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UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME New Delhi, India	Mission Report Summary Date: 18/10/2021
Name(s) of Traveller(s): Dr Ruchi Pant & Ms Ridhima Gupta Unit: Environment, Energy and Resilience Project No.& Title: 100901, Enhancing Climate Resilience of India's Coastal Communities	Mission Period & Itinerary: 5/10/21 – 8/10/21
Purpose of the Mission: To meet key stakeholders in Mumbai and Hyderabad and discuss the detailed implementation strategy of the GCF Coastal Project in the States.	
<p>Schedule of Meetings:</p> <p>Meeting 1: Ms Neenu Somraj (IFS), Deputy Conservator of Forest, Mangrove Cell</p> <p>The initial background of the GCF project (since 2019) was discussed with the DCF, Mangrove Cell. The DCF assured her support on the overall implementation of the project. The following issues were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons for delay in signing of the LoA by the State: The DCF informed that the clarifications on the LoA clauses were accepted by the State Project Director. Following this, the Mangrove Cell sent a letter of assurance to the Principal Secretary (Department of Environment) on moving forward with the LoA. • The DCF suggested to hold a meeting with the Principal Secretary, Department of Environment, to push for the signing of the LoA by the State. • The two vacant positions in the SPMU (State Project Manager and Communications and M&E associate) were discussed. UNDP requested Mangrove Cell to provide suggestions for candidates for these positions. The DCF raised concern about the salary structure for the PMU team located in Mumbai. She had apprehensions about the higher cost of living in the city of Mumbai, that should have been considered. <p>Meeting 2: Meeting with State Project Management Unit, (GCF Coastal Project) Maharashtra and Mr Vasudevan (Former APCCF, Mangrove Cell)</p> <p>A detailed briefing was held with the SPMU to take stock of the progress made at State level till date. This was followed by a meeting with Mr Vasudevan to provide technical guidance on certain aspects (particularly ecosystem restoration and sustainable livelihoods) under the project at landscape level. Key pointers during the discussion include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SPMU informed that the District Coordination Officers (DCOs) have completed the initial screening and surveying of all districts and landscapes in light of the activities that need to be implemented. • Rural – urban migration is quite extensive in the selected districts, where building capacities of communities on climate resilient livelihoods mentioned in the project document could be a potential issue, due to dwindling interest at community level. For this reason, the State Govt has proposed a change in districts / landscape. • The DCOs also highlighted the need to increase the spectrum of “type” of climate resilient livelihoods. • State has taken a decision to implement the project in villages through the Mangrove Cell Management Committee (MCMC) which is taking time, in the absence of Panchayats and Gram Sabha meetings. This is resulting in overall delays in field implementation. 	

activities (as mentioned in the Project Document drafted in 2017-18) with existing Cost estimates and Unit costs for certain activities, which the Mangrove Foundation has agreed to cover.

- The co-finance commitment from different departments during the preparation phase were based on earlier schemes- most schemes are not operational, which is adding uncertainty to sources of co-finance.
- Noting the above issues, Mr Vasudevan informed that co-finance should not be an issue, as most of the activities can be covered by Mangrove Foundation. Further, he guided the DCOs on how to go about ecosystem restoration in the target landscapes, keeping the seasonal changes in mind.
- SPMU discussed whether there is a possibility to appoint dedicated field staff (Project Associate 1 per landscape) for the GCF project to works in coordination with the respective DCOs
- The SPMU Project Associate (Admin and Finance) would be looking after administrative and financial matters related to the GCF project. Possibility to have a person from Government who will look after the Project Accounts was discussed.
- Travel SOP – Vehicle / Travel allowance.

Meeting 3: Meeting with Mr Virendra Tiwari (IFS) PCCF, Mangrove Cell, Ms Neenu Somraj (IFS) DCF, Mangrove Cell and Representatives of Department of Agriculture and Maharashtra Maritime Board, Maharashtra

SPD discussed the role of the Maharashtra Maritime Board and Agriculture Dept in the project. MMB wanted to limit their work to Capacity building and trainings as part of their co-finance commitment. UNDP suggested that these activities could be covered under the GCF grant and the MMB should consider doing the plastic waste management work through their co-finance commitment.

SPD requested the representative of the Agriculture Dept to map all work being done by the dept in the project landscapes which will serve as co-finance.

Meeting 4: Meeting with Principal Secretary, Department of Fisheries and Animal Husbandry

- Brief project background was presented to the PS. Since the PS was not aware of the project, a meeting will be organised next week with the Mangrove Cell to discuss the project and opportunities for convergence.

Meeting 5: Meeting with Principal Secretary, Department of Environment

- Brief project background was presented to the PS. Discussion on clarification. The PS assured his support towards the implementation of the project at state level.
- UNDP provided clarification on clause 3 and clause 20 of the LoA, to which the PS reassured UNDP for moving ahead on the LoA.

Meeting 6: Meeting with Principal Secretary, Department of Agriculture

- Conflict between Department of Agriculture and Mangrove Cell has been noted– Mangrove seen as obstruction to farmers when it gets extended into their farmlands, shrinking their farm areas. This is likely to result in issues during landscape identification.
- The PS suggested to work with the Department to delineate and demarcate boundaries to avoid any conflicts with the farmers.
- Further discussion maybe required between both departments to ensure convergence on the issues.

Meeting 7: Meeting with Mr Tiwari, Ms Somraj, SPMU and the RFOs of all four selected districts – Monthly review meeting

- Detailed Minutes of the meeting annexed.

This includes some of the decisions taken:

- Total target coverage (area) of Mangroves in Maharashtra might be too ambitious- SPD has requested UNDP to check whether the target can be reduced.
- It was agreed to procure planting stock from other states, if required.
- Total target for coral restoration in Maharashtra also might be an issue. It was agreed that NGOs will be hired to conduct the baseline assessment along Sindhudurg Coast, mapping the status of coral hotspots. UNDP also connected the SPMU with agencies who could provide suggestions on methodologies/technologies for coral restoration.
- Technical guidance on landscape delineation / village selection has been requested by the State. UNDP will be sharing NCSCM's methodology of identification of landscapes through the hazard line mapping methodology.
- It was agreed that the new project could get info from the GEF supported project on the technical agencies (especially govt) that were engaged for different components of the project. And also agencies such as PLANT could be engaged for piloting the BIORock technology in the project landscapes. UNDP has worked with PLANT in the past and UNDP connected the SPMU with the key person: Suresh, who has agreed to help them do a survey and demonstrate the technology in select landscapes (project). DCF asked the SPMU (rohit) to put her in touch with Suresh John (PLANT – 9840740929).
- Discussion on methodologies considered as "Restoration" of mangroves was also discussed. Delineation of boundaries is also considered as "new protection status" of mangrove area, as per project document.
- The SPD will also further discuss with the DCOs on how to address the delays in MCMC formation.
- It was agreed that Maharashtra will work with Project Associates rather than hiring NGOs. NGOs will be engaged for specific tasks like collecting baseline and then for monitoring.
- Regarding the change in landscapes, UNDP confirmed that this can be done at the National Steering Committee with proper justification. Upon approval, the same will be sent to GCF for approval.
- The SPD also proposed that project purchases 4 vehicles, one for each district – SPMU to develop comparative chart for annual costs incurred for hiring / renting a vehicle; and for making a case for seeking approval at the National Steering Committee meeting.
- Hiring of State Project Manager. Since UNDP hasn't received adequate applications of candidates meeting the requirement for the position in the last advertisement, UNDP discussed the possibilities of the State doing headhunting and sharing info with UNDP.
- It was agreed that discussions have to be done at a higher level by the Mangrove Cell to engage with the govt depts. Including the Maritime Board.
- UNDP observed that Maharashtra may need to consult the NCSCM in order to identify villages where intervention is required, in the coming years, in addition to the ones Mangrove Cell is working with under the GCF project. Mangrove cell has currently identified only villages with mangroves. There may be a need to consider other parameters too in villages identification.

Meeting 8: Meeting with Mr Sanjay Gupta (IFS), PCCF (Work Planning), State Project Director, Andhra Pradesh

- The SPD suggested to work in 2-3 landscapes for pilot projects initially- these can be upscaled in other landscapes in the future.
- More clarity on the institutional arrangement of the project has been requested- UNDP to clearly define the role of the NPSC, SPSC and District level committees.
- The SPD highlighted that the state has more mangrove area that can be considered to be taken up under the project in order to meet overall targets.
- Template for TLIMP has been requested to maintain uniformity across all three states.
- Global level workshop could be planned in Pulicat in December (field exposure visit)

- UNDP to follow up with HOFF and clarify any concerns on signing the LoA; a visit will have to be made to Vijawada soon after Dushehra for the same as all key officers are on leave till 20 Oct.

Follow-up action matrix:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>By whom</u>	<u>Timeline</u>
Preparation of minutes of meeting	Ridhima Gupta	19 October 2021

Key personnel met (if applicable):

Mr Virendra Tiwari, IFS, APCCF, Mangrove Cell, Govt of Maharashtra

Ms Neenu Somraj, IFS, DCF, Mangrove Cell, Govt of Maharashtra

Mr Sanjay Gupta, IFS, PCCF, Govt of Andhra Pradesh

Mr Vasudevan, Former PCCF, Mangrove Cell

Principal Secretary, Department of Fisheries and Animal Husbandry

Principal Secretary and one more official, Department of Agriculture

Principal Secretary, Department of Environment

Cdr. Sandeep Kumar, Hydrologist, Maharashtra Maritime Board (9969858815)

Dr. Jyoti Patil, Environmental Engineer MMB (9619202759)

Mahesh Dueore, Nodal Officer, Agri Dept,

Distribution of Mission Report: yes

Mission Report uploaded on ATLAS?: yes

Endorsement of Supervisor: Ruchi Pant

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