



Enhancing the Conservation Effectiveness of Seagrass Ecosystems Supporting Globally Significant Populations of Dugongs across the Indian and Pacific Ocean Basins

This Project is executed by The Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund, with financing from the GEF, implementation support by UNEP and technical support from the CMS Dugong MoU Secretariat

INCEPTION WORKSHOP REPORT

20-21 October 2015

Colombo, Sri Lanka



Prepared by: Project Coordination Team

29 November 2015

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List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
DTG	Dugong Technical Group
CMS Dugong MoU	Dugong Memorandum of Understanding of the Convention on Migratory Species
EPSC	Executive Project Steering Committee
GEF	The Global Environmental Facility
NFC	National Facilitating Committee
PCT	Project Coordination Team
The MbZ Fund	The Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund
UNEP	United National Environment Programme

Acknowledgements

The Inception Workshop of the GEF Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project would not be possible without the dedication and active support of all Project Partners and several institutions such as the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife and the Department of Wildlife Conservation Sri Lanka (host of the meeting), the Business and Biodiversity Platform of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce in Sri Lanka, the CMS Dugong MoU Secretariat and the UNEP Regional Office for Asia Pacific.

The technical part of the meeting also would not have been a success without the passion and commitment to dugongs and seagrasses of the CMS Dugong MoU Technical Group (DTG).

The beautiful wooden dugongs that all participants at the Inception Workshop received, reached us thanks to the kind support and help of Save our Andaman Network (SAN), a non-profit organisation in Trang, Thailand as well as the Department of Wildlife Conservation on the Sri Lankan side.

The Project Coordination Team would like to extend its sincere thanks and gratitude to all these organisations and individuals for their contribution to the Inception Workshop and we hope to continue this fruitful cooperation throughout the lifetime of this Project. Thanks and appreciation also go to all team members of The Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund, including those who are not part of the Project Coordination Team, who supported the organisation and implementation of the Inception Workshop.

Summary

This document represents the report on results from the Inception Workshop of the GEF Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project. This report was developed by the Project Coordination Team.

The Inception Workshop took place on 20-21 October 2015 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Nearly 70 people participated in the Inception Workshop, including all national Project Partners, The Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund Team (Executing Agency), the CMS Dugong MoU Secretariat and representatives from the CMS Dugong MoU Technical Group, the UNEP GEF Task Manager, representatives from dugong range states (e.g. India) and local stakeholders from Sri Lanka.

The Inception Workshop was the first common meeting between all Project Partners after the Project endorsement in July 2014. The Inception Workshop was crucial for presenting the global context of the Project, with its history, present situation and what we are striving for in the future. It was an important moment for setting a common baseline of the Project and a framework for delivering quality Project results and ensuring post-Project legacy.

The Inception Workshop was organised as follows: the first day was dedicated to understanding better the Project, starting from the global picture and zooming in on Project Countries; the second day focused on the Project Components: research, knowledge, incentives and policies, and communications. During the second day, all participants were divided into four thematic groups on Dugong research, Seagrass research, Incentives Approach and Conservation Communications.

The draft agenda of the Workshop was initially developed by the Project Coordination Team. The final version of the Inception Workshop agenda came after numerous discussions with members from the CMS Dugong MoU Technical Group.

The expected results for Project Partners and the PCT from the Inception Workshop were:

- Common understanding of Project objectives and main outcomes reached
- Common understanding of Project baseline and quality of end results reached
- Understanding of Project coordination, advisory and implementation structure stressed and clarified
- Partners knowing each other and synergies identified
- Project issues and challenges identified

- Capacity for dugong and seagrass research, incentive instruments and communications built

During the Inception Workshop all Project Partners were provided a short questionnaire (Evaluation and feedback form) designed by the PCT to give a feedback on the content, structure and overall organisation of the Workshop. The questionnaire was also used to identify needs of Project Partners.

This report consists of three main sections:

- **Part I** presents the results from the Evaluation and feedback forms.
- **Part II** provides responses to major questions and issues raised by Project Partners.
- **Appendices** relate to different aspects of the Inception Workshop and the overall Project.

To read this document, it is recommended to have the agenda of the Inception Workshop and the Evaluation and feedback form templates printed out for reference, both documents are provided as Appendices.

The results from the Evaluation and feedback form on the Inception Workshop showed that overall, the thematic and organisational structure of the agenda matched the expectations and needs of Project Partners and stakeholders from the Workshop. Project Partners appreciated especially the opportunity to meet their counterparts from the other Project Countries, The MbZ Fund Team (Project Coordination Team), as well as Dugong MoU Secretariat and the DTG. Project Partners identified the need for future global meetings stressing their active involvement in the organisation and implementation of such meetings. Some topics were not discussed during the Inception Workshop – the integration of dugongs and seagrass issues into the policy agenda, the involvement of the business sector in the Project and lessons learned. It was recommended to integrate all such needs in any future Project event and to expand the format of such meetings by inviting other dugong range states that are part of this Project to share their experiences and lessons learned across boundaries.

PART I. Overview of Results from the Evaluation and feedback form

The Evaluation and feedback form developed by the PCT consisted of 12 questions based on the structure of the Inception Workshop agenda. Appendix 1 to this report represents the Inception Workshop agenda, Appendix 2 provides information on questions and topics covered by each Thematic Group (held on Day 2 of the Inception Workshop) and Appendix 3 is the Evaluation and feedback form. A summary of all questions raised during the Thematic Groups session is presented in Appendix 5.

The Evaluation and feedback form was provided to Project Partners only - there were 42 representatives from Project Partners organisations. The PCT received 35 Evaluations forms out of 42.

Detailed Feedback per Question:

Questions 1 to 5 and 7 and 8 gave the opportunity to respondents to give their assessment based on a qualitative ranking: “very good”, “good” or “poor”. Questions 6 and 10 to 12 were two tailed-questions (yes/ no). Question 9 is an open question seeking for feedback with no ranking.

Question 1 sought a feedback on the structure of the Inception Workshop agenda. 25 of the 35 respondents rated the structure of the agenda “very good” and the remaining 10 rated as “good”. Seven respondents provided comments, requiring longer time for discussions, more time for group sessions and more activities for participants suggesting longer duration (one additional day) for the Workshop.

Question 2 related to the presentation of the global GEF Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project. The session was titled “The bigger picture: Project overview and the role of the Project in the international context. Project coordination and implementation arrangements”. This session received 28 “very good” and seven “good”. A major comment on this session related to the Project coordination, requesting for more clarification on The MbZ Fund role in the global Project. Another important feedback was the need for country specific implementation strategy.

Question 3 related the session on "Countries Presentation". Day 1 was mostly dedicated to this session. Most of the Country presentations were delivered by the Dugong Focal Points of the Project Countries. All country presentations followed a template and a guideline document, developed and provided by the PCT. 20 minutes were allocated for each Country presentation. There were eight Country presentations and questions were collected by members of The MbZ Fund to be addressed during the following question and answer session. 23 respondents rated this session as “very good” and the remaining 12 as “good”. Respondents provided 12

comments, ranging from “An eye opener” to “too much information in the presentations”. Respondents also identified as important to make a better link between National Projects and the global Project. Respondents highlighted that there needs more work to be done on national workplans at a national level and to consider issues such as social auditing. More time for the plenary discussion was also identified as one of the Workshop needs.

Question 4 related to the session on "Project communications and coordination guidelines". The session received 27 “very good” ratings. There were 8 comments related to this session, identifying rooms for improvement. They included the need to having longer time for this session to get a better understanding of the coordination of Project communications. Some respondents commented that Project communications will differ from place to place and modern technologies might not always come into use in some isolated areas. It was also commented that project communications capacity differ from one Project Country to another and that Project Partners would need the PCT’s support to address these communications needs.

Figure 1 provides a summary of the results from the Evaluation and feedback form.

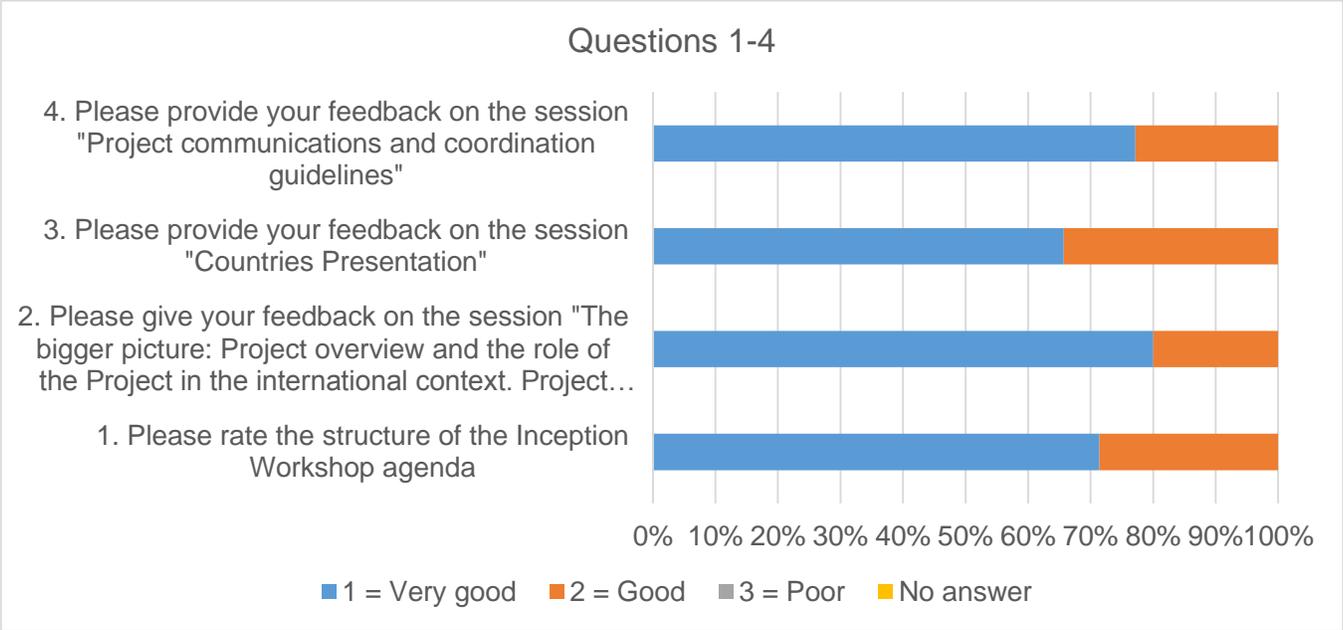


Figure 1. Response to questions from 1 to 4

Question 5 related to the Thematic Group session on Day 2. There were four themes, the presentation of which was given in four separate rooms. The themes were Dugong research, Seagrass research and ecosystem services, Incentives Approach and Conservation Communications. The themes were presented by two leaders, Technical Advisors, members of the CMS DTG. All Technical Advisors were provided guidelines on the Thematic Group session. Appendix 2 provides an excerpt from the guidelines to the Technical Advisors, which is a summary of the questions and topics to be covered by the Technical Advisors.

All participants were divided into four Thematic Groups. The groups were formed by the PCT based on areas of work/interest of the national projects under the global Project. The groups of participants rotated and visited each of the thematic rooms. Each round in a Thematic Group lasted for 40 minutes (30 minutes for the Thematic Group leaders to present the content and 10 minutes for discussion). During the Thematic Groups discussions, Technical Advisors from the DTG and MbZ Fund team members collected the questions from each group – major questions out these four Thematic Groups were answered during the plenary session after the four rounds.

Respondents were asked to evaluate the four Thematic Groups session based on three criteria: (i) issues discussed, (ii) results from the Thematic Groups and (iii) organisation and structure of the Thematic Groups. There were three possible ratings to assess this session: (a) very good/relevant, (b) good/relatively relevant and (c) poor/not relevant.

Most of the Thematic Groups scored “very good” on average. Figure 2 presents the ratings of the four Thematic Groups based on the three ratings criteria.

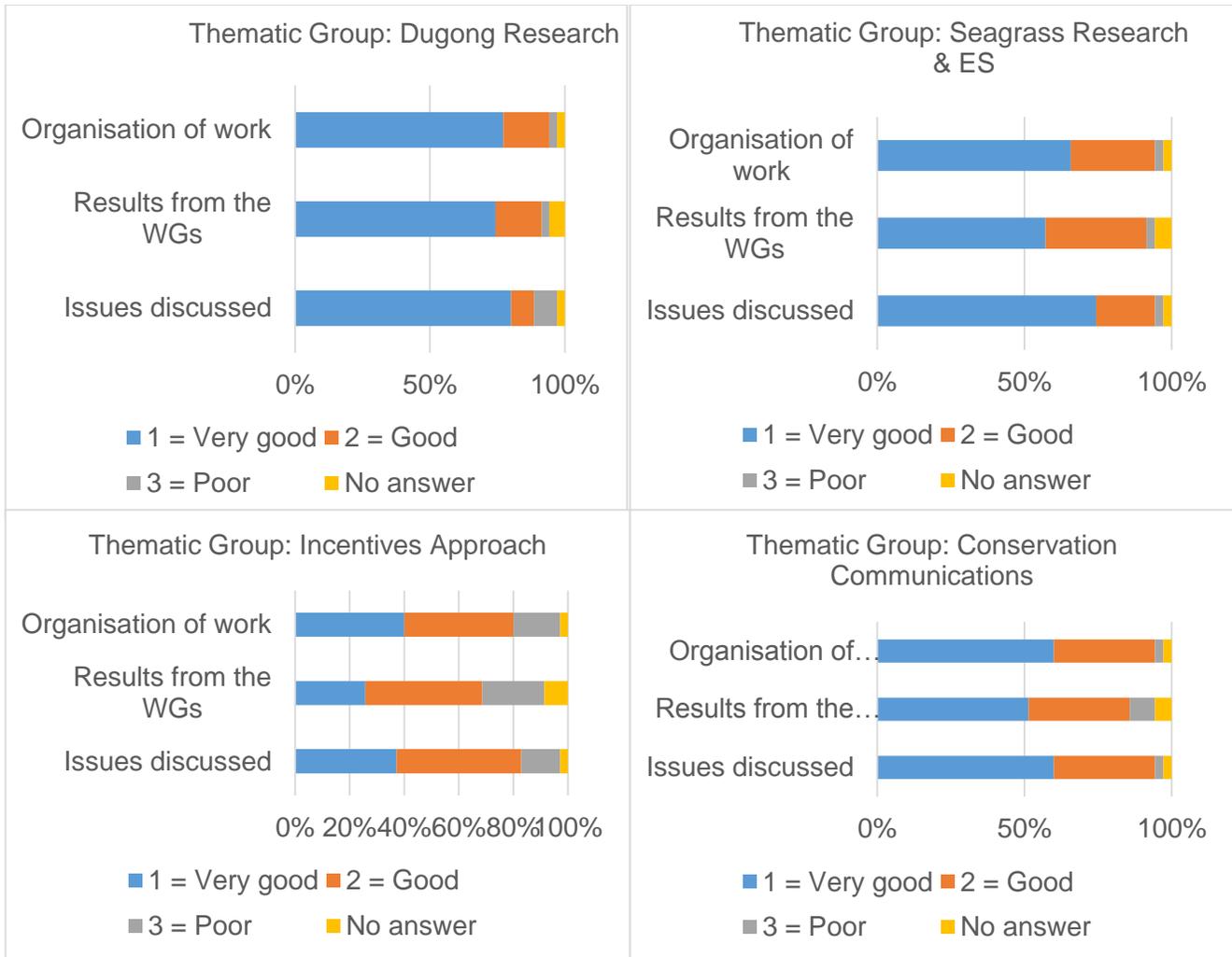


Figure 2. Feedback to Thematic Group session, Day 2

Question 6 related to major issues, which required more attention during the Thematic Groups session. Respondents provided 13 comments, requiring more information on dugong and seagrass research techniques, on the core of the incentives approach, on project coordination, as well as more details on country specifics. A summary of all comments is provided in Table 1 Summary of comments.

The Thematic Group session was followed by a Panel discussion, during which all Thematic Groups leaders summarised the discussions and the various points raised during the Thematic Group that they were leading and provided answers to questions brought during the Thematic Group session.

Question 7 captured the opinion of respondents on the Panel discussion. According to most respondents, the Panel discussion repeated what was already said during the Thematic Group session. Respondents also recommended that this Panel discussion should have paid more attention to the lessons learned from the Inception Workshop.

After the Panel discussion on the Thematic Groups session, Day 2 continued with a presentation on Project implementation, coordination and reporting frameworks.

Question 8 related to the presentation on Project implementation, coordination and reporting frameworks, which was mostly rated as “very good”.

Question 9 on the new information issued from the Inception Workshop received 23 answers out of 35. The responses related to dugong and seagrass survey techniques and ecosystem services valuation, effective conservation communications, similarities across countries and regions, as well as the importance of survey design.

Question 10 on any issues not covered by the Inception Workshop, the majority of respondents indicated the following: the link between the global Project and the national projects, policies work and work with decision-makers, the collection, analysis and sharing of data and “Project administration and pitfalls”.

Question 11 relating to holding future meetings with all Project Partners received 29 positive responses.

Question 12 (last question) on recommendations to the PCT on future meetings received several suggestions such inviting dugong range states not included in this Project, allocating a session on lessons learned, involving Project Partners more in the organisation and implementation of meetings (as facilitators, for example).

The next table contains a summary of comments on all questions¹ of the Evaluation and feedback forms. The table presents at least 50% of the comments per question. The comments were not modified or edited by the PCT. *(As above-mentioned a detailed summary of all the results from the Evaluation Forms is provided in Appendix 5.)*

Table 1. Summary of comments on questions from the Evaluation and feedback forms

Question from the Evaluation and feedback form	Number of comments received	Summary of comments
1. Please rate the structure of the Inception Workshop agenda	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Featuring & case study sharing • More time for discussion • Timing (maybe needs another day). More opportunities for countries exchange, particularly on thematic areas of the project. • A lot more activities for participants
2. Please give your feedback on the session "The bigger picture: Project overview and the role of the Project in the international context. Project coordination and implementation arrangements"	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still not clear who is responsible for what in the MbZ (Fund) • Need country specific implementation strategy (brain-storming) • Involve partners in an activity where they are well versed of their role to play in the project.
3. Please provide your feedback on the session "Countries Presentation"	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An eye opener & Informative for similar challenges countries • Project outcomes & sustainability; no mention of social audit • clarity of presenter; design and process map; more detailed plan of work • Some countries are not clearly present. • Maybe incorporation into the agenda for countries who have similar activities to share what they have in mind, share current challenges, suggest solutions or develop questions which they can then bring to plenary • Some presentation too much information. Should be short.

¹ Comments related to Question 5 'Thematic Groups' are covered under Question 6.

Question from the Evaluation and feedback form	Number of comments received	Summary of comments
4. Please provide your feedback on the session "Project communications and coordination guidelines"	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target audience; local fishing communities are target. New generation media might not give results; better to use print media. • What exactly being communicated and to whom • The session is too short; it is interesting session but need longer time • Communication abilities vary for different countries, so need for clarification to partners. • More discussion on guidelines and feedback
6. Do you think that there are issues that needed more attention or not discussed during the working group discussion	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dugong survey • Dugong and their associated other animals. • not more attention but thing like restoration of seagrass in areas where SG got depleted • Threats and how countries are making enabling framework for project implementation • Strong relation to current status of the projects • Private sector engagement • Regional/local sensitiveness to problems/ issues • Common challenges / components between 8 countries - common gaps • perhaps allocate more time for each session for more in-depth discussion
7. Please rate the Plenary session after the work in groups	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just repeated the group sessions • Specific lessons learnt in the working groups to be discussed in a bit more detail manner • Redundant • Sitting arrangement, limited interaction with participants. Could have been facilitated with more interaction in mind with participants. • Letting people know that anyone can put a question on a topic under discussion; the person who wrote the question on the card.
8. Please rate the session "Project Status today and the next steps"	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Big picture" not necessary for individual projects

Question from the Evaluation and feedback form	Number of comments received	Summary of comments
9. What new did you learn about dugongs and seagrass conservation, and community work during the Inception Workshop?	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to conduct a dugong survey • Seagrass research methodologies, ecosystem services valuation concepts. • New methods & Program inception according to local relevance • Learning from each other experience of success and failure • There is very close correlation. No seagrass means no dugongs • Plan well, design survey methods wisely and communicate appropriately • Networking, personal meetings, projects of the partners • Issues on dugong & seagrass conservation & management in different countries across the region & some adaptive methods that are applicable to individual projects • Effective communication • Learnt new ideas for project activities/ design • Incentives approaches / learn from other countries each thematic areas, Dugong & Seagrass • There are synergies. Incentives only (not) refers to cash but infrastructure/ assets • Other projects with both similar and different issues. Into an incentives/ planning
10. Was there any important Project issue that was not discussed during the Workshop?	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please include policy change session more • Policy & Planning - Role of governments? - leadership. • Define methods of seagrass survey , methods every country can use commonly • Implementation framework and how to break out of rigid implementation framework of GEF project guidelines • Data analysis and data sharing • Bit more on grant administration? Any pitfalls?

Question from the Evaluation and feedback form	Number of comments received	Summary of comments
11. Do you think there should be further global Project meeting the life of the GEF Dugong and Seagrass project?	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please make it bi-annual program • Yearly evaluations • Maybe after year 2
12. Do you have any recommendations to the organisers /speakers/ moderators?	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further information on seagrass and dugongs survey methods will be useful • Think of a range-country workshop sometime during the midterm of the project so that range states can initiate their own projects without being dependent on multilateral funding/ implementation support • No DSA provided to the participants. • Maybe to have a lessons learnt session in any future meetings. • Country level planning is a must. There are overlapping work between organisations; all those should deliver on same lines for comparison. There should be country level coordination body. • Sitting arrangements (round table setting; group tables). Countries are the key focus - opportunities for country comments - 8 countries should have time to comment on issues. • Involve Project partners to facilitate various roles of future project meeting. • Great workshop! Excellent organisers and speakers!

PART II. Response of the Project Coordination Team to additional questions from the Inception Workshop

The aim of this Part of the Inception Workshop report is to address some of the major queries and issues raised by Project Partners during the Inception Workshop. These questions relate to:

- i. Project Coordination and Implementation structure
- ii. Clarity on Project Outcomes
- iii. Administrative pitfalls and Project communications requirements

Although most of this information² can be found in the Project Document, which was sent to all Project Partners earlier in May 2015, a short explanation is provided below to all Project Partners for clarification purposes:

i. Project Coordination and Implementation structure:

Figure 3 illustrates the decision-making and organisational chart³ of the GEF Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project.

² This section of the report, does not address technical questions related to dugong and seagrass research and incentives approach - support will be sought from the CMS Dugong MoU to address any technical questions and needs of Project Partners over the course of the Project in order to ensure the consistency of the techniques applied and data generated across the Project Countries.

³ Source: Project Document of the global GEF Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project

Please note that the number of National Projects is different from their actual number today because some National Projects were merged

Executive Oversight

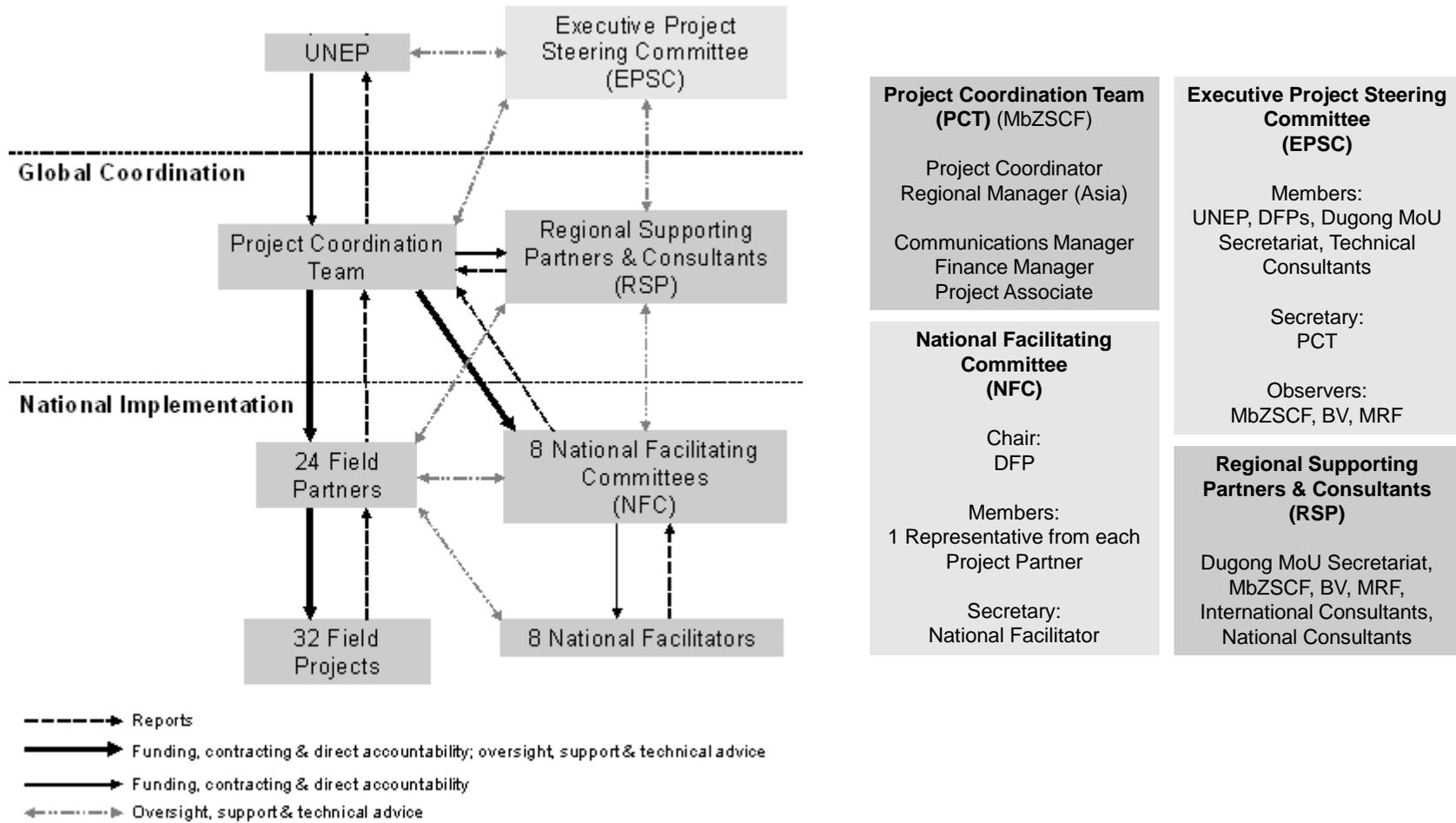


Figure 3. Decision-making flowchart of the global Project

The GEF is the donor to this Project. UNEP is the GEF Implementing Agency of this global Project, which is accountable to the GEF for GEF finance activities and is responsible to ensure that these activities are carried out in accordance with UNEP and GEF policies, criteria and procedures. UNEP also provides global oversight and support to The MbZ Fund in the implementation of the Project. UNEP is represented in the Executive Project Steering Committee (EPSC) of this Project.

The MbZ Fund is the Executing Agency of this Project. The MbZ Fund signed an Agreement with UNEP for the execution of the GEF Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project. The MbZ Fund is responsible for ensuring the successful completion of the Project through cooperating with Project Partners in the eight Project Countries. For this purpose, The MbZ Fund should conclude funding agreements with Project Partners, allowing for the allocation of a share of the GEF funding available for the national projects in the eight Project Countries. The MbZ Fund is accountable vis-à-vis UNEP for the financial and technical progress and is responsible for monitoring the performance of Project Partners under these funding agreements.

For meeting its responsibilities under this Project, The MbZ Fund should establish a Project Coordination Team⁴, comprised of a Project Coordinator (Maya Todorova), a Project Associate (Mariam Yacout), a Project Communications Manager (Kirk Duthler) and a Project Finance Manager (Nabil Zakhour).

The PCT is responsible for coordinating, on a daily basis, with Project Partners their national projects and ensuring the legal and financial conditions for starting the national projects are set and respected. The PCT reviews, monitors and approves the national projects' financial and technical progress regularly. The PCT is also responsible for providing a global framework for the Project communications highlighting guidelines on how to promote the Project and the Project Partners. This Project's overarching framework includes developing a Project communications strategy, a Project website and other communications tools.

During the implementation of the Project, the PCT will seek technical advice from the CMS Dugong MoU Secretariat, who initially developed this Project. The CMS Dugong MoU Secretariat has established a Dugong Technical Group of experts in the fields of dugong and seagrass research and incentives approach. These Technical Advisors supported the development of this Project and their technical support is needed to ensure the scientific consistency of the Project and potential replicability of its results and lessons learned.

⁴ According to the Project Document, the PCT would have also included a Regional Project Manager. This position was removed from the Team. More about it can be found in the Project Inception Report (*to be distributed in due course*).

The implementation of on-the-ground activities is carried out by national Project Partners. By the end of the Inception Phase, all Project Partners will have formed national level structures for national coordination and cooperation – these structures are called National Facilitating Committees (NFC). There are eight NFCs chaired by the Dugong Focal Point of each Project Country; these NFCs are supported by a nominated National Facilitator. NFCs are financially supported under the global GEF Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project in the form of eight separate national projects (one per Project Country).

The overall Project progress is reviewed and supported by the EPSC, which consists of the Dugong Focal Points, UNEP, the CMS Dugong MoU Secretariat and selected members of the DTG.

ii. Clarity on Project Outcomes

The GEF Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project consists of 11 outputs grouped under four global Project components, as shown on Figure 4.

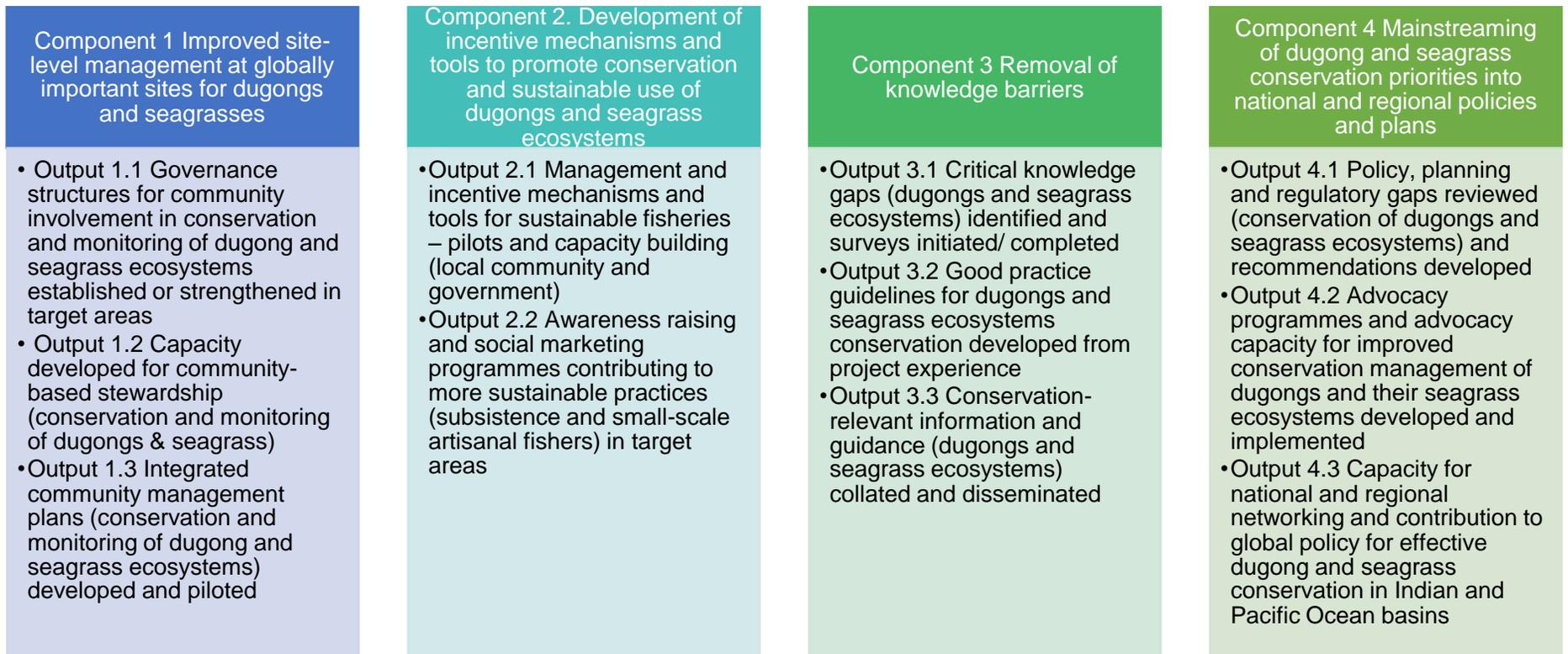


Figure 4. Global Project Components and Outputs

iii. Administrative pitfalls and Project Communications Requirements

The terms and conditions under this Project are laid down in a frame Funding Agreement, signed between The MbZ Fund in its capacity as the Executing Agency and each Project Partner.

Among others, there are two important aspects that Project Partners need to turn their attention to in the Funding Agreement:

(a) The calendar of financial and technical progress reporting and (b) communications requirements.

According to the agreement between UNEP and The MbZ Fund, and by which The MbZ Fund is bound, the reporting serves as the basis for The MbZ Fund to release the available GEF funding for a given national project. Therefore, without adequate technical and financial reports, the PCT will not be in a position to release any requested funding. It should be noted that the reporting calendar (as specified in the Funding Agreement between The MbZ Fund) is in line with the global Project reporting deadlines. Failing to comply with these deadlines will represent an issue for the global Project and its liquidity, which may disrupt the regular disbursement of funds to Project Partners.

With regard to Project Communications, The MbZ Fund is legally bound to ensure that all communications materials (soft and hard versions) acknowledge the donor - the GEF, the Implementing Agency – UNEP and the Executing Agency – The Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund. The PCT has developed communications guidelines, which are an integral part of the Funding Agreement between The MbZ Fund and the Project Partners.

These communications guidelines cover on aspects such as the usage of the short and long titles of the global Project, the association of a standard paragraph to all communications materials, the clearance (by the PCT) of national projects manuscripts/communication materials for external publication before launching them.

The PCT is currently working on brand guidelines and a communications strategy, which will be shared with all Project Partners in due course.

The existing communications guidelines as provided in the Funding Agreement between The MbZ Fund and the Project Partners are in Appendix 6 to this report.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. AGENDA OF THE INCEPTION WORKSHOP

Day 1, 20 October 2015

Time	Session	Presenter/Facilitator
09:00 – 09:30	Registration	
09:30 – 09:40	Lighting up the Traditional Oil Lamp	
09:40 – 09:50	Welcome Address	Secretary RMDB Meegasmulla, Ministry Of Sustainable Development and Wildlife
09:50 – 10:05	Introduction to the workshop and the Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project	Max Zieren Maya Todorova Nicolas Heard
10:05 – 10:25	Minister's Speech	Hon. Minister Gamini Jayawikrama Perera, Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife
10:25 – 10:30	Vote of thanks	Director General H. D. Ratnayake, Department of Wildlife Conservation
10:30 – 11:00	Closing of inauguration & tea break	
11:00 – 11:05	Agenda, presentation of the facilitation and presentation team	Maya Todorova
11:05 – 11:30	The bigger picture: the role of the Project in the international context Project overview, Project coordination and implementation arrangements	Max Zieren Donna Kwan Maya Todorova
11:30 – 11:35	Introduction to get to know each other	Mariam Yacout
11:35 – 11:50	Coffee break	

11:50 – 11:55	Get to know each other	Mariam Yacout
11:55 – 12:55	Country presentation: Indonesia	Dugong Focal Points/ Project Partners Facilitated by Mariam Yacout
	Country presentation: Madagascar	
	Country presentation: Malaysia	
12:55 – 13:55	Lunch	
13:55 – 14:55	Country presentation: Mozambique	Dugong Focal Points/ Project Partners Facilitated by Nicolas Heard
	Country presentation: the Solomon Islands	
	Country presentation: Sri Lanka	
14:55 – 15:10	Coffee break	
15:10 – 15:50	Country presentation: Timor-Leste	Dugong Focal Points/ Project Partners Facilitated by Kirk Duthler
	Country presentation: Vanuatu	
15:50 – 16:05	Coffee break	
16:05 – 16:25	Question & Answer Session	Facilitated by Maya Todorova
16:25 – 16:55	Project communications and communications guidelines	Kirk Duthler Philippa Heard
16:55 – 17:05	Wrap up of Day 1	Maya Todorova

19:00	Welcome Dinner	8 Degrees Restaurant, Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo
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Day 2, 21 October 2015

Time	Session	Presenter/Facilitator
08:30 – 09:00	Registration	
09:00 – 09:20	Introduction to Day 2	Maya Todorova
09:20 – 09:30	Criteria of quality Project deliverables	Len McKenzie
09:30 – 09:50	Introduction to work in groups: Good practices in research, incentives and communications – 4 Thematic Groups, 4 rounds: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dugong research 2. Seagrass research and ecosystem services 3. Incentives approach 4. Conservation Communications 	Maya Todorova Nicolas Pilcher and Helene Marsh Len McKenzie and Richard Unsworth Josh Donlan and Donna Kwan Kirk Duthler and Philippa Heard
09:50 – 10:10	Coffee break	
10:10 – 10:50	Work in groups: Good Project practices – Round I	
10:50 – 11:00	Short Break	
11:00 – 11:40	Work in groups: Good Project practices – Round II	
11:40 – 11:50	Short Break	
11:50 – 12:30	Work in groups: Good Project practices – Round III	
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch	
13:30 – 14:10	Work in groups: Good Project practices – Round IV	
14:10 – 14:30	Coffee Break	
14:30 – 15:55	Plenary Session: Reporting of results. Question & Answer Session	Facilitators and presenters of the Thematic Groups and Project Coordination Team
15:55 – 16:05	Short break	
16:05 – 16:20	Project status today and next steps	Project Coordination Team
16:20 – 16:50	Wrap up of Day 2 and the event. Closing words. End of the Inception Workshop	Project Coordination Team, Dugong MoU, UNEP/ GEF, Project Partners

APPENDIX 2. INFORMATION ON QUESTIONS AND TOPICS TO BE COVERED BY EACH THEMATIC GROUP

Thematic Group	Presenters/ Facilitators	Topics/ questions
Dugong research	Prof Helene Marsh Dr Nicolas J. Pilcher	Good examples of Dugong research (Dugong questionnaire) Kind of data to be collected and frequency (monitoring) Main challenges and possible solutions Organisation of the data collection process Data repository (legacy of data collecting projects) Usefulness and use of data (examples)
Seagrass research & ecosystem services	Mr Len McKenzie Dr Richard Unsworth	Good examples of seagrass research (Seagrass-Watch) Kind of data to be collected and frequency Main challenges and possible solutions Organisation of the data collection process; data repository (legacy of data collecting projects) Usefulness and use of data – seagrass ecosystem services
Incentives Approach	Dr Josh Donlan Dr Donna Kwan	What is meant under incentives approach? How to mobilize local level support? How to achieve market access for local communities? How to ensure the financial sustainability of incentives after the end of the Project? How to ensure environmental sustainability of incentives during and after the Project? /How do we make sure that our incentives do not cause a leakage effect on other ecosystems or species? How do we measure our impact?
Conservation Communications	Dr Kirk Duthler Ms Philippa Heard	How do we achieve effective conservation communications? How do we mobilize support? How do we use communications for lobby purposes? How do we devise messages that reach different target audiences? The role of social media How do we measure our impact? How do we remain impactful after the end of the Project (Project legacy)?

APPENDIX 3. EVALUATION & FEEDBACK FORM

EVALUATION & FEEDBACK FORM

*The aim of this form is to evaluate the structure, content and overall organisation of the Inception Workshop. Please complete all fields and submit the form to **Azis and Salima**. Your feedback is important!*

1. Please rate the structure of the Inception Workshop agenda

- Very Good
- Good, but needs improvement with regards to

.....

- Poor, missing important elements (please specify)

.....

2. Please give your feedback on the session “The bigger picture: Project overview and the role of the Project in the international context. Project coordination and implementation arrangements”

- Very good - clear and comprehensive
- Good, but needs more explanations on

.....

- Poor, missing information on: (please specify)

.....

3. Please provide your feedback on the session “Countries Presentation”

- Very good - clear and comprehensive
- Good, but needs improvements with regard to:

.....

- Poor, missing information on: (please specify)

.....

4. Please provide your feedback on the session “Project communications and coordination guidelines”

- Very good - clear and comprehensive
- Good, but needs improvements with regard to:

.....

Poor, missing information on: (please specify)

.....

5. What is your evaluation of the work in groups?

Please rate the 4 group sessions with regard to the following features using the following scale:

1 very good/ relevant; 2 good/ relatively relevant; 3 poor/ not relevant

Features	Dugong research	Seagrass research & ES	Incentives Approach	Communications
Issues discussed				
Results from the WGs				
Organisation of work				

6. Do you think that there are issues that needed more attention or not discussed during the working groups discussion:

Yes,

No

7. Please rate the Plenary session after the work in groups:

Very good - clear and comprehensive

Good, but need improvements with regard to:

.....

Poor, missing information on: (please specify)

.....

8. Please rate the session "Project Status today and next steps":

Very good - clear and comprehensive

Good, but need improvements with regard to:

.....

Poor, missing information on: (please specify)

9. What new did you learn about dugong and seagrass conservation, and community work during the Inception Workshop?

.....

10. Was there any important Project issue that was not discussed during the Workshop?

Yes,.....

No

11. Do you think there should be further global Project meetings during the life of the GEF Dugong and Seagrass Project?

Yes

No

12. Do you have any recommendations to the organisers/ speakers/ moderators?

Yes,

No

Thank you for completing and submitting this form

APPENDIX 4. SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS FROM THE THEMATIC GROUP SESSION

I. General Project-related Questions and Suggestions:

- Can projects be changed /refined if the methods may not be appropriate?
- Will the CHM capture all methods, references, datasheets, etc.?
- Given the limited budget, what are the priorities in seagrass ecosystem services?
- How to keep people interested in the Project, after its lifetime?
- Meetings workshops such as this one should be organised each year to facilitate networking, exchange of ideas and inspiration

II. Questions from the Thematic Groups:

Thematic Group 1: DUGONG RESEARCH:

Q: What are the methods used to affix tracking devices to dugongs? The rodeo method is so stressful for the animals. Are there better alternatives?

Q: What methods do we actually use, if we have a rough idea of how many dugongs there are in our water? Does it matter 200-400?

A: Maybe not so important to know the exact number but rather whether there still are any and what trends might be.

Q: How to determine home range of dugongs so a drone survey can be designed?

A: Movements are individual-related and some dugongs move more than others – therefore, it may not help to use an average. Maybe best to survey the bay frequently and see how variable the sighting number is. Try to tease out temporary emigration vs. permanent emigration. Look at bathymetry. Look at where seagrass is. What drone and range would be available and how this matches the size of area of interest. Dr Amanda Hodgson is the person to talk to - she has come up with the best possible designs. If surveys need to be designed to carry out over time, 25% of the budget should go into designing the survey itself.

Q: Any suitable speed and height for a drone survey?

A: This is a question to be asked to Dr Amanda Hodgson.

Q: Multiple survey methods (diving, seagrass, drones) are used. How valuable is looking at feeding trails?

A: Very good to look at where dugongs use habitat, if they use excavating feeding methods. Depends on type of seagrass. But if they use cropping this might not tell us much as we might get a false positive idea (i.e. dugongs were cropping and so lack of trails would suggest no dugongs). Also, if you see lots of trails, is it one dugong feeding a lot, or many dugongs feeding less? Might be able to use drones to identify trails.

Q: What aspects of bathymetry should we be looking at?

A: Look for shallow areas – where do we end the bathymetry (maybe the 20, or the 50m contour?). Most data suggests that they are in shallow water. Area between Sri Lanka and Indonesia might have seagrass in deeper water. In Torres Strait, a lot of feeding occurs in deeper waters and so there they use the 40—50m contour line as the boundary. In areas with a sharp drop in continental shelf, the shelf contour line might be around 20m. The more you know about where seagrass is, the easier it is to design these surveys. For example, if you know seagrasses reach deep waters, you might want to design your survey to take in this area.

Q: Do bottom features influence presence of dugongs on shallow seabed?

A: Need to know about the tides and other environmental variables such as temperature. The more you know about the seabed, the better it is to design a survey.

Q: Do they ever enter freshwater or estuaries?

A: Not known in FW areas, but in estuaries they nearly always are in brackish water areas. Learn to listen to what fishers tell you on dugong distribution.

Q: Are there records of dugongs changing behaviour (e.g. feeding)?

A: Possible – some records of dugongs show that they are active at night. But it is important to look at the temperature – a couple of degrees can make a big difference. In Moreton Bay, dugongs go out at low tide and come back in on high tide, and use areas based on the time of the day. This is best explained by temperature more than boating activity. But there is evidence in other areas that dugongs do not come into areas when lots of boating activity occur.

Q: In regions where dugongs are on the verge of extinction, does existing info on habitat preference of any help in designing surveys?

A: Look for all info on the ground first (e.g. Gulf of Kutch) – map seagrass, look for trails, sightings of animals, etc. Don't know of areas where they use habitats different from other parts of the world. Don't do anything that

would risk killing an animal in areas where very few exist. Hard to get angry with fishers for catching a dugong if we do it...

Q: Any particular season when surveys should be conducted?

A: Try to aim for the time when the sea is likely to be calmest and there is no rain. Set a strict ceiling on acceptable weather conditions and stick to it.

Q: If we use the questionnaire to give to fishers, do you think the data is sufficient to quantify the population, or simply the distribution, given that other designs are so much more expensive?

A: The questionnaire can probably best be used to give you an indication of where to look more rigorously.

Q: Is it enough to ask fishers if they have seen dugongs and when, or should this ideally be linked to trails and actual sightings?

A: It is best if they can give you details of actual sightings or feeding trails. It is good to follow up a report of a sighting with an open ended question asking for them to tell you about what they saw. This gives an indication of the likely validity of the sighting.

Q: How far can we go with the fisher surveys – sometimes the responses may not be credible?

A: Use the questionnaire as a guide rather than a definitive guide. Identify hotspots.

Q: How can we use communities to help us monitor specific areas over time? And how do we incorporate these data into larger studies?

A: You have to be cautious about interpretations. Citizen science is a valuable source of information. The most important aspect is to feed it back to the communities. Communities feel upset at wasting time. Must commit to returning information.

Q: Interested in drones. Who do I contact?

A: Dr Amanda Hodgson is the person to contact. Not much done with small drones. Need to know ATC rules. Need to have the right question and that may help choose the drone type and the study design.

Q: Can feeding trails be used to determine abundance?

A: Provided you know for sure they are trails... Good evidence of dugong. Refer to above (earlier) response...

Q: Are there any particular seasons for conducting surveys?

A: Always try to do when it is as calm as possible. As little rain as possible – weather records can be really helpful in upfront design. Note weather can change over years and so need to be a bit flexible. Also look at tidal cycles.

Q: Are there any relationships between (so called) favourable species and dugong hotspots?

A: Sometimes. There are places where this is true and then others where it was not, do be exceptionally cautious on designing a hotspot based on forage species presences.

Q: Given differing levels of research at each country, what might be the best way to conduct research so that the results are comparable across countries?

A: Nice idea. But is it the most important thing? Would it not be best to think about most appropriate per country? If countries have differing management needs, it might not be appropriate to try and standardise.

Q: Want to use fisher surveys to identify hotspots and then passive acoustic monitoring. Thoughts on PAM?

Q: What are the assumptions inherent in the method?

A: Is fine for detecting sounds when animals vocalise or chew, but they do not vocalise all the time and so will not get them when they do not do this. Can end up with false positives... Maybe not rush into PAM and go back to actual questions. Sounds do not carry far so if you get them this is good indication of dugongs, but lack thereof does not mean no dugongs.

Q: Are there any methods that can focus on indirect signs of dugongs to use in abundance estimates? (e.g. trails, genetics, etc.)?

A: People do use indirect signs –feeding trails (but use results carefully as trails can be one or many animals; and if animals crop we may not detect dugongs where they are).

People also monitor faeces, and so records might indicate dugong presence but likely not abundance. But these need to be tied to other studies, and clearly articulate all assumptions, to get the best feel for what is going on.

Q: What about citizen science? How can that help?

A: Incredibly useful (e.g. CMS questionnaire) but need to be cautious of the results, and need to feed it back in a timely manner to retain interest and buy-in from communities. Now a number of applications are developed to help a wider range of people to be able to feed data into a database- but we must budget for a way to return that data to the public. Also need to consider multiple lines of evidence – with one clue we might not be able to detect declining trends but multiple clues may really point us in one direction or another.

Q: Are there examples of studies where fisher data has been compared with actual mark recapture data to gauge the margin of error?

A: Not sure if this is the right question. It is possible these may measure different things. Survey is a snapshot in time. CMR measures usage over time. These are only the same when there is no emigration. Maybe important to think about what the differences are in the data being assembled? And are they the same? Important to understand assumptions behind each type of data to make sure they are measuring the same things.

Q: What sort of periodicity might we consider for a questionnaire survey?

A: Things will not change over the short term so no real need to go back within the year. Also might want to consider using a shorter questionnaire to focus down on key questions rather than ask everything as a lot of the fishery aspects might not have changed. Follow up questionnaires also allow a chance to feed back to fishers.

Q: If we do not know the population size what might a minimum sample size be?

A: It really depends on the question. If the question is 'is the population genetically healthy?' you might need 20 or so, but we can get a better response from a geneticist. But overall the larger the sample, the better the response.

Q: What, given the lack of appreciation of dugongs in some places, might be the best building blocks to putting together a comprehensive approach to dugong conservation? Who to bring on board?

A: Most important agencies will depend on local situation. But need to work with fisheries agencies as well as conservation agencies – and these are usually different. Normally had to get fisheries agencies to take the problems seriously. E.g. a few dugong deaths might not be considered important but in this species it actually is. So getting the understanding that a few deaths is a major issue is very hard to do. Another group to get on board are terrestrial managers due to how land management practices impact seagrass habitats. Important to identify all key stakeholders in each local situation.

Q: Boat strikes are also threats. Will speed limits help mitigate this threat?

A: Speed limits are a good way of solving boat strikes – but it is hard to implement – manatees in Florida are well protected via this management measure. They also found that large boats are more of an issue.

Q: Is it possible to have a resident population and also possible that some places are only temporary stopping places for migrating dugongs? How to manage? How to tell the difference?

A: Possible, but important to take a look at extensive areas of continental shelf where waters are shallow, and areas where there are likely to be seagrass beds. Then talk to fishers and see what they can tell about the place. Timor-Leste (?) was a transit area (e.g. between Australia and Indonesia), but understand that bays and smaller areas might be temporary residence areas. Genetics suggest there may be some mixing, but insufficient is known at present to make that call.

Q: What is considered a 'small' population?

A: Something like <100 animals. But there can be many dugongs in a country that are widely dispersed.

Q: Is there a short version of the CMS dugong survey?

A: No, but it was designed in such a way as to provide a wealth of data, admittedly it is long but 6000 responses indicate people are willing to use it. There is a ten question follow up but the initial one is useful on many fronts, particularly the spatial dimension.

Thematic Group 2: SEAGRASS RESEARCH:

Q: Seagrass restoration – examples of successful seagrass restoration?

A: Very expensive, best done by sowing seeds, best in tropical areas

Q: Importance of the correct species?

Q: Seagrass meadow resilience in order to demonstrate benefits to the fisher folks?

A: Reducing impact leads to greater resilience

Q: Methods for the assessment of the economic evaluation?

Q: The consequences of trophic cascades?

Q: Design of the participatory seagrass mapping (communities) – starting from education?

Q: Identifying the associated flora and fauna in an ecosystem and the role they play in that ecosystem?

Q: How important is to bring traditional ecological knowledge?

Q: Different seasonalities? How often? Which season?

Thematic Group 3: INCENTIVES APPROACH:

Q: What do we mean by incentives?

Q: What is the design framework of incentives? What are the tools available?

Q: Are the timeframes needed under the Project feasible?

Q: Who are your customers? Do you know them?

Q: How do we measure the impact?

Q: When are incentives not appropriate?

Q: If you have only once chance, how to influence decision-makers efficiently?

Q: Adaptive management and embracing failure?

Q: Importance of pride as an internally motivating incentive?

Q: Unexpected consequences?

Thematic Group 4: CONSERVATION COMMUNICATIONS:

Q: Do we have a Communications Strategy or plan which will provide guidelines on things such as logo usage, requirements (Y1/Y2/Y3/Y4 - case studies), how to use certain messages etc. And if so, when will we get the document?

Q: How much responsibility do local project managers have in communicating Project outcomes?

Q: What are the communication outputs of the Project itself? (quantifying, relaying results)?

Q: How do we address issues with a Project with co-financers in communication materials?

Q: When do we select global/national/local key messages so as not to dilute the message for each level?

Q: How can you make a species charismatic when it is so hard to see?

Q: Can we conduct global photo competition among the 8 countries?

Q: Communication challenges in some of the Project Countries (basic technologies to report conservation stories)?

Q: How do you tell “your” story?

A: Develop your key messages (local/national) and send to the Project Coordination Team for review and comments

Q: Humanise” success stories - stories of actual families/households do the work = better perception of the story = more impact, more interesting - it is a proofpoint

Q: Why dugongs? Why seagrasses?

A: A difficult question to answer/hard to convince ordinary people/local communities of the significance of conservation activities/species (e.g. dugongs and seagrasses)

Q: Is there a norm to developing a key message?

Additional remarks on Communications:

- Include 3 key photos/pictures with global key messages (dugong, seagrass, communities)
- Points of collaboration/Key-Messages sound top-down, like us doing something instead of communities. We actually depend on communities and their local knowledge.
- ‘Elevator stories’ - clear, short, impactful
- Three concerns - the audience, the message, the context => key message
- Ensuring future for dugongs, seagrasses and communities

APPENDIX 5. SUMMARY OF RESULTS - FREQUENCY OF ANSWERS

Questions	1 = Very good	2 = Good	3 = Poor	No answer
1. Please rate the structure of the Inception Workshop agenda	25	10	0	0
2. Please give your feedback on the session "The bigger picture: Project overview and the role of the Project in the international context. Project coordination and implementation arrangements"	28	7	0	0
3. Please provide your feedback on the session "Countries Presentation"	23	12	0	0
4. Please provide your feedback on the session "Project communications and coordination guidelines"	27	8	0	0
5. What is your evaluation of the work in groups? Please rate the 4 groups session with regard to the following features using the following scale:				
5.1. Dugong research				
Issues discussed	28	3	3	1
Results from the WGs	26	6	1	2
Organisation of work	27	6	1	1
5.2. Seagrass research and ES				
Issues discussed	26	7	1	1
Results from the WGs	20	12	1	2
Organisation of work	23	10	1	1
5.3. Incentives Approach				
Issues discussed	13	16	5	1
Results from the WGs	9	15	8	3
Organisation of work	14	14	6	1
5.4. Communications				
Issues discussed	21	12	1	1
Results from the WGs	18	12	3	2

Questions	1 = Very good	2 = Good	3 = Poor	No answer
Organisation of work	21	12	1	1
7. Please rate the Plenary session after the work in groups	16	11	1	7
8. Please rate the session "Project Status today and the next steps"	25	4	1	5

Questions	Yes = 1	No = 2	0 = no answer
6. Do you think that there are issues that needed more attention or not discussed during the working group discussion:	16	14	5
10. Was there any important Project issue that was not discussed during the Workshop?	10	21	4
11. Do you think there should be further global Project meeting during the life of the GEF Dugong and Seagrass project?	29	2	4
12. Do you have any recommendations to the organisers /speakers/ moderators?	13	16	6

APPENDIX 6. COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

These communications guidelines are an integral part of this Project Funding Agreement (“Agreement”). This document provides guidance on external National Project communications that the National Partner should respect, as stipulated in the Agreement.

The National Partner is encouraged to communicate National Project-related information (achievements, news) under their own name. However, it is important to always acknowledge the collaborative spirit of the Global Project. In this regard, when producing any manuscript/communications materials, funded by the GEF, the Partner should abide to the following set of rules:

Communications Materials

1. Every communications materials should contain the full title of the Global Project. The full title of the Global Project is: “Enhancing the Conservation Effectiveness of Seagrass Ecosystems Supporting Globally Significant Populations of Dugongs across the Indian and Pacific Ocean Basins”. Once mentioned in a communications materials, the short title of the Global Project may substitute the full title. The short title of the Global Project is: “The GEF Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project.”

2. The following standard paragraph should be included and clearly visible on all communications materials: “This Project is executed by The Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund, with financing from the GEF, implementation support by UNEP and technical support from the CMS Dugong MoU Secretariat.”

3. Where appropriate, the above paragraph should always be supported by the logos of the GEF, UNEP, The Fund, CMS and Dugong MoU. To use these logos, the Partner should contact The Fund (contact details provided in Appendix 4).

4. All National Project manuscript/communication materials for external publication should be sent to The Fund (contact details provided in Appendix 4) to the Project Funding Agreement) for review and prior approval. Within 40 working days of receipt, The Fund will provide substantive feedback on/clearance of the manuscript/communications materials.

5. Any manuscript/communications materials produced by the Partner in their local language, the Partner abide to the above set of rules.

Social Media

To help the Fund, in its capacity as the Executing Agency of the Global Project, communicate the progress of the Global Project to wider audience, The Fund requires the National Partner to commit to:

1. Actively and regularly contributing to all Global Project associated Social Media sites (the Partner should contact The Fund (contact details provided in Appendix 4 to obtain additional information on this.)
2. Regularly sending high resolution photographs (minimum 300 dpi) to The Fund for use within the Global Projects' external communication tools (Website, Newsletter, Annual Reports)

Copyright Release:

Upon signing the Project Funding Agreement, all copyrights to photographs and other materials produced under the National Project should be shared with The Fund. This entitles The Fund to utilise any materials, photographs, information and/or data generated in relation to the National Project without further consent from the Partner. The Fund will, as appropriate, ensure full credit to the Partner when using such materials.