



## UN-REDD Mongolia National Programme Board Meeting Minutes

**Name of Project:** UN-REDD Mongolia National Programme  
**Venue:** Holiday Inn Hotel, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia  
**Date and Time:** 16 November 2018  
**Chaired by:** Ms. Beate Trankmann, United Nations Resident Coordinator, Mongolia

### 1. Attendance:

#### Present

##### Programme Executive Board members

1. Beate Trankmann, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative
2. Oyunsanaa.B, NPD and Director, DFPC, MET
3. Vinod Ahuja, FAO Representative
4. Alexis Corblin, RTA, UN Environment (attended online)
5. Daniela Gasparikova, DRR, UNDP Mongolia
6. Oyunchimeg, Officer, Department of Monitoring, Evaluation and Internal Auditing, MET
7. Sarantuya.B Director, Information and Research Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology and Environment
8. Dolgorsuren, Officer, Department of Climate Change and International Cooperation, MET
9. Delgerjargal.B, Director, Department of Mining policy, Ministry of Mining and Heavy Industry
10. Bayarsaikhan.G, Officer, Department of Light Industry Policy Coordination, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry
11. Munkhsaikhan, Officer, Sectoral Development Policy Coordination Department, NDA, representing D.Erdenebayar, Director, Division of Sector Development and Coordination, NDA
12. Dan Altrell, Team Leader, Senior Forest Inventory and Forest Management Advisor, Biodiversity project (II) in Mongolia, representing Klaus Corsitto, Biodiversity and Adaptation of Key Forest Ecosystems to Climate Change project, GIZ
13. Badamkhand, Head of Forest-sustainable development council, CSO
14. Solongo.Ts, Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation, sustainable forest management and carbon sink enhancement into Mongolia's productive forest landscapes project, FAO

##### Non-members

15. Nathalie Faulkner, Climate Change Officer representing B.Bunchingiv, Programme Analyst, Climate Change, UNDP Mongolia
16. Chuluuntsetseg, Deputy Director, Biodiversity and Adaptation of Key Forest Ecosystems to Climate Change II
17. Thomas Enters, Chief Technical Adviser, UN-REDD Mongolia National Programme (attended online)
18. Khishigjargal.B, Programme Manager, UN-REDD Mongolia National Programme
19. Yeseul Byun, International Expert on NFMS/FRL, UN-REDD Mongolia National Programme
20. Banzragch.Ts, Senior Policy Adviser, UN-REDD Mongolia National Programme
21. Batchuluun.B, Communication Officer, UN-REDD Mongolia National Programme
22. Narantsatsral.B, Finance and Administrative Officer, UN-REDD Mongolia National Programme
23. Khongor.Ts, National Expert on NFMS/FRL, UN-REDD Mongolia National Programme
24. Tuya.Ts, National Consultant on Final Evaluation of UN-REDD Mongolia National Programme
25. Delgerjargal, Assistant Policy Advisor
26. Enkhjargal.D, National consultant on capacity building, UN-REDD Mongolia National Programme
27. Maralgoo.G, Officer, DFPC, MET
28. Dulamjav.D, Secretary/translator, UN-REDD Mongolia National Programme

#### Absent

1. Tsengel. Ts, PEB chair and State Secretary of MET.
2. Batkhuu.I, Director, Department of Development Financing, Ministry of Finance



## 2. Agenda and Objectives

A detailed agenda including the PEB objectives can be found in [Annex 1](#) of this document.

### 3. Progress update, final evaluation and proposed extension

#### 3.1. Opening Speech

In absence of the State Secretary, Ms. Beate Trankmann chaired this PEB meeting. In her remarks, the main recommendations of the final evaluation were emphasized, including the request for a no-cost extension of the Programme to allow the finalization of the REDD+ National Program and its validation at the national level to reach full political commitment, before submission to the Cabinet. The institutionalization of the NFMS and SIS systems and the potential to include permafrost as a carbon pool in FRL were also highlighted. Finally, the importance of recognizing country specific contexts, while adhering to the guidance provided by UNFCCC on issues related to safeguards, governance, grievance redress mechanism, and gender, in drafting the REDD+ National Program design processes, was stressed.

#### 3.2 Update 1: Progress on Decisions and Recommendations made at the previous meeting in April 2018

Status of decisions and recommendations marked as 'yellow' and 'red' were presented to the PEB ([see Annex 2](#)). Those decisions and recommendation will require more work before their status can be reported as completed to the Board.

#### 3.3 Update 2: Review progress of 2018 AWP and financial report

Specific actions, including improvement of the FUG monitoring manual, formalizing the CSO Forum, also known as the Forest and Sustainable Development Council (FSDC), finalizing the UN-REDD phasing-out strategy, organizing a high-level event, disseminating studies and communication material, and clarifying the financing of REDD+, require finalization.

In terms of financial delivery, 90% has been disbursed, while an additional 5% of budgeted funds is locked in as commitments under on-going contracts bringing the estimated delivery rate for the end of the year to 95% . The items requiring decisions or guidance by the PEB were summarized by the National Programme Manager (NPM) for consideration and discussion. The relevant decisions and recommendations are noted in the following sections.

##### Discussion

The presentation by the NPM confirmed the need for an extension. For the Programme to submit the request to the UN-REDD Secretariat, the extension must be endorsed by the PEB. The UN-REDD Secretariat is aware of the Programme's closing date and should be able to provide a response before the end of November.

##### Recommendation 2/1:

The PMU must work on the recommendations marked as yellow and red from the previous PEB meeting.

#### 3.4 Update 3: Review Programme progress and next steps – key elements of REDD+ (National Program, FRL, NFMS, SIS)

- **Forest Reference Level (FRL):**



Following the final evaluation comments, a project proposal has been prepared to compare the maps of forest and permafrost changes and to establish their correlation.

The PEB needs to advise on next steps for the web portal (forest.atlas.mn) where forest inventory data is uploaded and changes in GHG emissions are given. The team recommends transferring the website to the Environmental Data Center to ensure its sustainability.

**Discussion:**

It is necessary to find a permanent home for this database over and beyond the duration of the project. The operation and maintenance of such portal requires one IT staff to run the website and one forest specialist to manage the data. The Environment Data Center and the PMU run on a different operating system. It might therefore be complicated and time-consuming to transfer the database directly to this data center.

**Recommendation 3/1:**

PMU to present the menu of options to hand-over the NFMS web-portal to potential host institutions, including budget and timeline and considering its long-term sustainability.

- **REDD+ National Program (NP):**

As advised by the Chair, it is necessary to include gender and land tenure issues in the NP. The document needs yet to be completed, including financing and budget, targets' identification and verification (especially in objective 3), and the action plan. In addition, a Technical document will be developed by the CTA based on the NP. The National Forum should be organised for validation.

**Discussion:**

Further decision on the targets and actions is essential to estimate the budget. A clear timetable for the extension must be agreed upon to ensure the completion of the NP by the end of the extension period.

The extension period should take into account also the duration required for the legal process, including obligatory consultations and deliberations before submission to the Cabinet, duration and timelines of which are outside the realm of control of the PMU. However, the technical process underpinning the preparation of the NP can be accelerated. The final draft of the NP, technically validated with complete Annexes, would have to be available by December 15 to allow for the consultation process to be completed by the end of the suggested three months extension period of the programme. Consultations to solicit inputs from Ministries and CSOs would have to take place from January 5 to February 15.

On further analysis of the detailed timelines, it was revealed however that the equivalent of one month will be lost because of the end of year (2 weeks) and Lunar New Year (2 weeks in February) holidays reducing the suggested three months extension to de-facto 40 working days. The PEB therefore decided to recommend an extension of a total of four months to the UNREDD Secretariat for consideration to ensure full completion of the required political consultation process in relation to the National REDD Programme. The technical finalisation of the draft document will be expedited in as much as possible.



The UNFCCC requests developing countries' National Programmes or Action Plans to include governance issues related to transparency and rule of law and, to ensure stakeholder participation. REDD+ must also address land tenure and gender issues. However, these are not reflected in the current NP draft. It is important for all stakeholders to be conscious that these elements are considered an integral part of REDD+ National Programme and Strategies under the UNFCCC mechanism in order to qualify for result-based payments.

Recommendation 3/2:

Complete the REDD+ NP draft by December 15 with all annexes, actions, targets, and address gender, land tenure and other issues as guided by the UNFCCC (see paragraph 72 of the Cancun Agreements).

Recommendation 3/3:

Develop a revised and detailed workplan for finalization, consultation and approval of REDD+ NP for the proposed extension period of 4 months by November 22. This will be led by the NPM in consultation with the NPD, Policy advisor, and the CTA.

- **Safeguards Information Systems (SIS):**

Mongolia's SIS establishment requires two phases: Phase 1 (2019-2020) to provide information on how to address the Cancun Safeguards, to meet REDD+ requirements for receiving results-based payments and to support the implementation of the State Policy on Forest. Phase 2 (2021-2024) objectives are to provide information on implementation of the Cancun and other relevant safeguards and relate them to all relevant programs on climate change adaptation and mitigation in the forestry sector (supporting Mongolia's Nationally Determined Contributions to the Paris Agreement).

A SIS design has been prepared and a database will be established, including its integration with other relevant databases in Mongolia. A SIS report called "Mongolia's REDD+ Safeguard Information System: Proposed Structure, Functions and Roles" sets out a model for a future SIS database in Mongolia, based on the country's safeguards framework, consultation with stakeholders, and existing priority information systems and sources. It includes detailed information on the proposed information structure (including indicators), system functions, roles for relevant agencies and stakeholders, and proposed architecture for the SIS database, as well as recommendations for future work.

A report called 'Mongolia's REDD+ Safeguard Information System: Proposed Structure, Functions and Roles' provides information on the steps and resources needed to set up the system recommendations on SIS design elements.

**Discussion:**

Recommendations on institutional responsibilities have been made to the Government but have not been officially decided and formalized by the MET.

The SIS database has not been budgeted in the 2019 workplan. Whether SIS database should be kept separate from or be combined with NFMS should be further explored.. In addition, operation and maintenance (O&M) of both systems should be budgeted under REDD+ NP budget associated with corresponding actions. To ensure sustainability and institutional anchorage of the database and to guide the data collection methodology and data sharing protocols with data provisioning organisations, MET is invited to issue an executive order.



Recommendation 3/4:

Identifying options for the establishment of NFMS and SIS databases (separated or combined) including O&M costs for the institutions to budget. Providing better guidance to the Government on how to institutionalize the web-portals and distribute the data collection responsibilities.

Recommendation 3/5:

Finalizing the policy brief on safeguards and SIS institutionalization to be submitted to the MET decision makers.

### 3.5 Preliminary findings of the final evaluation

The main recommendations from the final evaluation include requesting a three-month no-cost extension with the main objective of completing the REDD+ National Program, the development of a donor proposal to work on soil carbon, peatlands and permafrost layer areas, modifying or adding PAMs to increase adaptation capacity and institutionalizing the operations of the NFMS and SIS operations. Detailed findings and recommendations were presented to all key stakeholders in the targeted debriefings and the final evaluation report has been shared with all Board members.

### 3.6 Others

It was suggested that the IT platforms could be linked with the on-going work on the NDC at the sectoral level as well as with the GHG Inventory that is being developed by JICA. It would be ideal to have all such systems at the same organization as they are inter-connected.

A forest practices board similar to the one observed during the study tour in British Columbia could play the role of watchdog in the forestry sector. However, new activities should not be initiated during the project extension period. Instead, the PEB recommended for the Programme to conduct a desk review on possible options and functions of such a Board if there is a strong interest from the MET to pursue its establishment.

Eighteen CSOs came together and established the CSO Forum. Their registration certification will be received within a week and their first meeting will take place soon after to define their long-term vision and objectives. They would like to participate in the implementation of the REDD+ NP and work closely with the MET. An office will be made available by the CSO Forum Secretariat during the first year, and the Forum requests equipment that was procured under the programme to be transferred to support its office operations. They will be able to help with REDD+ material advocacy and dissemination. Decisions on asset transfers are expected to be reviewed and finalised by the final PEB meeting early next year assuming the programme is extended.

## 4. Decisions made by the PEB

### 4.1 Workplan extension:

The PEB agrees on requesting a four-month no-cost extension of the Programme. Ms. Beate Trankmann will seek approval by the UN\_REDD Board via the UN-REDD Secretariat.

The main item of the workplan for the extension period will be the completion of the NP, in addition to the follow-up actions from the final evaluation including the sustainability of the NFMS and support to the institutionalization of the SIS (budget, institutional arrangements) and summarize recommendations for its operationalization.



#### 4.2 Phasing-out strategy:

This document was developed after the last PEB meeting in May, but it needs formal endorsement from the PEB. It will be electronically circulated to its members, and comments will be provided by November 23. If no comments are received, the phasing-out strategy will be considered approved. It is however suggested to include a final review of the approved document at the next PEB meeting for updates that may be required in connection with work completed under the extension period.

#### 4.3 Asset transfer

The issue has been shifted to the next PEB meeting.

#### 4.4 Next PEB meeting:

It was agreed to hold the next PEB meeting soon after Lunar New Year, during the week of February 11, to allow enough time to go through the workplan to flag problems and discuss the phasing-out strategy and asset transfer.



5. Closing and wrap up

The following decisions were taken:

- 1) The PEB agrees on requesting a four months no-cost extension of the Programme.
- 2) Preparation of a detailed workplan for extension period and finalization of final REDD+ NP.
- 3) Timelines for the NP workplan to be provided by 23 November.
- 4) The next PEB meeting will be held immediately after the Lunar New Year, during the week of February 11. During this meeting the phasing-out strategy will be re-visited.

Note taken by:  date: 22 Nov 2018  
 Nathalie Faulkner, UNDP Climate Change Officer

Reviewed by:  date: 22 Nov 2018  
 Khishigjargal. B, National Programme Manager

date: 27 Nov 2018  
 Oyunsanaa. B, National Programme Director

date: 28 Nov 2018  
 Daniela Gasparikova, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Mongolia

Agreed by:  date: 28/11  
 Tsengel. Ts, PEB Chair, State Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Tourism

date: 28/11/2018  
 Beate Trankmann, PEB Co-chair, United Nations Resident Coordinator



## Annex 1. Agenda

### PROGRAMME EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING AGENDA UN-REDD MONGOLIA NATIONAL PROGRAMME

*10:30-13:30, November 16th, 2018  
Holiday Inn Hotel, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia*

#### Objectives:

1. Progress on decisions and recommendations made at the previous meeting
2. Final Evaluation: Preliminary findings and recommendations
3. Review progress of 2018 AWP and proposed amendments
4. Review progress and financial report– Key elements of REDD+ (Strategy, FRL, NFMS, SIS)
5. Decisions and recommendations

#### Decisions to be made by PEB:

- a. Approval for a three-months no-cost extension of the Programme and work plan and budget for the extension
- b. Approval for asset transfer
- c. Suggestions and recommendations on other issues

Time	Session	Presenter/Facilitator
10:30 – 11:00	Registration	
11:00 – 11:10	Opening remarks	PEB chairs
<b>Session 1: Progress updates, final evaluation and proposed extension</b>		
11:10 – 10:40	<b>Update 1:</b> Progress on decisions and recommendations made at the previous PEB meeting in April 2018	Khishigjargal.B, Programme Manager
	<b>Update 2:</b> Review Progress of 2018 AWP and financial report (see document 5)	
	<b>Update 3:</b> Review Programme progress and next steps – Key elements of REDD+ (Strategy, FRL & NFMS, SIS)	Banzragch. Ts, Senior Policy Advisor Khongor, UN-REDD Enkhjargal, UN-REDD
11:40 – 11:55	Preliminary findings of the Final Evaluation and Recommendations (see document 4)	Oyunsanaa.B, NPD
11:55 – 12:15	Proposed no-cost extension (see documents 1 and 2)	Khishigjargal.B
12:15 – 12:30	Questions and discussion	PEB members
12:30 – 12:40	Tea break	
<b>Section 2: Issues for recommendations and advice</b>		
12:40 – 12:55	Discussion on phasing out of the Programme (see document 7)	
<b>Section 3: Decisions</b>		
12:55 – 13:20	Decision to be made by PEB on:	Facilitated by NPD and UNRC
	a. Work plan and budget for the proposed extension and approval of no-cost extension of the Programme	
	b. Approval of asset transfers (see document 3)	
	c. Suggestions and recommendations on other issues	
13:20 – 13:30	Closing and wrap up	PEB chairs
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch	



## Annex 2: Update 1 - Progress on PEB Decisions

Recommendation / Decision	Progress	Comments
<b>Update 1: Progress on Decisions and Recommendations made at the previous meeting</b>		
<b>Recommendation 1/1: The Standard Operating Procedures are approved by the PEB in principle and will now be submitted to the Ministry of Finance for its review and support.</b>		SOPs approved by PEB was circulated to MET and MoF immediately after previous PEB meeting. There was staff turnover at MoF, and when followed, informal response was that general guidelines for aid project procedures was recently approved, hence may consider if changes to the guidelines is made in future.
<b>Recommendation 1/2: The current liquidation, commitments and planned activities in the AWP will be updated to identify bottlenecks and to factor in preparation of contracts, recruitment etc.</b>		Updates in liquidation, commitments and planned activities were made regularly.
<b>Recommendation 1/3: FAO/GEF and FAO team of the Programme to analyze joint activities and capacity building programs for FRDC in 2018 to avoid overlaps and strengthen the outputs.</b>		PMU and GEF team conducted jointly pre-feasibility study of PAMs in Khentii aimag and PMU shared key findings during field study trip with GEF (end of Oct)  3 trainings events for FRDC and ALAMGC (Collect earth, SEPAL, FRL technical assessment) and 4 technical LoAs in MRV (additional NFI, saxaul forest, below ground biomass, FRL guidance document) delivered between Q2-Q4.
<b>Update 2: Progress on Mid-Term Review Recommendations - Key Issues Only</b>		
<b>Recommendation 2/1: FAO/GEF to take the lead in designing and implementing FUG monitoring with technical support from the PMU.</b>		This was completed after drafts of Sub-National Action Plans (SNAP) had been received and PAM prioritization had been finalized. Based on PAM pilot study trip with draft SNAP and revised PAM list, which was recently shared with PMU (end of Oct), FAO is finalizing a proposal on FUG-associated monitoring protocol and methodology to share with GEF for future implementation under GEF budget.
<b>Recommendation 2/2: FAO/GEF and PMU to discuss the feasibility of a joint study tour and decide immediately.</b>		The decision was to organize different study tours as the objectives of the tour to Canada was deemed to be too different.
<b>Update 3: Update 3: AWP 2018 – Key Issues and Constraints</b>		
<b>Recommendation 3/1: The PMU to organize dialogue with MET to initiate the institutionalization of the CSO council as an entity.</b>		The issue was discussed with MET. A decision by CSO Forum was made to be a legal entity at the last CSO meeting.
<b>Recommendation 3/2: The PMU to work with the CSO Council to investigate how to make the Council more sustainable, both in terms of finance and operational mechanisms.</b>		Quarterly meetings held, during which the sustainability issue of the Council was discussed at great length, and a decision to become a registered legal entity (NGO) was made and registration process is initiated.

<b>Update 4: Review Progress – Key Elements of REDD+ (Strategy, FRL, NFMS, SIS)</b>		
<p><b>Recommendation 4/1: PEB members to support their institutions and members of the Core Group on REDD+ National Program development.</b></p>		<p>Some PEB members provided valuable support to the development of the REDD+ National Program, although until today the Program has not been finalized. Last TWG meeting was held on 30 October.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4/2: TWG and DFPC to draft recommendations for the institutionalization of NFMS and FRL.</b></p>		<p>Revised NFMS drafted. TWG meeting with MET to be organized, if the UN-REDD Programme will not be extended, to endorse the NFMS document.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4/3: TWG and DFPC to draft recommendations for the institutionalization of SIS.</b></p>		<p>Several workshops and meetings have been held in 2018 to discuss SIS design, including institutional arrangements, and the SIS Report prepared. The Report provides a detailed design, SIS tables, and action plan for setting up an SIS online database.</p> <p>Recommendations/steps for institutionalization of SIS include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MET ownership of SIS is needed, as well as decision on establishing and operating SIS database at EIC, in accordance with the Law on Environmental Protection. The tasks for establishing and operating this database should also be incorporated into EIC’s annual workplan.</li> <li>• A mandate and resources for managing/ administering safeguards and the SIS by the agency responsible for REDD+ are also needed (i.e. EIC is not the only actor with an important institutional role to play).</li> <li>• Activities and budget for setting up and operating the first phase SIS database are to be included in the REDD+ National Program document (this is underway).</li> <li>• Action plan for establishing online SIS database and webpage covers the two phases of the REDD+ NP.</li> </ul>
<b>Update 5: Sustainability and Exit Strategy</b>		
<p><b>Recommendation 5/1: The PMU to work with the MET on a comprehensive exit and institutionalization strategy by end of May 2018.</b></p>		<p>Phasing-out strategy was developed in July and minor modification have been made since then. Formal endorsement by PEB is pending and strategy is being implemented.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5/2: The State Secretary to take the lead on establishing the REDD+ Taskforce following approval of the REDD+ National Program. PMU to allocate funds for training for Taskforce members in Q4 2018.</b></p>		<p>REDD+ National Program is under development and not approved yet. Therefore, discussing the establishment of the REDD+ Taskforce is premature.</p>

<p><b>Recommendation 5/3: The State Secretary to take the lead on improving the system of allocating natural resource use taxes to ensure 85% is spent on environmental management.</b></p>		<p>The PMU has not been informed by the State Secretary about any action that he may have taken.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5/4: PMU to organize a high-level workshop to look at financing of the forest sector and disseminate the Finance Mechanisms, Finance Flows and Sustainable Forest Management studies.</b></p>		<p>Info briefs consisting of key messages from these studies have been prepared and are available on Mongolia's REDD+ website in English (some also in Mongolian). A high-level workshop was not organized.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5/5: PMU to update all Programme indicators and means of verification as recommended in the mid-term review report.</b></p>		<p>All Indicators and means of verification were updated as recommended by the mid-term review.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5/6: PMU to develop an exit strategy for knowledge management and ensure all documents are disseminated by end of June 2018.</b></p>		<p>As a part of Phasing out strategy, all knowledge management and other documents are being handed over to the DFPC, MET. DFPC will also take over the maintenance of the Mongolia REDD+ website for at least another three years.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5/7: PMU to investigate external sources of finance for financing the implementation of the REDD+ National Program.</b></p>		<p>MET delegates were sent to overseas trips to explore partnership and funding opportunities: high-level delegates to Canada; and MET delegates to the international conference on Boreal Forest in Austria. But funding for implementation of REDD+ National Program is still uncertain, especially because the Program has not been completed, yet.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5/8: AWP to be revised and updated.</b></p>		<p>AWP was updated and a separate WP for the proposed extension (Nov. 2018 to Feb. 2019) was prepared.</p>
<p><b>AOB</b></p>		
<p><b>Decision AOB/1: The PEB agreed to send one person to the UN Forests Forum in New York, if the participant makes the case for Mongolia's boreal forests to have greater support.</b></p>		<p>Following the PEB meeting there was no official request for support, and the timing for booking flights, visa arrangements was deemed too short to support this request.</p>
<p><b>Decision AOB/2: The next PEB meeting will be held in October 2018. The date will be set nearer to the time.</b></p>		<p>Due to various constraints the PEB meeting was proposed to be held on 16 November 2018.</p>