



Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs and their Habitats throughout their Range

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CONSIDERATION OF THE NEED TO REVIEW THE DUGONG MOU CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Prepared by the Dugong MOU Secretariat

Background

1. The Conservation and Management Plan for the Dugong MOU (CMP) and the Dugong MOU were developed in parallel, both taking effect on the 31 October 2007.
2. The CMP consists of nine objectives and 26 activities and has not been reviewed since it took effect. According to paragraph 15 of the Dugong MOU, “[...] the Conservation and Management Plan, may be amended by a consensus of the Signatory States”.

Development, implementation and reporting

3. The draft CMP was developed to support the implementation of the Dugong MOU and was written collaboratively during two Dugong MOU negotiation meetings held in August 2005 and May 2006. It considered existing MOUs, regional management plans, and action plans (such as the CMS Indian Ocean – South-East Asian Marine Turtle MOU and the Pacific Islands Regional Marine Species Programme 2008–2012). Invited participants reviewed the draft CMP and considered the approach and practicality for implementation. Comments received were taken into consideration in the finalisation of the CMP.
4. The aim of the CMP is to address the conservation of dugongs and their seagrass habitats, including awareness and education, cross-cutting issues and enhancing cooperation on national, regional and international scales. The CMP includes elements on objectives, actions, priority levels, timeframes, organisations, and targets.
5. The Secretariat facilitates and coordinates actions under the CMP through the Dugong, Seagrass and Coastal Communities (DSCC) Initiative (see CMS/Dugong/MOS3/Inf.2) which was endorsed by the Second Meeting of the Signatories. The DSCC Initiative aims to achieve the nine objectives of the CMP to ensure the long-term survival of dugongs and their seagrass habitats throughout their extensive range.
6. Signatory States implement actions guided by the CMP. These actions may be adapted to the needs of the dugong populations and seagrass habitats in their coastal waters.
7. Signatory States report on their implementation of the CMP through triennial National Reports. These National Reports provide vital information on the implementation of the CMP and assist the Secretariat in determining progress towards achieving the objectives and targets of the CMP, highlight areas for attention, and identify adaptive measures and collaboration initiatives. They can also serve as a valuable record of national achievements for dugong and seagrass conservation.

8. The National Report Template, presented by the Secretariat at the Second Meeting of Signatories to the Dugong MOU, was designed to mirror the structure and content of the CMP and facilitate monitoring and evaluation.

Fundamental review of the CMP justification

9. According to paragraph 12 of the Dugong MOU, “[t]he Conservation and Management Plan is an integral part of this Memorandum of Understanding”. As a living document it is therefore important that the CMP remains relevant and considers emerging issues as well as international mandates. To this end, it is critical to conduct a fundamental review to examine and, if necessary, revise the CMP. The review would address and respond to matters and information that have arisen over the past 10 years including:

- The overall effectiveness, performance, and implementation of the CMP;
- Monitoring and evaluation challenges including national reporting;
- Changes in the conservation status and trends of dugongs and their seagrass habitats, related risks and emerging issues;
- Alignment with international legislation and high-level international policy mandates (such as the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the CMS Strategic Plan for Migratory Species); and
- Changes in government direction and the priorities of Signatory States.

Review process

10. The Secretariat, in consultation with the Dugong Technical Group (DTG), would develop a Scope of Work for the review of the CMP. The Scope of Work would detail the objectives, scope, outcomes, and terms of reference. It would also outline the consultation, review and approval processes.

11. The Secretariat would then recruit a consultant to undertake the review of the CMP, in line with the Scope of Work. A revised CMP would then be presented for adoption at the Fourth Meeting of Signatories to the Dugong MOU.

12. In consultation with the DTG, the Secretariat considered alternative options for reviewing the CMP, including forming a Working Group and outsourcing the review to the DTG, however, these approaches were considered problematic due to resourcing, logistic and communication issues.

Key scope of work activities

13. The fundamental review of the CMP would include: (a) reviewing the key elements of the CMP to ensure they are current and address new and emerging threats and priorities; (b) revising as necessary the actions identified in the CMP to ensure alignment with new priorities and international mandates including the CMS Strategic Plan for Migratory Species; (c) revising as necessary the CMP’s targets; and (d) facilitating monitoring and evaluation including any necessary adjustments to the National Report Template. If revised, the CMP and the National Report Template would be presented to the Fourth Meeting of Signatories for consideration and adoption.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to:

- a) Agree that a review of the CMP be undertaken.
- b) Endorse the proposed approach to the review, as suggested by the Secretariat.