

## **Third Western Indian Ocean Large Marine Ecosystem Strategic Action Programme Policy**

### **Harmonization and Institutional Reforms**

#### **Project Steering Committee Meeting**

**16 March 2021**

**15h00 – 17h00 East Africa Time**

**Venue Microsoft Teams**

#### **Draft Meeting Report**

### **Introduction**

The Nairobi Convention is executing the Western Indian Ocean Large Marine Ecosystem Strategic Action Programme Policy Harmonization and Institutional Reforms (SAPPHIRE) project which is implemented by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The project promotes policy harmonization and institutional reform for the improvement of the management of the Western Indian Ocean Large Marine Ecosystems. The overall objective of the project is to achieve effective long-term ecosystem management in the Western Indian Ocean LMEs in line with the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) as endorsed by the participating countries. It has five integrated components and each of them is intended to achieve various outcomes:

- ❖ Component 1: Supporting Policy Harmonization and Management Reforms towards improved ocean governance.
- ❖ Component 2: Stress Reduction through Community Engagement and Empowerment in Sustainable Resources Management.
- ❖ Component 3: Stress Reduction through Private Sector/Industry Commitment to transformations in their operations and management practices
- ❖ Component 4: Delivering best practices and lessons through innovative ocean governance demonstration
- ❖ Component 5: Capacity Development to Realise improved ocean governance in the WIO region

The project is being implemented in nine out of ten contracting parties of the Nairobi Convention: Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa and Tanzania. The participating countries have assigned two national project focal points who are members of the regional project steering committee (PSC). The PSC forms the highest decision-making body in the project management structure. The PSC meets annually to review project progress, approve annual work plans and budgets and provide recommendations as well as propose joint solutions for identified problems and challenges during the implementation of planned activities, among other duties.

The first PSC meeting was held in June 2019 in Durban, South Africa and the second was held virtually on 26 November 2020 due to the global travel restrictions caused by COVID-19. During the second PSC meeting, the Project Management Unit was requested to host a third PSC meeting in the first quarter of 2021 to present the project workplan and budget for 2021. Since the travel restrictions and lockdowns extended for an unexpected period, the Nairobi Convention Secretariat was forced to organize the third PSC meeting virtually.

### **Objectives of the Meeting**

The objective of the third PSC meeting was to: i) review the project progress from the fourth quarter of 2020, ii) discuss the impacts of COVID-19 on the implementation of project activities at the national level, iii) discuss and approve the workplan and budget for 2021, iv) discuss the overall project timelines, and v) discuss the timing of the mid-term review.

### **Expected Outcome**

- a) An overview of the impacts of COVID-19 on the implementation of project activities at the national level.
- b) Approved workplan and budget for 2021
- c) An understanding of the current timelines for the project, and the implications of delays caused by Covid-19 on completion of project activities.

## Summary of Proceeding of the Third WIO LME SAPPHIRE

### Project Steering Committee Meeting

#### *Session I: Opening Remarks*

##### **Nairobi Convention Secretariat**

1. The meeting was called to order at 1505 hrs by Mr Dixon Waruinge, Head of the Nairobi Convention Secretariat. He welcomed all participants to the meeting and led them in a round of introductions. He appreciated the role every participant was playing to achieve the primary goals of the SAPPHIRE project.
2. Mr Waruinge recognized the adverse effects of the lockdowns and other measures imposed due to COVID-19 in most countries in the region have had on the implementation of project activities and resources utilization in 2020. He highlighted that the project management unit and the Focal Points should come up with innovative ways to accelerate project implementation.
3. He highlighted that the PSC meeting had been organised to i) get updates from countries on the effects of the COVID-19 effects on the implementation of SAPPHIRE projects activities at the national level, ii) discuss and approve the annual work plan and budget for 2021, and iii) discuss the project timelines.
4. He then welcomed Ms Madeleine Nyiratuza, the Regional Technical Specialist, Water & Oceans at UNDP, Addis Ababa to make opening remarks on behalf of UNDP, the SAPPHIRE Project Implementing Agency.

##### **United Nations Development Programme**

5. Ms Nyiratuza expressed her delight in participating in the PSC meeting, indicating that it was her first since joining the UNDP two months ago. She appreciated the efforts the team had exhibited towards the project implementation despite COVID-19 disruptions. Ms Nyiratuza reiterated UNDP's strong commitment to supporting the PSC to implement the 2021 workplan.
6. She expressed optimism in the team's ability to deliver outstanding results for the project despite the struggles being faced in conducting field activities. She mentioned that the Global Environment Fund (GEF) expected delivery of the project.
7. In conclusion, Ms Nyiratuza encouraged the project management team to come up with innovative ways to accelerate the implementation of project activities, ensuring quality outputs as expected by the GEF. She welcomed all participants to the meeting and wished them a fruitful discussion.

##### **Government of Kenya**

8. Mr Waruinge welcomed Mrs Susan Otieno, SAPPHIRE Focal Point for Kenya, to make opening remarks on behalf of the Chair of the Nairobi Convention Bureau, the Government of Kenya.
9. Mrs Otieno thanked the participants for attending the third SAPPHIRE PSC meeting and highlighted that the PSC is the highest decision-making body for the project providing oversight in project implementation.
10. She mentioned that COVID-19 continues to impact negatively on the social and economic aspects of people's lives. She highlighted that there has been little progress since the last PSC meeting.
11. She highlighted that countries are still required to observe the World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines which have slowed the implementation of SAPPHIRE project activities at the national level. She urged the PSC members to think of innovative strategies that would enable the project to recover from the lost time to achieve the project objective within the stipulated timeline of 2023. In conclusion, she wished all participants successful deliberations that would move the SAPPHIRE project forward.
  - ❖ *As Kenya is the chair of the Nairobi Convention Bureau, Mrs Otieno chaired the remaining part of the PSC meeting.*
12. The chair led the participants in reviewing the provisional agenda which was adopted without any changes.

## ***Session II: Presentation and Discussion***

### **Update on project progress, expenditure, and presentation of 4th Quarter 2020 Progress Report**

13. The Chair invited the SAPPHIRE Project Coordinator, Dr Tim Andrew, to make a presentation highlighting the project progress and expenditure during the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2020.
  - ❖ The [presentation](#) highlighted the expenditure breakdown for the project from September 2018 through December 2020 with a key emphasis on 2020 and the resulting unspent budget. The presentation highlighted the unspent budgets per Component for 2020.
  - ❖ Dr Andrew mentioned that the expenditure report was being reviewed by the Implementing Partner (UNDP).
14. In conclusion, Dr Andrew requested the PSC to approve the expenditure report and utilization of the 2020 unspent budget in the 2021 annual workplan.
  - ❖ South Africa requested that a detailed presentation on financial expenditure ought to be delivered before approval of the expenditure is sought.
  - ❖ Mr Waruinge agreed with South Africa that the Project Coordinator should justify expenditure in subsequent presentations at the PSC meeting before approval could be requested.

- ❖ This was agreed to and the PSC was asked to wait until subsequent presentations had been delivered in the course of the meeting before considering approval of the expenditure report and the use of 2020 unspent budgets in 2021.

## **Report back from South Africa and Comoros on the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on implementation of projects in-country during 2020**

### **a) South Africa**

15. Mr Yamkela Mngxe, SAPPHIRE national focal point, South Africa mentioned that they will be undertaking a demonstration project to demonstrate a coordinated ocean and coastal ecosystem management approach.
16. He highlighted that the project implementation would be launched on 1 April 2021. He mentioned that they would engage with the Nairobi Convention Secretariat on how the funds would be administered.

### **b) Comoros**

17. Mr Ambadi Issouf, alternate focal point, Comoros highlighted that they are implementing a demonstration project to strengthen sectoral policy and co-management of natural resources for better conservation of marine and coastal ecosystems.
  - ❖ The [presentation](#) highlighted that the project is expected to improve (1) the governance of fisheries, (2) sustainable use of natural resources, (3) conservation of ecosystems and reduction of the impact of human activity on the environment, and (3) livelihoods of fishing communities.
  - ❖ The presentation highlighted that the project has been able to train the fisher communities on alternative income-generating activities (IGAs) among other achievements.
  - ❖ The presentation highlighted that implementation of the project has been constrained by Covid-19 restrictions which have brought challenges in convening physical meetings.

## **Presentation of Project Proposals Under Component 2**

### **a) Kenya**

## **Climate-Smart Design for Diani-Chale Marine Ecosystem management and Improved Livelihoods for Coastal Communities – Dr Judith Nyunja**

18. Dr Nyunjia mentioned that the proposed project aims at sustainably managing the Diani-Chale marine ecosystem which falls within the Transboundary Conservation Area between Kenya and Tanzania.
19. The [presentation](#) highlighted that the proposed site falls within a marine reserve established in 1995 but no management system has been established since then resulting in extensive damage to the marine ecosystems.
20. It highlighted that the project intends to i) Develop an effective climate smart co-management framework for Diani-Chale marine ecosystem by 2023, ii) Co-create with communities, innovative fisheries management plans and nature based enterprises to support local livelihoods and enhance economic growth in Diani-Chale by 2023, iii) Demonstrate the feasibility of reducing pressure on mangrove forests through promotion of alternative livelihood activities (mangrove ecotourism etc.) other than direct exploitation of mangrove wood resource, iv) Establish demonstration projects on ecological mangrove restoration, and v) Develop communication, education and public awareness programme that supports sustainable utilization and management of marine resources.

#### **b) Madagascar**

#### **Community mud crab fattening project in 10 villages of Sofia region of Madagascar – Mr Nicolas Andriamboavonjy**

21. Mr Andriamboavonjy mentioned that the proposed project aims at reducing fishing pressure through the introduction of a rustic crab housing system and the establishment of a co-management of the small-scale fishery to ensure stock sustainability.
22. He highlighted that the demonstration project will; i) Establish sustainable exploitation & management of mangrove crabs in Sofia region, ii) Improve community livelihoods through alternative livelihood development such as the crab housing system, and iii) Share the best practices for an ecosystem approach to fisheries & aquaculture management.

#### **Review and approval of Annual Work Plan and Budget for 2021**

23. The [presentation on the annual workplan](#) highlighted an overview of the major activities to be undertaken under each project component in 2021. Additionally, the presentation highlighted the implementation timeframes for each activity.
24. Dr Andrew mentioned that there were several areas of savings in 2020 in terms of budget due to the changes that came in from changing to virtual meetings. He highlighted that some of the capacity development training had also been postponed to 2021.
25. He mentioned that countries were in the process of updating the Marine Ecosystem Diagnostic Analysis (MEDA) reports that would be ready by mid-2021.

26. Dr Andrew concluded the presentation by requesting the PSC to approve the annual workplan for 2021 as presented.
- ❖ Mauritius mentioned that they entered total confinement from 10 to 25 March 2021 hence they anticipated delays in the MEDA update process. She requested for an extension for the MEDA process until August of 2021, which was noted by the Project Management Unit. Additionally, she requested that the SAPPHIRE project annual workplan and budget reflects the requested extension and unspent budget in 2020 for the MEDA update and projected budget in 2021.
27. The [presentation on the annual workplan and budget](#) highlighted each activity planned for 2021 according to the project components. The presentation mapped each of the planned activities to the original budget for 2021, the unspent budget from 2020 and the revised project budget for 2021.
28. Dr Andrew finalised by requesting the PSC to approve the 2021 annual budget as presented.
- ❖ The requests to i) approve the utilization of the 2020 unspent budget in the 2021 annual workplan, ii) approve the 2021 annual workplan, and iii) approve the 2021 annual budget were proposed by South Africa and seconded by Madagascar. Mozambique approved the proposed annual work and budget plan for 2021 through the meeting chatbox.
  - ❖ UNDP agreed with the approvals to use the unspent 2020 budget in 2021 and the presented annual workplan and budget for 2021.
  - ❖ UNDP thanked Dr Andrew for his presentation and mentioned that the mid-term review was set for July 2021 in their systems and requested him to start recruiting a consultant who would take up the mid-term review.

### **Discussion of overall project timelines and the mid-term review**

29. Dr Andrew opened this session by highlighting that the project was set to be implemented between October 2017 – April 2023. He mentioned that COVID-19 had caused unprecedented impacts on the implementation of project activities resulting in a proportion of 2020's budget remaining unspent.
30. Following the unexpected outcomes from 2020, He pitched the idea of requesting an extension of the project to the Project Steering Committee (PSC) members. He requested the PSC members to note the delays and consider a no-cost extension from April 2023 to December 2023. He also said that there was a need to approve the timing of the planned mid-term review.
- ❖ South Africa expressed its support for Dr Andrew's recommendation.
  - ❖ Mr Waruinge mentioned that the midterm review was an execution activity hence should go ahead as planned by UNDP. He highlighted that the extension of the project period will be discussed with UNDP.

- ❖ UNDP mentioned that there was no reason to currently discuss the project extension and that further discussion could occur after the midterm review was complete.

### **Co-financing discussion and report back (participating countries commitments)**

31. The Chair reminded the PSC members that country members had agreed and committed to co-finance the project. She then invited Dr Andrew to make a brief presentation on co-financing.
32. The [presentation](#) highlighted that a large amount of the project finance had been committed by the Governments in form of in-kind contribution. He mentioned that co-financing can be drawn from: i) Non-GEF-funded projects and programmes, ii) Projects or programmes that would contribute to the outcome of SAPPHIRE project, and iii) In-kind support from routine government-funded operating budgets for activities such as staff time, facilities, transport, communications, etc.
33. Dr Andrew highlighted that there was a need to update and revise the original commitments made by countries before SAPPHIRE inception.
34. He finalised by informing the PSC members that the PMU will circulate a co-financing template to be completed by Focal Points so that the information is ready and available as per the UNEP's format before mid-term evaluation.

### **AOB**

There was no other business to discuss.

### **Session III**

#### **Closing Remarks**

35. Ms Nyiratuza thanked the PSC members for a well-managed meeting and good presentations. She thanked the country focal points for the presentations made for their proposed projects. She recognized the work being done by the Nairobi Convention Secretariat in executing the project. She thanked the chair for moderating the meeting.
36. On behalf of the implementing agency, she expressed unreserved satisfaction with the progress of the project despite the delays occasioned by the pandemic.
37. Mr Waruinge appreciated the good work done by Dr Andrew in coordinating the SAPPHIRE project. He thanked Ms Nyiratuza for her positive contributions to the meeting. He thanked all the participants for their presentations and input.
38. He recognized the need to share documentation and called for internal consultations with UNDP to clear issues that can be solved internally. He thanked participants for their inputs and presentations.



39. Mrs Otieno thanked the focal points for their participation in the meeting. She wished those affected by COVID-19 well and asked them to find innovative ways of implementing the project activities.
40. Dr Andrew thanked the PSC members and the partners for their ongoing support for the SAPPHIRE project.
41. There being no other business the meeting was closed at 1815 hrs.

## Annex

### 1. Meeting Documents

The meeting documents presented/discussed during the second PSC meeting of the SAPPHIRE project can be accessed online by [clicking here](#).

### 2. Provisional Agenda

Time	Programme	Presenter/Facilitator
<b>I. Opening Session</b>		
15min	Opening Remark(s)	Nairobi Convention Secretariat, UNDP and Government of Kenya
05min	Adoption of Agenda	Chair
<b>II. Presentation and Discussion Session</b>		
25min	Update on project progress, expenditure, and presentation of 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter 2020 Progress Report	Nairobi Convention Secretariat and National Focal Points
05min	Report back from South Africa and Comoros on the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on implementation of projects in country during 2020	SAPPHIRE Focal points for South Africa and Comoros
15min	Presentation of project proposals for Component 2 (Kenya and Madagascar)	Dr Judith Nyunja – KWS; Mr Nicolas Andriamboavonjy
20min	Review and approval of Annual Work Plan and Budget for 2021	Nairobi Convention Secretariat and National Focal Points
05min	Break	All
10min	Discussion of overall project timelines and the mid-term review	All
15min	Co-financing discussion and report back (participating countries commitments)	Nairobi Convention Secretariat and Focal Points
05min	AOB	All
<b>III. Closing Session</b>		
05min	Closing Remarks	Chair, Nairobi Convention Secretariat and UNDP

### 3. Meeting Participants

Focal Points		
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