

REPORT OF
5TH APFP AND 3RD SEAPEAT PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
20 December 2013, Selangor, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

1. The 5th APFP and 3rd SEAPeat Project Steering Committee Meeting was held on 20 December 2013 in Selangor, Malaysia. The Meeting was attended by representatives from Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam, ASEAN Secretariat, Global Environment Centre (GEC) as the Regional Project Executing Agency (RPEA), and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The List of Participants is in **ANNEX 1**.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Dr. Raman Letchumanan, Project Director, Head of Environment Division, ASEAN Secretariat.

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING REMARKS

3. Dr. Raman Letchumanan, Head of Environment Division, ASEAN Secretariat, expressed appreciation to all parties involved for the progress achieved so far. He highlighted the project's achievement in coordinating with different ministries for successful implementation, and emphasized the need to continue to use this project as a means to get all relevant agencies to work together to promote sustainable management of peatlands.
4. Ms. Francesca Tarabella, IFAD, thanked all parties involved for the progress of the project, and sought cooperation from all parties to ensure that the milestones of the project are met timely without any issues until project closure.
5. Mr. Faizal Parish, Global Environment Centre (GEC), recalled that 2 independent evaluations of the APFP and SEAPeat projects have been done with excellent results. He called for close coordination in the implementation of APFP and SEAPeat projects in the remaining six months towards completion of APFP.
6. Dato' Masran bin Md Salleh, Deputy Director-General, Forestry Department of Peninsular Malaysia on behalf of the Director General of the department, welcomed all participants to the Meeting. He emphasized the importance of peatlands in providing important and unique ecosystem and supporting local livelihoods. He noted with satisfaction that ASEAN has come up with peatland management initiative at regional scale through the APFP and SEAPeat projects, and highlighted some achievements

and progress at pilot sites in Malaysia. Finally, he wished the Meeting great success and a fruitful outcome.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF AGENDA

7. The Meeting adopted the revised Agenda for the Meeting, as in **ANNEX 2**.

AGENDA ITEM 3: MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

8. The Meeting reviewed the matters arising from the Fourth Project Steering Committee Meeting (PSC4), and noted the progress made. The progress on action from PSC4 is in **ANNEX 3**.

9. The Meeting noted the summary progress to address the recommendations of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of APFP as in **ANNEX 4a** and the report of the 2nd Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) of SEAPEAT as in **ANNEX 4b**. The Meeting noted that comments on financial matters from the Mid-Term Review (MTR) were discussed at the special meeting in Kuala Lumpur in December 2012. Progress in addressing issues raised by the MTR was noted.

10. The Meeting noted that in the final account closing, it will be important to make sure that all transactions are clearly documented in the financial report. The Project Director reminded all countries to be cautious on the issue of fixed assets, as they will be scrutinized during the final evaluation. The Project Director advised all countries to register and label all fixed assets properly, and to submit a statement certifying that the fixed assets are still in good condition by the end of 2013 and completion of the project in 2014.

AGENDA ITEM 4: PRESENTATION ON PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF APFP AND SEAPEAT

11. The Meeting noted the progress of APFP and SEAPEAT project presented by the RPEA.

12. The Meeting noted that for Indonesia, good progress has been made on capacity building and fire prevention which includes, among others, fire assessment in Riau in June and September 2013, FDRS training in Riau on 2-3 December 2013, and trainings on sustainable peatland management in central Kalimantan, Jambi, and North Sumatra.

13. The Meeting noted that Malaysia has established national/state steering committee and working committee on peatlands, conducted FDRS interpretation and National Forest Inventory, and strengthened the Selangor Forestry Department fire patrol team.

14. The Meeting noted that Philippines conducted community interviews and filming for video production for IFAD peatland communication materials. The Meeting further noted that Philippines' project office was affected by Typhoon Haiyan in November 2013 and so most, if not all, of its project documents were destroyed and cannot be submitted to IFAD for financial reporting purpose. Philippines was requested to report on the extent of loss of records and any funds by **31 January 2014**.

15. The Meeting noted that Viet Nam has submitted its National Action Plan to Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) of Viet Nam. Viet Nam has also worked with local community to develop a draft peatland distribution map in Lower Mekong Delta and U Minh Ha region. Viet Nam informed the Meeting that according to the tax regulation of the Ministry of Finance of Viet Nam, the project needs to pay withholding on payments to consultants under the project and this was delaying the finalization of the project accounts.

AGENDA ITEM 5: PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL OF 2014 AWPB FOR APFP AND SEAPEAT

16. The Meeting noted the presentation of 2014 Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) for APFP, as in **ANNEX 5** as well as short presentations by SEApeat participant countries. The Meeting noted that each participating country has prioritized the activities in their 2014 APWB.

17. Lao PDR included peatland assessment / survey in their 2014 AWPB. Lao PDR was requested to submit a specific proposal by early January 2014 for consideration.

18. Viet Nam also informed the Meeting that they will consider the APFP component completed by 31 December 2013 and that there will be no new activities for January-June 2014 other than translating reports for submission to GEC and finalizing an outstanding payment of USD18,000 to consultant by January 2014 for work commissioned in 2013. Nevertheless, Viet Nam was still requested to submit a work plan for 2014 including the outstanding payment to consultant.

19. The Meeting noted that ASEAN Secretariat would reallocate some resources in its budget to support the further development of the Peatland Programme and for the Closing Meeting.

20. IFAD noted that the overall financial status of the project is on track as there is no overspending nor discrepancy with IFAD's records. IFAD however highlighted that any adjustment of budget above the original budget ceilings for the overall project should not exceed 10%. This should be taken into consideration in finalizing the AWPB 2014.

21. The Meeting endorsed the overall 2014 AWPB and Component AWPB (CAWPB) for APFP as presented – subject to any fine tuning to meet the budget ceiling requirements. It was noted that the final AWPBs to be prepared by each component

should consist of three main parts, namely Part 1: The Narrative Plan, Part 2: AWPB Summary Table and Annex: Procurement Plan.

22. The Meeting agreed that complete documentation of AWPB be submitted to the RPEA by **24 December 2013** for APFP and by **2 January 2014** for SEAPeat. Following verification/adjustment as appropriate, this should be submitted to ASEC and thereafter to IFAD for final approval.

AGENDA ITEM 6: CONFIRMATION OF TIMING / PROCEDURES FOR PROJECT COMPLETION / CLOSURE

23. The Meeting noted the presentation on Procedures for Project Completion / Closure for APFP by IFAD, as in **ANNEX 6**. The Meeting noted that:

- (i) All goods must be delivered, works completed, and services rendered by 30 June 2014.
- (ii) Expenditures from June to December 2014 should be only for preparation of completion report and for key staff (eg project coordinator, national expert and finance officer).
- (iii) Reports at completion should consist of summary of audited financial statement and audit opinion and management letter of the recipient, the project parties and RPEA, to be submitted to IFAD through the ASEAN Secretariat.
- (iv) The terminal evaluation by IFAD will be held tentatively in August 2014.

24. The Meeting noted the following deadlines to meet for project completion:

AWPB 2014 and procurement plan to be submitted to RPEA	24 December 2013 (APFP) 2 January 2014 (SEAPeat)
SAPR July-Dec 2013	28 February 2014
Audit report and audited financial statements	Financial statements by 28 February 2014 NC to submit Audit to RPEA by 30 April 2014 RPEA to summarize and submit to ASEC by 15 June 2014
Terminal Report	July 2014

25. Each national component and RPEA should submit a co-financing plan on an annual basis at the same time as submitted the AWPB. Each national component and RPEA should also submit a status report on co-financing as part of the annual financial reporting.

AGENDA ITEM 7: PRESENTATION ON THE ASEAN PROGRAMME ON SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF PEATLAND ECOSYSTEMS (2014-2020)

26. The Meeting noted the outcome of the Workshop on the Design of the ASEAN Programme on Sustainable Management of Peatland Ecosystems (2014-2020) held on 19 December 2013.

27. The Meeting noted that EU and IFAD/GEF indicated their interest to provide financial support for the implementation the Programme. ASEAN Secretariat will take the lead in organizing further follow-up meetings on the Programme in 2014, together with various partners.

AGENDA ITEM 8: DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

28. The Meeting noted that the project closure meeting will be held in Indonesia. The date of the Meeting will be determined at a later date depending on the progress of activities.

29. The Meeting noted that a separate working meeting on the development of the ASEAN programme on sustainable management of peatlands (2014-2020) will be held tentatively in March 2014, and a subsequent meeting with partners will be held tentatively in May 2014.

AGENDA ITEM 9: OTHER MATTERS

30. There were no other matters discussed.

AGENDA ITEM 10: ADOPTION OF SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 5TH PSC MEETING

31. The Meeting agreed to adopt the Summary Record of the 5th PSC Meeting ad-referendum.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

32. The delegates expressed their appreciation to the Forestry Department Peninsular Malaysia, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Malaysia, and the GEC for the arrangements made for the meeting. The delegates also expressed appreciation to the ASEAN Secretariat for the support provided for the Meeting.

33. The Meeting was held in the traditional spirit of ASEAN cooperation and cordiality.
