

The GEF Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project Project Progress Report

Reporting Period **From:** January 2016 **To:** 30 June 2016

1. PROJECT GENERAL INFORMATION

National Project Code & Title:	MY4-2114; A multi-pronged approach in overcoming knowledge barriers on the ecology and status of dugongs in Johor, Malaysia - Towards critical habitat protection		
Project Partner(s):	The MareCet Research Organization		
Location (country, region/ district and commune/ city/ village/ region etc.)	Country: Malaysia State: Johor Region: Sibu-Tinggi Archipelago, Johor east coast		
Of which areas under protection (please indicate the name and size of protected areas or locally managed marine areas, if applicable)	Sultan Iskandar Marine Park, Johor east coast, Malaysia (765.65 km ²) (a.k.a Tinggi Island Marine Park)		
Project start date	01 Jan 2015 (started earlier than GEF project due to conferment of Pew Fellowship to Louisa Ponnampalam)	Project intended completion date	Sep 2018

2. PROJECT PROGRESS

2.1. Narrative of project progress during the past semester by Project Activity¹

Main challenges and achievements in bullet points

Describe according to project activity (as per proposal), what has happened during this reporting period (results, plans)

Main challenges:

- Unpredictable weather conditions during aerial surveys
- Getting appointments to meet with key community leaders
- Getting some interview respondents to be fully committed to the entire interview survey

Achievements:

- Comprehensive data on distribution of dugongs during different tide phases (high and low tides) and time of year
- Comprehensive data on distribution of human activities in the project site, i.e. dugong habitat
- Comprehensive data on the occurrence and boundaries of the seagrass meadows around the Sibuloh Archipelago
- Initial data on the distribution and characteristics of dugong feeding trails and seagrass samples for analyses of nutrient composition
- Initial data and feedback from local community members on their perceptions and opinions of dugong and seagrass conservation plans for the Johor east coast islands and adjacent waters
- Interest and support of the Johor State authorities for dugong and seagrass conservation in Johor
- Plans moving forward for the delineation of a dugong and seagrass conservation area and the drafting of a management plan for said area
- Invitation by the Johor state government authorities to conduct an exhibition on dugongs and seagrass in August 2016 in conjunction with the Sultan of Johor's annual 2016 Islands Expedition

During this reporting period, my team and I conducted one aerial survey in March 2016 (where we also invited project partner from project MY1 to join us on one of the flights), one seagrass mapping and dugong feeding trails survey in June 2016, two community consultation interview surveys (the first in February 2016 to suss out the various villages and local businesses to approach, and the second one in June 2016 to have initial discussions with community leaders from the respective villages/areas), conducted a necropsy on an immature male dugong that had died from unknown causes in May 2016 (June 2016), had multiple meetings with the Johor state authorities to present overview of dugong and seagrass scenario around Sibuloh and Tinggi Islands, the conservation needs for the species and the area, and the way forward to delineate the conservation area and draft its management plan (Jan – June 2016), and began preparations for an exhibition on dugongs and seagrass to be held in August

¹ Briefly describe progress made during the previous six months highlighting major outcomes/benchmarks achieved during the period.

2016 in conjunction with the Sultan of Johor's 2016 Islands Expedition (an annual expedition in which His Majesty meets and greets the various local communities on the islands and to officiate local initiatives for the improvement of their welfare).

2.2. Project implementation progress²

Outputs & Activities ³	Expected completion date	Implementation status as of end of reporting period expressed in %	Describe any problems in delivery and any changes/mitigation action required.
Output 1.3 Integrated community management plans (conservation and monitoring of dugong and seagrass ecosystems) developed and piloted	2018	5	N/A
Activity 1.3.1 Discussions and meetings to establish a dugong and seagrass conservation steering committee group among the various stakeholders	End 2016	10	Need better coordination among various agencies and stakeholders during discussions and MareCet to help steer this in the right direction
Activity 1.3.2 Discussions and meetings with govt agencies (e.g. Marine Department, Maritime Enforcement Agency) and local groups (e.g. villagers, boat and resort operators) to introduce and establish the concept of speed limit zone in high dugong areas	End 2017	5	N/A

² Information provided in “Quarterly Expenditure Report” should be in line with output/activity progress reported in this table.

³ Outputs and activities as described in the project proposal or in any updated project revision. Expand table as necessary.

Outputs & Activities ³	Expected completion date	Implementation status as of end of reporting period expressed in %	Describe any problems in delivery and any changes/mitigation action required.
Activity 1.3.3 Speed limit zone adopted and demarcation buoys deployed	Mid-2017	2	N/A
Output 3.1 Critical knowledge gaps (dugongs and seagrass ecosystems) identified and surveys initiated/ completed	End 2017	40	N/A
Activity 3.1.1 Aerial surveys	End 2017	40	N/A
Activity 3.1.2 Seagrass surveys	End 2017	20	N/A
Activity 3.1.3 Contaminant studies	Q1 2018	30	Analyses underway, and seeking additional funds for analyses
Activity 3.1.4 Socio-economic studies	End 2017	10	N/A
Output 4.1 Policy, planning and regulatory gaps reviewed (conservation of dugongs and seagrass ecosystems) and recommendations developed	Q1 2017	35	Need better coordination among various agencies and stakeholders during discussions and MareCet to help steer this in the right direction
Activity 4.1.1 Presentation of core research findings to relevant govt agencies	Twice a year	50	N/A
Activity 4.1.2 Roundtable discussions on MPA planning for dugong and seagrass	Mid-2017	35	Need better coordination among various agencies and stakeholders during discussions and MareCet to help steer this in the right direction. Government agencies keen to support and have committed co-financing budget, however timeline unrealistic (would prefer to establish MPA by Q3 2016), however things are generally progressing in the right direction.

2.3. Risk and risk management

Please describe internal and external risks (examples included in brackets) that could affect successful implementation of project activities and the proposed risk mitigation measures.

Risk group	Description	Risk level (Low/Medium/High)	Mitigation measures
Project Management (team capacity, internal communication, co-financing, budget, financial management, reporting, etc.)	Team capacity	Low	To plan ahead and ensure enough project personnel available to conduct project activities
Socio-cultural issues (external communications, capacity of and work with stakeholders, cultural aspects)	Lack of cooperation among project partners and stakeholders Reluctance of local community members and stakeholders to provide full cooperation during community consultative interviews	Medium - High	Ensure good communicators are present on the MPA/LMMA consultation team, both from the NGO and government sides
Political risks (Political stability in country, political impacts on the project)	Lack of political will for MPA/LMMA expansion planning	Medium	Ensure that key findings and consequences of not acting on conservation measures are communicated simplistically and often to the relevant government agencies; Inclusion of government agencies on both Federal and State levels to encourage active participation in the project

Environmental risks (severe weather events/ disasters, natural causes negatively affecting project areas, habitats and species)	Poor and erratic weather conditions	Medium - High	Check the best available weather forecast ahead of scheduled fieldwork periods; Allow for up to 3 days as a buffer to remain in the field to complete work in case work was hampered by poor weather
Other (please specify)	The rising costs of living and materials in Malaysia	Medium - High	Always look for the best offers and pricing ahead of time and where possible, negotiate suitable rates for equipment/ service which will remain constant throughout the duration of the project

3. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

3.1. Please describe activities for monitoring and evaluation carried out during the reporting period.

Examples include: baseline data collection, stakeholder surveys, field surveys, steering committee meetings to assess project progress, peer review of documentation to ensure quality, mid-term review, etc.

Do not include routine project reporting.

N/A

4. OTHER INFORMATION

4.1. Meetings⁴

Meeting type ⁵	Title	Venue	Dates	Convened by	Organised by	No. of participants	Report issued Y/N	Language	Dated
Expert group meeting	Meeting for the action plan for the execution of the dugong sanctuary in Johor	Department of Fisheries Malaysia, Johor State Office, Johor Bahru, Johor	13 Jan 2016	Director, Johor Dept of Fisheries	Dept of Fisheries Malaysia	10	N	N/A	
Community consultative meetings	Initial trip to local villages (mainland and islands) within the proposed dugong sanctuary area in Johor to establish contact and introduce social science survey intent	Various villages along the Johor east coast (Mersing to Tanjung Sedili), and on Sibul and Tinggi Islands	19 – 20 Feb 2016	Lee Sok Fen (MY4 project member)	MareCet	8	Y (informal report to Dr Ponnampalam)	English	23 Feb 2016
Expert group meeting	Meeting for the establishment of a Technical	Johor National Parks Corporation Headquarters, Nusajaya, Johor	29 Feb 2016	Johor State Exco Member for Health and Environment	Johor National Parks Corporation	22	N	N/A	

⁴ Expand table as necessary

⁵ Meeting types: e.g. expert group meeting, project inception workshop, training workshop/seminar, partners consultation workshop, project Steering Committee meeting etc.

	Committee for the Johor dugong sanctuary								
Malaysia GEF dugong project partners meeting	Meeting on the National Facilitating Committee GEF 5 Project – Conservation on dugong and seagrass	Department of Fisheries Malaysia Headquarters, Putrajaya	1 Apr 2016	MY National Focal Point	Department of Fisheries Malaysia	20	N	N/A	
Expert group meeting	Meeting to present scope of work for the delineation and establishment of the Johor dugong sanctuary	Johor National Parks Corporation Headquarters, Nusajaya, Johor	11 May 2016	Johor State Exco Member for Health and Environment	Johor National Parks Corporation	20	N	N/A	
Expert group meeting	Meeting to discuss plans for dugong exhibition during the Sultan of Johor's 2016 Islands Expedition	Johor National Parks Corporation Headquarters, Nusajaya, Johor	1 Jun 2016	Director, Johor National Parks Corporation	Johor National Parks Corporation	16	N	N/A	
Community consultative meetings	Pilot survey to test out questionnaire designed for	Various villages along the Johor east coast (Mersing to	2 – 10 Jun 2016	Lee Sok Fen (MY4 project member)	MareCet	35	N	N/A	

	collecting feedback from the community regarding the establishment of a dugong sanctuary	Tanjung Sedili), and on Sibul and Tinggi Islands							
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

4.2. List(s) of meeting participants*⁶

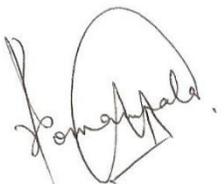
No.	Name of participant	Nationality
1	Datuk Hj Ayub Rahmat	Malaysia
2	Syed Abdullah Syed Abdul Kadir	Malaysia
3	Hj Shakib Hj Mohd Ali	Malaysia
	Sukarno Wagiman	Malaysia
4	Fairul Izmal Jamal Hisne	Malaysia
5	Kee Alfian	Malaysia
6	Lili Tokiman	Malaysia
7	Munir Hj Nawi	Malaysia
8	Zamani Omar	Malaysia
9	James Bali	Malaysia
10	Ng Jol Ern	Malaysia
11	Julian Hyde	United Kingdom
12	Izarenah Mat Repin	Malaysia
13	Mohd Nizam Ismail	Malaysia
14	Abdul Muntalib Juli	Malaysia
15	Mohd Tamimi Ali	Malaysia
16	Mohd Ghazali Manap	Malaysia
17	Halid Salleh	Malaysia

* I do not have the participants list for each meeting as it was not made available, so I have listed the main attendees as I remember. This list also does not include the names of people who were at the community consultative meetings/interviews.

⁶ Expand table as necessary

4.3. Documents, other printed materials, videos, and soft products (such as CDs or websites) (produced under the project)

No	Type ⁷	Title	Author(s) Editor(s)	Publisher	ISBN	Publication date
1	Newspaper article	The damsel of the sea	Lim Su Lin	Focus Malaysia	N/A	October 2014
2	Short video	Ever wondered what dugongs eat?	MareCet	MareCet	N/A	September 2014
3	Short video	Dugongs Eating, Swimming, and Serving as Seagrass "Mascots" One Minute Dive with Pew	The Pew Charitable Trusts	The Pew Charitable Trusts	N/A	18 February 2015
4	Short video	Dugongs in Johor – 7 Sep 2015	MareCet	MareCet	N/A	September 2015
5	Info flyer	Dugong Research and Conservation	MareCet	MareCet	N/A	October 2015
6	Newsletter	Updates on dugong research and conservation	MareCet	MareCet	N/A	April 2016
7	Online photo album	Seagrass mapping & dugong feeding trails survey, June 2016	MareCet	MareCet	N/A	June 2016

Name of Project Manager: Louisa Shobhini Ponnampalam		Name of Project Manager Supervisor: N/A	
Signature: 	Date: 10 July 2016	Signature:	Date:

⁷ Documents and printed material types: e.g. technical publication, meeting report, technical/substantive report, brochures, media releases, etc.