referred to the fact that although there is no budgetary allocation for “Printing” and “Training and Workshop”, the NP has made expenditure of about BDT 60 Lakh. Similarly, expenditure in the “International Consultant” head exceeded the allocation. He expressed concern and alerted NPD to be within budgetary structure. He also opined that scope of “Consultant” should be evaluated.
- 2.8 The Chair suggested Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF), to evaluate scope of “Consultant” and to identify budgetary line items which exceeded allocation with due justification and to re-submit the revised budget to PSC.
- 3.0 **Decisions:** after detailed discussions, the following decisions were taken by the PSC
 - 3.1 Steps can be taken for no-cost time extension of TPP and also to extend duration of National Programme Document (ProDoc) up to June 2019.
 - 3.2 To submit FREL/FRL documents in January 2018 to UNFCCC, a national consultation workshop under the leadership of the Chair, MOEF can be arranged for finalization of the same.
 - 3.3 The CCF will arrange a meeting involving all concerned to evaluate scope of “Consultants” and to identify budgetary line items exceeded allocation with due justification and to re-submit the revised budget to PSC.
 - 3.4 All future expenditures should be within the approved revised budget.
 - 3.5 Proposal(s) for re-structuring of committees under REDD+ management structure needs to be re-submitted to MoEF.
- 4.0 The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

Annex -1: List of Participants

Sl.	Name of participants	Designation & Organization	Email/Contact Phone
1.	Istiaque Ahmad	Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests, & Chair, PSC.	
2.	Md. Shafiul Alam Chowdhury	Chief Conservator of Forests, Bangladesh Forest Department	01819323000
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11.	AKM Rafiqul Islam	Deputy Director, Department of Environment	rafiquislamakm@yahoo.com 01711446249
12.	Sukumar Datta	Principle Scientific Officer, Bangladesh Space Research and Remote Sensing Organization	duttasukumar@yahoo.com
13.	Md. Tanjim	Asstt. Chief, Planning Commission	01552349869 forestplanning17@gmail.com
14.	Md. Rakibul Hasan Mukul	Conservator of Forests, Central Circle and NPD, UN-REDD Project.	
15.	Imran Ahmed	Assistant Chief Conservator of Forests, Bangladesh Forest Department	imranforest@live.com 01999000004
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17.	Ms. Anatoli Poultouchidou	FAO Consultant	Anatoli.Poultouchidou@fao.org
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19.	Nasim Aziz	Programme Manager, UN-REDD	nasim.aziz@undp.org
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21.	Mominul Haque	UN-REDD Programme	mominul.haque@undp.org