

SAPPHIRE Focal Points Project Review Meeting

Date: Wednesday 12th August 2020

Time: 02:00 pm – 04:00 pm EAT

Venue: Microsoft Teams

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance

SAPPHIRE Project Focal Points

1. Comoros – Mr. Ambadi Issouf
2. Kenya – Mrs. Susan Otieno
3. Madagascar – Mr. Nicolas Andriamboavonjy
4. Mauritius – Mrs. Nashreen Soogun
5. Somalia – Mr. Abdirahman M. Osman
6. South Africa – Mr. Yamkela Mngxe
7. Tanzania – Ms. Ritha Minja

Nairobi Convention Secretariat

1. Sinkinesh Jimma
2. Timothy Andrew
3. Bernard Inzilia
4. Caroline Bii
5. Marlyn Omondi
6. William Obote
7. Angela Patnode
8. Bonface Mutisya

Meeting Agenda

1. Update on COVID-19 pandemic and its impact at national level and on implementation of project activities by each Focal Point
2. Review Annual Work Plan 2020
3. Review of Project Progress
4. Co-financing reporting (participating countries committed contributions)
5. National level coordination of activities implementation
6. AOB

Min 01/20: Opening Remarks

The meeting was called to order by Tim Andrew who was appointed to chair the meeting. He highlighted that the meeting was organized to a) review project progress and the impact of COVID-19 on the implementation of planned activities at the national and regional levels' b) propose possible acceleration mechanisms; and c) seek joint solutions to identified problems affecting the implementation of the project.

The chair highlighted the agenda items for concurrence between all participants. The Agenda was confirmed by Mauritius and seconded by Madagascar.

The chair conveyed the Nairobi Convention's sympathies to the Government of Mauritius for the Oil spill tragedy. He mentioned that the Convention is in the process of developing a strategy on how to support Mauritius in medium- and long-term assessment and monitoring, as well as the potential restoration of affected critical habitats as part of the integrated UNEP response.

Min 02/20: Update on COVID-19 pandemic and its impact at national level and on implementation of project activities by each Focal Point

Madagascar

- a. The Focal Point reported that, due to the COVID 19 pandemic, Antananarivo is under lock down and restricted movement measures, which has affected the planned policy dialogue and consultation activities at the national level.
- b. On his update on the MEDA process, he highlighted that the work is impacted as the National Environment Office (ONE) was damaged by fire. He added that he is following up with the National Coordinator of MEDA on how to continue the work.
- c. The Focal Point mentioned that they are preparing a letter to be send to the Secretariat requesting support from the SAPPHIRE project to develop a demonstration project proposal.

Mauritius

- a. The Focal Point provided detailed information and update on the Wakashio oil spill incident.
- b. The Focal Point reported that Mauritius is reportedly free from COVID – 19, but the offices are still closed.
- c. It was mentioned that the MEDA update work was in progress, with authors drafting reports until the Oil spill Incident from *MV Wakashio* happened. Thus, reporting might be delayed because the Ministry is delaying all activities and giving priority to respond to the Oil spill incident.
- d. She mentioned that drafting of the MEDA reports will resume in three weeks after the oil spill is managed because all the staff from the Ministry of Environment as well as Mauritius Oceanographic Institute, the Fisheries Department and other stakeholders are involved in the *Wakashio* issue.
- e. The Focal Point requested the Secretariat to share the method to be used in formatting of references while drafting the MEDA Chapters. She sought for clarification on whether the updating of the MEDA will stick to the 2012 format or if the Secretariat will come up with a new format.

Kenya

- a. The Focal Point reported that Kenya is still experiencing a surge in COVID cases especially in Nairobi since July. She mentioned that the Government is still urging citizens for adhere to COVID – 19 preventive measures, including social distancing and sanitizing. Additionally, she mentioned that domestic travelling has resumed but international borders are not yet open.
- b. She mentioned that the project activities should resume, especially the one on developing a blue economy strategy, even though the number of people allowed in a meeting is limited and that might impact on activities targeting meetings.

South Africa

- a. The Focal Point mentioned that there has been an exponential increase in the number of COVID - 19 infections in the country in the last two weeks of July and August. He mentioned that the country is still on lockdown at level three of five which is the most stringent. He mentioned that certain activities such as holding physical meetings or social gatherings and the sale of alcohol are prohibited and social distancing of two meters is encouraged. He mentioned that borders are still closed, and inter-provincial traveling is not allowed except for business with few domestic

flights permitted. He mentioned that the President should address the Nation on Friday or Sunday to provide an update on whether the lockdown level will move one level up or down.

- b. The Focal Point mentioned that implementation of national level activities is stuck with staggered return to work for employees, though they are very much encouraged to work from home except essential service workers who are allowed to go to the office. He emphasized that the country is heavily impacted by COVID and the lockdown associated with it.
- c. He mentioned that only the MEDA Update process is progressing while the team is working to finalise the demonstration project proposal.

Tanzania

- a. The Focal Point mentioned that the COVID pandemic has affected them but most of the activities have resumed with high precautions including sanitizing and washing hands as well as wearing masks, especially in crowded places as instructed by the Ministry of Health. She mentioned that fieldwork and travelling is restricted.
- b. She mentioned that the MEDA update work is progressing through the Institute of Marine Sciences (IMS). The authors are working on the MEDA chapters and will be submitted to IMS for compilation in a week.
- c. She mentioned that they are organizing a National Intersectoral Coordination Committee at the end of the month to review the project proposal on the Pemba Channel Conservation Area. The proposal has been approved for submission under Component 2 of the SAPPHIRE project. In addition, she mentioned that there are consultations with the Zanzibar Focal Point and SAPPHIRE PMU to develop a proposal under Component 1 of the project.

Somalia

- a. The Focal Point reported that, as other countries, Somalia has also been affected by the pandemic and the lock down has delayed different national level activities.
 - b. The Focal Point mentioned that they have established the project NICC and are working on project proposals to be submitted to the PMU at the end of the week. He highlighted that they are working on a proposal on Policy Harmonisation and another one on data collection and management.
- The Focal Point of Mauritius was excused from the meeting to attend a ministerial meeting on the oil spill incident.

Min 03/20: Review of the Annual Work Plan (AWP) 2020 and Project Progress

- a. The project manager mentioned that the annual project steering committee meeting would have been hosted around this time in Maputo, Mozambique but was cancelled due to COVID-19.
- b. The project manager gave a presentation on the AWP for 2020. The presentation highlighted the planned activities and the expected project outcomes under each component; the progress in implementation of each planned activity, activities postponed due to COVID 19 pandemic and proposed revision to the AWP. The presentation is available [here](#).
- c. She then gave a presentation on a [summary of the project progress in 2020](#). The presentation highlighted the progress made in the implementation of activities in 2020 according to each component. The presentation is available [here](#).

Discussion

- i. South Africa welcomed the report and confirmed its support to the SAPPHIRE PMU in implementing the planned activities in the 2020 AWP. He also appreciated the hard work and regular communication and update from the PMU.
- ii. Tanzania sought clarification on the development of a Western Indian Ocean Source to Sea Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA).
 - ✓ It was explained that the development of a regional TDA seeks to combine the TDA carried out during the ASCLME and WIOLAB projects into one TDA which covers from source to sea as requested by the Nairobi Convention Contracting Parties. The merged TDA will feed into the development of one Strategic Action Programme for the WIO region.
 - ✓ It was also mentioned that the updated National Marine Ecosystem Diagnostic Analysis (MEDA) will feed into the development of the merged TDA.
- iii. Kenya mentioned that the Project Manager had been providing them with continuous updates on the project progress. The Focal Point congratulated the Project Manager for delivering some activities within the year despite the setbacks of COVID. She reaffirmed Kenya's support to the PMU in delivering the project activities.

Min 04/20: Co-financing Reporting

- The Project Manager mentioned the all participating countries had made co-financing commitments during the SAPPHIRE project development phase. The focal institution has a mandate to report on co-financing annually from different parallel initiatives implemented by government and other partners that contribute to SAP implementation and achievement of project objectives.
- The Project Manager mentioned that the Secretariat will send a format request to the Focal Points to submit a co-financing report. She mentioned that the co-financing reports should be shared with GEF and it has not been done for the last two years.

Min 05/20: National level coordination of activities implementation

Somalia

- a. The Focal Point mentioned that new members have joined the NICC after the new project Focal Point was appointed. He mentioned that they will be working to coordinate their efforts to come up with priorities to be implemented on the ground. He added that they will work to reach more coastal communities in the rural areas which have been affected by COVID more than the urban areas.
- b. He mentioned that they have finalized consultation with the core team and the Director General on putting together proposals to be submitted to the SAPPHIRE project to be considered for funding. He added that they are waiting for consultations with the regional states of Somalia and coastal communities.

South Africa

- a. The Focal Point mentioned that they are faced with the challenge of overlapping institutional/sectoral mandates in the management of marine resources.
- b. He requested the project to support them to come up with a common platform for the different stakeholders involved in the management of marine resources. This will help in diffusing the sectoral mandates and in pooling efforts towards a grouping with common interest in issues around ocean governance, maritime sector, environmental sector, etc.

- c. It was mentioned that the challenge of sectoral focused groups and how to bring them together becomes very complex if you have five or more sectoral groups. The focal institution of SAPPHIRE is required to establish a NICC composed of representatives from all relevant sectors for the coordinated and smooth implementation of planned activities at the national level.
- d. The Focal Point mentioned that they have been trying to bring together different sectors to the NICC meetings but always faced poor attendance. He highlighted that the Ministries of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries have been combined, thus they expect better sector representation and coordination in the NICC meetings.

Tanzania

- a. The Focal Point reported that they have had coordination meetings with the Nairobi Convention Focal Points for the Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar to discuss project activities.
- b. She mentioned that they have discussed working on a proposal on developing a Blue Economy Strategy for Tanzania to be funded under Component 1 of the SAPPHIRE project. She sought for clarification on the institution to lead the process of developing the strategy since all activities on policy development must go through the Vice Presidents Office, which is the mandated institution and not NEMC.
- c. It was mentioned that NEMC, the Vice President's Office (Mainland Tanzania) and Second Vice President Office (Zanzibar) should agree and communicate to the Secretariat on the most suitable institutional arrangement to lead the work.

Madagascar

- a. The Focal Point mentioned that they have cooperated with the Ministry of Fisheries, Ministry of Environment, NGOs and the Local Community in the implementation of planned activities at the national level.
- b. He reported that earlier this month, they had hosted the first National Consultation meeting with the different ministries, followed by a consultation meeting with the public and private sector.

Comoros

- a. The Focal Point mentioned that the Comoros NICC met and they are ready to support the implementation of demonstration projects and other activities at the national level.
- b. The Focal Point requested to facilitate the timely release of fund for demonstration projects and the MEDA update in order to implement activities as of the planned timeframe.

Min 06/20: AOB

Somalia

The Focal Point mentioned that they are working on national level synergies between ongoing projects and also those that the Nairobi Convention projects could support.

South Africa

The Focal Point thanked the Secretariat for the good work and encouraged it to keep up even during this period of pandemic.

Tanzania

The Focal Point thanked the project management unit for organizing a fruitful meeting.

Min 07/20: Closing Remarks

- a. The Project Manager thanked the Focal Points for participating in the project review meeting and providing constructive remarks and recommendations.
- b. She thanked the Focal Points for their leadership in coordinating national level activities on top of their institutional and multisectoral work.
- c. She mentioned that its only through the commitment and support of the Focal Points that the project has progressed this far. In addition, she mentioned that through their support, the project will have meaningful impact at the national and regional levels.
- d. She highlighted that it's understandable that most of the national activities are on hold or stalled due to COVID – 19, which is compounded by poor connectivity in some countries.
- e. She mentioned that there will be bilateral follow-ups on the recommendations given during the meeting.