

Draft Terms of Reference for the Dugong Technical Group (DTG) to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs and their Habitats throughout their Range (Dugong MOU)

Preamble

These Terms of Reference have been established to guide the appointment, engagement and remuneration of specialist advisors to the Dugong MOU.

Purpose

1. The purpose of the Dugong Technical Group (DTG) is to serve and assist the Signatory States and the Dugong MOU Secretariat in the effective implementation of the Dugong MOU and the associated Conservation and Management Plan (CMP) through the provision of expert advice on request.
2. The Secretariat of the Dugong MOU will serve to receive and transmit requests from the Signatories for advice from the DTG and communicate responses of the DTG to the Signatories.

Role of the DTG

3. The main tasks of the DTG will be to:
 - a) Provide expert advice and information, and make recommendations on the implementation of the Dugong MOU to the Signatory States and the Secretariat, as requested;
 - b) Analyse, as necessary, scientific data and status assessments and provide recommendations on actions needed;
 - c) Provide comments on any proposals to amend the MOU text or CMS which have a technical content;
 - d) Carry out any other tasks referred to it through the Secretariat by the Signatory State Meeting.
4. The Secretariat may request the DTG to give priority to certain activities and tasks, which may include, but are not limited to:
 - a) Evaluating and providing advice on any conservation and management programme proposed or implemented within Range States;
 - b) Assisting the Secretariat in the development of projects and initiatives so that regional, sub-regional and local concerns and interests are taken into account;
 - c) Providing advice to the meetings of Signatory States on the adoption of additional conservation and management actions and on revisions to the CMP;
 - d) Evaluating, at the request of the Secretariat, the efficiency of different measures proposed or implemented to reduce the capture and incidental mortality of dugongs in fishing operations;
 - e) Promoting the use of standardised dugong research techniques, monitoring programmes, data collection, data storage and reporting;
 - f) Reviewing scientific reports, annual reports of the Signatory and Range States, and other appropriate documents to assist the Secretariat in assessing progress in the implementation of the MOU and its associated CMP;
 - g) Bringing to the attention of the Secretariat significant new information relating to the conservation and management of dugongs and their habitats;
 - h) Seeking input from other individuals and bodies, as appropriate, in responding to requests for advice; and
 - i) Making recommendations regarding other fields of expertise needed within the Secretariat to assist with its work.

Membership

5. Members of the DTG serve in their capacity as specialist individuals rather than as representatives of Governments or organisations with which they also may be affiliated.

Meetings and Remuneration

6. Where possible, the provision of advice will be sought on a pro-bono or in-kind basis.
7. Where possible, advice will be sought through electronic forms of communication.
8. To minimise costs, the DTG will conduct as many of its activities as possible through electronic forms of communication. Meetings of the DTG will be held periodically, where possible and as funds permit, for example prior to the regular meetings of Signatory States or other key meetings and workshops.
9. Members of the DTG may be invited to participate in Signatory State meetings, and may also be requested to participate in the meetings of related and associated projects and organisations that the Secretariat deems relevant to the work of the MOU.
10. Where a meeting of the DTG is considered essential, for example prior to the regular meetings of Signatory States or other key meetings and workshops, the travel (economy class) and accommodation for members attending will be arranged and provided by the CMS Secretariat.
11. The cost of supporting DTG members' work will be borne by the Dugong MOU Secretariat and will be reported at the following Signatory State Meeting.

Size and Composition

12. The size of the DTG may fluctuate and the composition of the DTG will strike a balance among the areas of expertise set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding, which include dugong biology and ecology, marine resource management, fisheries bycatch mitigation, socio-economics, sustainable development and other relevant disciplines. Additional experts may be invited to participate on an *ad hoc* basis, at the request of the Secretariat.
13. Members of DTG will have widely recognized experience and expertise in one or more aspects of dugong research, conservation and/or management of species and their habitats; and experience of working with relevant experts at local, national and international levels. Members of the DTG will also have full access to electronic mail and web-based information and communication systems, through which the intercessional work of the DTG will take place.
14. Any additional expertise identified by the Signatories will be sought through a "Call for expressions of interest" process organised by the Secretariat. The Secretariat will report any appointments to the Signatories.

Conditions of Membership

15. Membership of the DTG is voluntary.
16. Membership of the DTG is for three years and may be ended at any time by either party by written notice. Members may be re-appointed by mutual consent.
17. Membership of the DTG will not preclude an individual from being recruited as a paid consultant. These tasks will be of a substantial nature outside of the remit of the general Terms of Reference for DTG members. Selection of, and remuneration for, consultants will be in line with current United Nations established practice.