

Report of the APFP-SEApeat Special Meeting

21 August 2014
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

34. The special meeting of the ASEAN Peatland Forest Project (APFP) and SEApeat project was held in Kuala Lumpur on 21 August 2014. The objective of the Meeting was to discuss the final reporting for the APFP closing, clarify reporting requirements for APFP Completion Report, and prepare for the APFP Terminal Evaluation Review as well as discuss and make recommendations on next steps for project/programme development for peatland management within the region. The Meeting also reviewed the overall progress of the project against the approved logical framework.

35. The Meeting was attended by National Coordinators and National Experts of the ASEAN Peatland Forests Project (APFP) from Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Viet Nam; Country Coordinators of the SEApeat Project from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Myanmar; representatives from Brunei Darussalam, Singapore, European Union Delegation and GIZ, ASEAN Secretariat, and Global Environment Centre (GEC) as the APFP Regional Project Executing Agency (RPEA). The Meeting was chaired by Dr. Raman Letchumanan, Head of Environment Division, ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) who is also the APFP Project Director. The List of Participants is in **ANNEX 1**.

AGENDA ITEM 1: WELCOME REMARKS BY PROJECT DIRECTOR

36. Dr. Raman Letchumanan welcomed participants to Kuala Lumpur. He emphasized that the APFP and SEApeat project have had positive input to improve sustainable management of peatlands in the region. He appreciated the key achievements of all Components of the project and strongly urged the participating countries to document all the key achievements and to be shared.

37. Dr. Raman also highlighted the important role of this project to enhance knowledge of the stakeholders who are dealing with peatlands in the ASEAN region. Transformation of decisions from high level meetings such as COM and COP to local levels has been challenging. However, the project has successfully been providing positive impacts to the local authorities and community groups in managing the peatlands. The successful outcome of this project has inspired confidence in the respective countries to further develop programmes to support sustainable peatland management.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF AGENDA

38. The Meeting adopted the Agenda, as in **ANNEX 2**.

AGENDA ITEM 3: BRIEF OVERVIEW OF APFP COMPLETION REPORTS

a. Indonesia

39. The Meeting noted the achievements of the Indonesia Component, despite the numerous challenges faced. The Meeting noted that the Ministry of Environment Indonesia is undertaking the campaign targeted at the local governments to view peatland management as more important than fire prevention.

40. The Meeting noted the substantial co-funding for the Project from the Government of Indonesia. However, the amount of the co-funding in the report of the project need to be revised to reflect only direct contributions in the forms of cash or in-kind for the implementation of the Project. Contributions from private sector, CSOs or local communities to project implementation is also considered as co-funding.

41. The Project Director emphasized that Completion Reports need to acknowledge all achievements. A "Remarks" column should be added (applicable to all Completion Reports) to highlight overachievements and explain achievements that are below 100%.

42. Indonesia's draft report is in **ANNEX 3**.

Action points:

- 1. Co-funding figures to be revised and justified according to the guidelines.**
- 2. List of key achievements to be prepared for the Completion Report and Terminal Evaluation Review.**
- 3. Add a Remarks column to highlight overachievements and explain achievements that are below 100%.**
- 4. Balance of funds remaining as of 1 July 2014 should be accounted for in terms of committed payments and expected expenditures to ensure that all funds can be spent by 31 December 2014. Details of the budget of remaining balance to be submitted to ASEAN Secretariat/RPEA by 31 August 2014.**

The above action points apply to all countries.

b. Malaysia

43. The Meeting noted the achievements of the Malaysia Component. In particular, the Integrated Management Planning (IMP) for the North Selangor Peat Swamp Forest (2014-2023) should be highlighted in the key achievements in the Completion Report.

44. The Meeting noted the enhancement of policy and planning framework for peatland management at national and local levels, as well as up-scaling support for the good management practices at the pilot sites.

45. The Meeting noted the co-funding by the Government of Malaysia of approximately USD 8 million, which is 1:9 (Project fund from GEF was USD 880,000) to the project.

46. Malaysia's report is in **ANNEX 4**.

Action points:

- 5. Integrated Management Planning for North Selangor Peat Swamp Forest (2014-2023) to be shared with countries.**

c. Philippines

47. The Meeting noted the achievements of the Philippines Component. The Meeting noted that the Project has been successful in improving the livelihood of the people in the pilot site, i.e. Leyte Sab-a, and helped in minimizing the impacts from the Typhoon Haiyan.

48. The Project Director emphasized the need to highlight the critical milestones/achievements in the Philippines' completion report, among others:

- The discovery of more peatlands with the assistance of the Project, i.e. from 2,000 ha to 20,000 ha, which should be well acknowledged as overachievement
- The President's involvement in the launch of the Buy Living Tree System (BLTS)
- Project funds have been well spent since the beginning of the Project

49. Philippines' report is in **ANNEX 5**.

Action point:

6. Philippines to revise the Completion Report - Co-funding figures to be cross-checked; pending payments to be reported in details

d. Viet Nam

50. The Meeting noted that the achievements and lessons learned of the Viet Nam Component. The Meeting noted that activities of the Viet Nam Component were completed in 2013.

51. The Project Director emphasized key achievements that need to be highlighted, among others:

- The project pilot site that has been designated as ASEAN Heritage Park now proposed as RAMSAR site
- A considerable amount of co-financing in the form of cash since the beginning of the Project
- The expertise of the National expert has been tapped by other AMS (Myanmar and Cambodia) to assist in peatland assessment.

52. In addition to co-financing in the form of cash, direct in-kind contribution should be highlighted and presented in figures.

53. Viet Nam's report is in **ANNEX 6**.

e. Regional

54. The Meeting noted the achievements and lessons learned under the Regional Component; and the total co-funding of USD 1.7 million to the Project.

55. The Project Director emphasized the need to highlight the following in the Completion Report, among others:

- the synergy of having a regional component as compared to doing activities at the national level separately;
- the Project has been able to facilitate sharing of expertise and experience among AMS;
- GEC's leadership in working with the network of NGOs, community-based organisations, and plantation companies, which has enabled project implementation on the ground engaging the community

56. The Regional Component's report is in **ANNEX 7**.

Action point:

7. Revise the completion report for regional component to emphasize the achievements and special benefits of the component

Overall Completion report

The meeting reviewed the overall progress against the Overall LFA as in **ANNEX 8**. Input was requested by countries – especially where progress was less than 100%. The meeting reviewed the overall expenditure to 30 June 2014 (as in **ANNEX 9**). The meeting noted that almost all targets had been achieved and many targets had been exceeded. Most resources had been spent as planned and remaining funds were sufficient for the closure activities.

Actions

- 8. All components to check the overall LFA and update their sections on relative progress and give justification on over and under achievement and give feedback to RPEA by 31 August 2014**
- 9. For all components: Status of budget and expenditure to be updated to 31 August 2015 and provided by 10 September 2014 (before the Terminal Evaluation Review Mission.)**

AGENDA ITEM 4: STATUS OF ASEAN PROGRAMME ON SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF PEATLAND ECOSYSTEMS 2014-2020 (APSMPE)

24. Mr. Faizal Parish, RPEA, briefed the Meeting on the status of development of the ASEAN Programme on Sustainable Management of Peatland Ecosystems 2014-2020 (APSMPE). Since the last preparation meeting in April 2014, countries such as Malaysia, Myanmar and Philippines has organized meetings to further develop and refine their priority projects for inclusion under the APFP. The current list of concepts received for inclusion under the APSMPE is in **ANNEX 10**.

25. Brunei Darussalam updated the Meeting that they are inviting scientists from the region and all over the world to join in the implementation of their national projects, i.e. research on peat swamp forests, since peat swamp forests have recently been decided as one of the important sites for research.

26. A one day meeting to further review and develop the APSMPE will be held back to back with the APFP closing workshop in November 2014.

Actions

- 10. Countries need to review and update as appropriate the concept papers for the proposed country priority activities and provide revised copies to ASEC/RPEA by 15 September 2014.**
- 11. ASEC/RPEA to prepare a report on the development of the APSMPE for the meeting of the COM/COP AATHP in October 2014.**
- 12. ASEC/RPEA to organize the meeting on the APSMPE in November 2014.**

AGENDA ITEM 5: EU PIF

27. The Meeting noted the update from Mr. Muamar Vebry, representative from the EU Delegation to Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia and ASEAN, on the status of the Project Identification Fiche (PIF) for the ASEAN-EU project on peatlands. The meeting noted that the draft PIF would need to be finalized by ASEC and EUD by 10 September 2014.

28. The EUD representative also informed the Meeting that the next stage for detailed preparation would likely start in October 2014 with a target of finalizing the proposal in early 2015. A second Joint EU-ASEAN Planning and design team meeting would be held to review the draft before approval.

29. The Meeting welcomed the development of the Project and hoped that it would be approved and initiated in a timely manner. The meeting discussed the various following modalities for implementation being proposed in the PIF. It was felt important that the modalities would draw on the experience and lessons learned from the APFP and SEApeat project namely: a) the value of providing some resources directly to the participating countries to be managed according to national procedures to support implementation of National Action Plans on peatlands; b) The potential benefit of involvement of an international organization such as IFAD that could channel funds directly to the AMS and ASEC for direct implementation; c) the value of having a mechanism to facilitate the engagement of non-state actors such as NGOs, CSOs (as with the current SEApeat project). The means of implementation should be flexible enough to engage all stakeholders (government, private sector, and NSAs) emphasizing field level work at national level and coordinated regionally. The newly established ASEAN Task Force on Peatlands will coordinate all programs and projects, that will also allow specific project steering and management committees to be established as required by partners.

Actions

- 13. EU to provide a revised PIF to the ASEC for comment by 31 August 2014. EUD and ASEC to finalize the draft by 5 September 2014.**

14. AMS to prioritize project concepts for possible support under the project prior to the project formulation mission scheduled for October-November 2014.

AGENDA ITEM 6: REGIONAL GEF PROGRAMME

30. Mr. Faizal Parish, RPEA, briefed the Meeting on the options to develop a GEF Programme of Peatlands to support the APSMPE as described in **ANNEX 11**. This concept has been developed by the RPEA and IFAD based on discussions at the APFP-SEApeat meeting in April 2014. The programme is envisaged to have a budget of about \$20-25 million drawn from the country allocations under GEF 6 as well as supplementary GEF funding for regional activities (as in **ANNEX 12**)

31. The Meeting noted that the allocations for national activities shall be drawn from the GEF Country Allocations of the respective countries. In this respect, the relevant Member States agreed to consult their GEF Focal Points on the scope of involvement and the budget to be allocated taking into consideration the importance accorded by the Ministers at the COP-9 of the AATHP. The Meeting emphasized the importance of obtaining timely endorsement letter from the GEF Focal Point in order to participate in this programme. ASEC and GEC will work with the Governments to design and finalize the programme.

Other Potential Partners

32. It was noted that GIZ is in the final stage of preparing a concept regional project document on peatland management in ASEAN region with a budget of about 4.5 million Euro. If the concept receives endorsement it will seek inputs from AMS for further development.

Actions

15. ASEC/RPEA in cooperation with IFAD to work with AMS to develop a Programme Framework Document for a regional peatland programme for further discussion in November 2014.

16. AMS to consult their GEF Focal Points on the scope of involvement and the budget to be allocated and initiate development of GEF Project Identification Forms (PIFs) for submission together with the PFD in March 2015 for possible approval in May 2015 GEF council

AGENDA ITEM 7: APFP TERMINAL EVALUATION REVIEW

33. The Project Director briefed the Meeting of the concerns expressed by ASEC and the clarifications by IFAD regarding the finalization of the TOR and the selection of consultants for the Terminal Evaluation Review (TER). The Meeting noted the mandate of IFAD to select the consultants, but emphasized that IFAD is responsible to ensure the consultants perform their functions and produce an objective and quality report as per the TOR. The Meeting also hoped that the problems and issues that arose in the MTR would not recur for the TER.

34. Faizal Parish, RPEA presented the details of the TOR of the TER as in **ANNEX 13**, including the proposed schedule. APFP countries need to prepare carefully for the TER to ensure that the evaluation goes well as this will help in the development of a new regional project. Final completion reports and other papers will need to be submitted to IFAD by 1 September 2014.

35. It was agreed that local transport costs within the AMS should be covered by the country components.

Actions

17. Relevant AMS to finalise their last SAPR and Completion Report and revert to RPEA by 26 August.

18. Relevant AMS to provide details of the proposed flights and hotels information including costs to RPEA by 26 August

19. Components need to complete the contract register and asset register following the format from RPEA need to be sent to RPEA by 26 August

20. Countries to prepare files with all project reports and outputs as well as financial reports and documentation before the arrival of the mission and allocate appropriate staff to work with the TER mission members.

AGENDA ITEM 8: APFP COMPLETION WORKSHOP AND PSC NOVEMBER 2014

36. The Meeting noted that the APFP Completion Workshop and final PSC Meeting will be held in Riau, Indonesia with the following proposed schedule:

3 Nov am: 5th SEApeat PCM

3 Nov pm: 6th APFP PSC

4 Nov: closing/knowledge workshop of APFP

5 Nov: workshop on APSMPE

6 Nov: Field visit

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37. Cambodia informed the meeting that the schedule is overlapping with the Ramsar Asia Regional Pre-COP Meeting in Cambodia on 4-6 November 2014, and requested that the meetings be rescheduled. An alternative date of 10-14 November was proposed. With regard to the field visit – Indonesia proposed that the field visit be organized for the international participants and that an option of a two day field visit be considered to enable visits to APFP project sites.

Action

21. ASEC will finalise the dates of the completion workshop in conjunction with AMS and IFAD .

AGENDA ITEM 9: OTHER MATTERS

a. Preparation of final information and outreach materials

The Meeting agreed on the need to undertake more actions on information and outreach as in **ANNEX 14**. It was agreed that – materials produced by Cambodia for World Wetlands Day 2011 could be included onto aseanpeat.net. Similarly any peatland-related materials from other countries could also be provided for the website.

Actions:

22. Components to ensure logos to be used on publications, acknowledgement and copies submitted to the RPEA.

23. Photographs and video clips to be submitted to RPEA by 31 August to enable inclusion in a completion multimedia presentation

24. Half-page article with photos from the countries on recent achievements to be provided by components to RPEA by 31 August for the newsletter.

b. Compilation of maps of Peatlands, fire prone sites, datasheets on demonstration sites

38. A paper was presented as in **ANNEX 15** outlining requirements of APFP and SEApeat components to submit maps and datasheets. The Meeting urged the.

Actions:

25. Country components to share peatland maps in ARCGIS shapefile format in order to allow RPEA to produce a peatland map of Southeast Asia.

26. Maps of fire prone peatlands in Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand need to be shared by the countries as to overlay onto FDRS codes/indices for fire prevention.

27. Datasheets especially on demonstration sites of the participating countries need to be submitted to RPEA for compilation

28. Components to provide other materials as stated in ANNEX 15.

c. Results of recent peat assessments in Myanmar and Cambodia

39. A presentation was made by Sann Lwin from Myanmar on the results of recent peatland assessments as in **ANNEX 16**. A total of ten peatland sites have been identified in 2012-2014 with the support of the SEApeat project including a number of rare and unique peatland types.

40. A presentation was made by Julia Lo Of GEC on the peatland assessment in Cambodia from 6-15 August as in **ANNEX 17**. 3,700 ha of peatlands have been documented in surveys in Peam Krasop Wildlife Sanctuary in Koh Kong Province in August 2014. Sand mining for export to Singapore is taking place adjacent to the site and impacts need to be assessed. Peat sampling was undertaken at 32 sites with peat depths ranging from 44-200 cm and average of 115 cm. Peat was mainly underlain with clay. The site is one of 23 protected areas designed since 1993. Further surveys of other coastal areas are planned in late 2014.

41. The meeting noted the positive results from assessments in Myanmar and Cambodia and encouraged further work to be undertaken to understand the nature of the peatlands at the newly described sites and also to introduce protection measures.

d. Administrative and financial issues

42. The Meeting noted that Dr. Raman Letchumanan will retire from his service at ASEC on 4 September 2014.

43. The Meeting agreed that in this critical period of project closure and terminal evaluation it was important to find a mechanism to retain the services of Dr Raman. Given that there was adequate remaining budget in the regional and management component, it was therefore agreed that Dr. Raman Letchumanan will be engaged by the project through the RPEA as a part time Adviser up till the end of 2014, to provide guidance and assistance in the completion of the APFP, including finalization of the Completion Evaluation Report, interacting with the Terminal Evaluation Review Mission and contribution to the further formulation of the APSMPE. The Meeting agreed that the budget for this service shall be drawn from the balance of the ASEC's budget which would be transferred to RPEA.



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Action:

29. RPEA and ASEC to prepare TOR and make arrangements to appoint Dr. Raman.

AGENDA ITEM 8: CLOSING

Acknowledgement

Comment [F1]: To be added

List of Annexes



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