

## UN-REDD Technical Assistance (TA): Integrating Mangroves Sustainable Management, Restoration, and Conservation into REDD+ Implementation in Myanmar

6 February 2024

### 1. Justification for the third No-Cost Extension request to the UN-REDD Executive Board

The above-mentioned Technical Assistance (TA) was approved by the UN-REDD Executive Board (EB) on 25 August 2020, with funding from the Government of Norway, for an initial duration of 24 months until 24 August 2022. Implementation challenges related to Covid-19 pandemic and domestic political instability led to a request for a no-cost extension (NCE) which was approved by the Board on 6 July 2022, extending the TA's end date to 31 December 2022. The first NCE proved fundamental as a "testing" period to ensure that, despite the in-country conditions, activities could still be implemented, with particular focus on remote work and desk studies and, most importantly, activities to directly support at local and Community Forest (CF) level. The success of the activities in the field as well as the strong appreciation by local communities and organizations led to the decision to request a further NCE to continue planned activities. The second NCE was approved by the UN-REDD Executive Board (EB) on 27 January 2023, extending the TA until 31 December 2023.

Despite the challenges in the country, including post-pandemic and political turmoil, under the guidance of the Interagency Working Group (IWG), this TA made significant contribution to new mangrove maps and data including mangrove extent and change maps, improved Emission Factor estimates. Furthermore, documents such as a 'Scoping Paper for Analyzing Mangrove Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity in Myanmar', and 'Guidance on implementing safeguards for REDD+ in Myanmar' with associated checklists are important references for state and non-state actors for analysis of mangrove ecosystems and future REDD+ Safeguards implementation in the country. A significant achievement of the TA has been the capacity strengthening of grassroots CSO/NGOs and mangrove communities. Specifically, 25 mangrove communities received technical assistance, financial support and equipment to manage their Community Forests (CF) while generating revenues through Community Forest-based Enterprise (CFE) initiatives. The TA enabled local and indigenous communities to better protect over 5,000 ha of mangroves in the delta and southeast Myanmar (see Annex 1).

A workshop titled 'UN-REDD Lower Mekong Final Regional Dialogue' was jointly organized by the 'Lower Mekong UN-REDD Initiative' and 'UN-REDD Myanmar Mangroves TA' to share good practices among Mekong region countries and discuss the way forward. A web page for the Mangroves Initiative was also developed and is available under the UN-REDD website [<https://www.un-redd.org/myanmar-mangroves>].

In summary, the TA achieved all the outputs in the revised Results Framework (Activity Matrix) which was submitted to and approved by the UN-REDD Management Group and NORAD in April 2021.

However, as of December 2023, the TA remains with a balance of unspent funds of approximately 150K USD (between UNDP and FAO<sup>1</sup>) partly due to savings originated from a cost sharing agreement with the Lower Mekong Initiative for the Final Regional Dialogue. An internal discussion occurred among the TA's Interagency Working Group, and it was agreed to request a further NCE in order to fully utilize the remaining balance, continuing benefiting stakeholders – mainly local communities – in the country. What can be considered a relatively small financial envelop can translate into instrumental technical assistance and bring tremendous positive impact to communities. A no-cost extension is thus being requested for an additional 6 months, until 30 June 2024, to take best benefit from the funding and provide additional assistance to mangrove communities in mangrove restoration and livelihood activities. The additional 6 months will also allow for a final evaluation which will capture good practices and document lessons learned for future programming and REDD+ implementation in Myanmar and in the Lower Mekong region. Part of the remaining funds will be used to package the TA's achievements in order to assemble a body of knowledge which can be functional to scope opportunities and resource mobilization for continuing work on Mangroves with a wider perspective.

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<sup>1</sup> UNEP has completed all activities as of December 2023.

## 2. Revised workplan

### Legend

	Implementation plan as approved in previous NCEs
	Revised plan for the 3 <sup>rd</sup> no-cost extension
	Activities suspended as per revised Results Framework (post Feb 2021)

### Workplan

Expected outputs	Planned Activities	UN Agencies															
			2020	2021				2022				2023				2024	
			Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Output 1: Enhanced regulatory frameworks and enhanced operational multi-stakeholder coordination platforms support more effective conservation, restoration and sustainable management of mangroves																	
Activity 1.1. Operationalizing an enhanced legal and policy framework	UNDP																
Activity 1.2: Organizational coordination enhanced	UNDP																
Activity 1.3: Support to safeguards coordination and implementation	UNEP																
Output 2: Data generated for enhanced decision making and a comprehensive monitoring system of land-use and land-cover (LULC) change along coastal areas of Myanmar																	
Activity 2.1: Develop emission/removal factors	FAO																
	FAO																

Activity 2.2: Resource mapping and monitoring																
Activity 2.3: Carbon accounting and monitoring of carbon emissions/removals for Myanmar’s Mangrove areas	FAO															
Activity 2.4: Compile and analyse data on selected mangrove values	UNEP															
Output 3: Demonstration of integrated land use planning and inclusive forest planning strengthened and linked to national CC mitigation goals																
Activity 3.1: Revise and support implementation of District Forest Management Plans in Delta region	FAO															
Activity 3.2: Revise and support implementation of District Forest Management Plans in SE Myanmar	UNDP															
Activity 3.3: Develop participatory integrated land use plans in Delta region	FAO															
Activity 3.4: Develop participatory integrated land use plans in SE Myanmar	UNDP															
3.5: Implementation of DFMPs and LUPs adhere to FPIC principles and inclusive	UNDP															

stakeholder engagement approaches that are aligned with national safeguards framework.																	
<b>Output 4: Operational models of community-led management of land and forests</b>																	
Activity 4.1: Strengthening local communities' capacity for managing community conservation areas	UNDP																
Activity 4.2: Community forests and Community Forest Enterprises established in Delta Region	FAO																
Activity 4.3: Community forests and Community Forest Enterprises established in SE Myanmar	UNDP																
Activity 4.4: Promoting sustainable/integrated mangrove-shrimp farming practices																	
Activity 4.5: New mangrove plantations/restored mangroves																	
<b>Programme Management</b>																	
<b>Operations of PMU</b>	PMU.1: - Recruitment of PMU staff	UNDP															
	PMU.2: Purchase of equipment	UNDP															
		UNDP															

	PMU.3: - Operations and maintenance																	
<b>KM and Comms</b>	KM/Comms.1: - Capture, analysis and dissemination of knowledge and information about REDD+ in Myanmar to national and international stakeholders	UNDP																

## Annex 1: Areas of progress under the Myanmar Mangrove Initiative to date

### Output 1

#### 1.3: REDD+ Safeguards

- A guidance package on how to apply Myanmar's national safeguards approach at the subnational level, with a focus on Community Forestry, has been produced incorporating feedback from project partners and selected experts. This package includes a guidance document and a set of checklists in English and Myanmar languages, aimed at helping CSOs, NGOs and other civil society REDD+ planners and implementers to plan, design and implement socially and environmentally sustainable REDD+ actions in line with the safeguards. The guidance package has been translated into Myanmar language.
- A ToT was organized with a key NGO implementing partner in November 2022, in order to assist the partner (MERN), prepare for providing similar capacity building to key Community Forestry groups in the country, and to pilot the use of selected safeguards checklists. MERN piloted the checklists with select CFs in Ayeyarwaddy.

### Output 2

#### 2.1: Develop emission/removal factors

- Field data from Mangroves clusters (286 clusters) of the Myanmar National Forest Inventory were analyzed to yield improved EF estimates for the Mangroves biome.
- [A technical report](#) on Subnational Forest Reference Emission Level for Mangrove Forests: An Opportunity for Jurisdictional or Biome-wise REDD+ Implementation in Myanmar
- [A technical report on National Forest Inventory in Myanmar Mangroves](#)

#### 2.2: Mangrove classification maps for Ayeyarwady and Tanintharyi regions

- The mangrove extent maps of Ayeyarwady and Tanintharyi regions were classified in level of maturity and canopy coverage. For this, information extracted from time series of optical and radar satellite data were used in combination with training samples. These were collected by national experts through visual interpretation of very high-resolution satellite images and the support of the National Forest Inventory data. A methodology was developed for near-real time forest monitoring and the methodology was shared during a training with conservation CSO/NGOs and practitioners in Yangon. (<https://www.un-redd.org/satellite-monitoring-system-myanmar-mangroves>)

#### 2.4: Mangrove ecosystem services

- A scoping process was carried out, detailing key issues, available global and national data and proposed analyses on mangrove ecosystem services, biodiversity and values, with a focus on mapping. Consequently, a [scoping paper](#) was prepared, shared for feedback with project partners and stakeholders, finalized and published on the UN-REDD web site.
- A series of webinars/capacity building sessions with Myanmar NGOs on spatial analysis of ecosystem services (as well as changes in mangroves) including a case study on economic information/costs & benefits of action in mangroves.
- [A web story / story map](#) on the importance and services of mangroves was developed, utilizing the spatial and economic information.

## Output 3

### **3.4: Sub-national REDD+ Action Plans for Non-State Actors, community forests (CF) assessment and mapping**

- Awareness raising on REDD+ with the Karen National Union (KNU) was completed.
- A manual for writing KNU Community Forest management plan was developed and shared with the KNU.
- Assessment of CF effectiveness and mapping in both Rakhine and Tanintharyi were completed. Report is being finalized. This activity was a joint undertaking with Centre for Development and Environment (CDE).

### **3.5: Community Forestry Instructions and Forest Policy for Non-State Actors**

- KNU forest policy revision was completed.
- New Mon State Party (NMSP) community forestry instructions development was completed.

## Output 4

### **4.1, 4.2 & 4.3: Community Forests (CF), Community Forest Enterprises (CFE) and Community Protected Areas (CPA)**

- All the activities related to CF, CFE and CPA in 25 mangrove communities in the delta and southeast Myanmar were completed in December 2023.
- The detailed activities include socio-economic surveys, flora and fauna inventory and extensive community consultations to facilitate development of CF Management Plans, CFE Business Plans and CPA Management Plans along with Participatory Patrolling Plans.
- In parallel with these activities, capacity strengthening initiatives include awareness and training on importance of mangroves, mangrove management (silvicultural) practices, Market Analysis and Development (MA&D), entrepreneurial skills, basic accounting and financial management. A series of hands-on training on aquaculture and exchange visits were also organized to encourage community learning and networking.
- Equipment required for forestry operations including patrolling such as boats and engines, boots, measuring tapes, lifejackets and so on were provided to communities.
- To operationalize the Business Plans, an investment package (\$3000) was provided to each community to initiate Enterprises.
- A bilingual manual 'Guide for Developing Business Plan for Community Forest (Mangroves) Enterprise Development' was developed based on experience and lessons from CFE initiative in the delta and southeast Myanmar.
- A bilingual 'Guidelines for Community Protected Area Management Plan Preparation CPA' was developed.

## Communication and Knowledge Management

The IWG has been working on capturing some of the key achievement through dedicated publications (UN-REDD Briefs) with the following publications. All the outputs, web stories, story maps, and resources are available at the [Mangroves TA landing page](#).

- [Review of Jurisdictional Subnational REDD+ Planning and Implementation in Asia](#)
- [A technical report on National Forest Inventory in Myanmar Mangroves](#)



- [A human-interest story](#) was developed and featured on the International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystems
- A [scoping paper](#): “Options for analyzing mangrove ecosystem services and biodiversity in Myanmar . The paper has been translated into Myanmar language and will be available on the website soon.
- [A story about mangrove friendly livelihood development](#)
- [A video about indigenous people’s traditional mangrove management](#)
- Generic Management Plan for Mangrove Community Forest
- Guidelines for Preparing Mangrove Community Forest Management Plan
- A generic Terms of Reference (ToR) for Community Forest User Group for CF governance
- Guide for Developing Business Plan for Community Forest (Mangroves) Enterprise Development
- Guidelines for Community Protected Area Management Plan Preparation CPA