



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

Distribution: General

CMS/Dugong/MOS3/Report*

14 June 2017

Third Meeting of Signatories | Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 13-14 March 2017

REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING OF SIGNATORIES TO THE DUGONG MOU

Agenda Item 1. Opening of the Meeting

1.1. Opening Remarks

1. Mr Lyle Glowka, the Executive Coordinator of Convention on Migratory Species Office - Abu Dhabi, presided over the opening session of the Third Meeting of Signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs and their Habitats throughout their Range (Dugong MOU). After welcoming participants to Abu Dhabi, he invited His Excellency Dr Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Minister of Climate Change and Environment, Dr Bradnee Chambers, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and Her Excellency Razan Khalifa Al Mubarak, the Secretary General of the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) in turn to address the meeting.

1.2. Launch of the Dugong and Seagrass Research Toolkit

2. Mr Glowka introduced Dr Shaikha Al Dhaheri, Executive Director of the Terrestrial and Marine Biodiversity Sector of EAD who gave a presentation explaining the functions of the Dugong and Seagrass Research Toolkit. Mr Hatem Nuseibeh, President of Total E&P UAE and Group Representative in the UAE gave a short presentation outlining the importance of the Dugong and Seagrass Research Toolkit and why his company has been investing in dugong conservation.

Agenda Item 2. Signing Ceremony

3. Mr Glowka invited His Excellency Dr Hany Muhammed Ali Tatwany, Vice President of the Saudi Wildlife Authority, to sign the Raptors and Sharks MOUs on behalf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In connection with the signing, remarks were given by Mr Nick P. Williams, Head of the Coordinating Unit of the CMS Raptors MOU, Dr Chambers and H.E. Dr Tatwany.

Agenda Item 3. Rules of Procedure

4. Dr Donna Kwan (Dugong MOU Secretariat) opened the formal business of the meeting, expressing her thanks to colleagues in EAD for their support. She noted that unfortunately the representatives of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands would not be able to attend the meeting owing to visa-related issues, but it was hoped that the representative of Vanuatu would arrive later.

5. The meeting would present delegates with the opportunity to look back over the achievements of the period 2013-2016 and to look ahead to the three-year period ending in 2019. The MOU Secretariat was ready to provide all the assistance required and the Dugong Technical Group (DTG)

* Second reissue for technical reasons (05 September 2017).



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throughout their Range

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was present in large numbers to offer its advice during the course of the meeting. Dr Kwan welcomed the presence of many of the partners from the GEF-5 Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project. She looked forward to an open and constructive dialogue to inform the decisions to be taken over the coming two days.

3.1. Adoption of the Rules of Procedure

6. Dr Kwan presented the document in Annex 1 of CMS/Dugong/MOS3/3, the Rules of Procedure as adopted by the Second Meeting of the Signatories in Manila in 2013. She proposed that these be adopted, while noting that technical corrections would be proposed for the meeting's consideration later in the programme.

7. The representative of Australia raised the question of whether credentials could be issued by someone authorized to do so by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Executive Secretary confirmed that it should be in order for the Minister to appoint a proxy and undertook to check the arrangements under the parent convention.

8. The representative of the Philippines also raised a question on credentials, pointing out that the template provided by the Secretariat did not conform to the model used by the Philippines' Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Executive Secretary said that the template provided by the Secretariat was only meant to be an indicative guide, and Signatories were entitled to draft their own Letters of Credentials. Provided all the main points were covered, this did not present problems.

3.2. Proposed Amendments to the Rules of Procedure

9. Dr Kwan presented some minor technical corrections to the Rules of Procedure. These addressed a typographical error in Rule 5 paragraph 4 in relation to the examination of credentials, as follows:

Existing text: "The Secretariat, in consultation with the Chair or the Vice-Chair (see Rule 7 below), and shall report to the Signatory State Meeting thereon for final approval. [...]"

Corrected text: "The Secretariat, in consultation with the Chair or the Vice-Chair (see rule 7 below), shall examine the credentials submitted and report to the Signatory State Meeting thereon for final approval. [...]"

10. There were no comments on the proposed changes which were accordingly adopted. The amended Rules of Procedure are presented in Annex 1 of this meeting report.

11. Mr Glowka said that the need for further amendments to the Rules of Procedure in relation to the interventions made earlier by Australia and the Philippines would be reviewed and, if necessary, the Secretariat would circulate a proposed revised text which could be considered at the next Meeting of Signatories.

Agenda Item 4. Election of Officers

12. Dr Kwan explained that it was normal practice under CMS for a representative of the Host Country to be invited to chair the meeting. She therefore proposed that the UAE chair the meeting. The representative of Australia seconded the proposal and consequently Her Excellency Eng. Mariam Mohammed Saeed Hareb Al Mheiri, Assistant Undersecretary, Environmental Affairs and Nature Conservation, UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, was elected to the chair.

13. The Chair thanked the meeting for the confidence shown in her and welcomed participants to the UAE, which, she pointed out, was home to a population of approximately 3,000 dugongs.

14. The Chair called for nominations for the post of Vice-Chair of the meeting. The representative of Thailand nominated Sri Lanka, represented by Dr Tharaka Prasad Gajadeera Arachchige, and the meeting agreed to this proposal.

Agenda Item 5. Adoption of the Agenda and Schedule

15. The Chair presented the Provisional Agenda (CMS/Dugong/MOS3/5.1/Rev.3) and the Provisional Annotated Agenda and Schedule (CMS/Dugong/MOS3/5.2/Rev.1) for adoption. There were no comments and these were adopted as presented.

Agenda Item 6. Credentials

16. The Chair invited delegates who had not already done so to submit their Letters of Credentials to the Secretariat. The Letters of Credentials of the following Signatories attending the meeting were examined and found to be in order: Australia, Bahrain, Eritrea, France, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Myanmar, Palau, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, Vanuatu.

Agenda Item 7. Admission of Observers

17. The Chair invited Dr Kwan to present the list of observers registered for the meeting, which was contained in document CMS/Dugong/MOS3/Inf.7. No further names were proposed to be added to the list and no objections were raised to any of the organizations included. This list was accordingly noted.

Agenda Item 8. Statements from Signatories and Observers

18. The Chair gave delegations the opportunity to make statements. There were no requests for the floor.

Agenda Item 9. Key Addresses ¹

19. The Chair introduced agenda Item 9 and asked Dr Kwan to introduce the various speakers. Dr Kwan invited Prof Helene Marsh of James Cook University, who also served on the DTG, to give her presentation 'Dugong Conservation: the Global Challenge'.

20. Professor Marsh said that conservation was often a challenge but the combination of unique biological, geographic and human factors made dugong conservation especially difficult. There was little that could be done to biology and geography, but human behaviour could be changed.

21. Dugongs were long-lived and slow breeding animals, so for populations to persist, it was necessary for adults to survive. Dugongs were also not 'wilderness' animals as there were many examples where they lived in close proximity to people and industry. Their vast range covered over 40 countries and their conservation status across this range was uneven. Globally, dugongs were categorized by the IUCN Red List at the global level as "Vulnerable" but some populations were likely to be "Endangered", others were relatively secure and some were "Data Deficient" at a regional level.

22. In some Range States, the majority of which were developing countries, there was limited capacity to engage in the required conservation effort, even when dugong numbers were low. Not all

¹ Where they have been made available to the Secretariat, the following presentations can be found on the dedicated page for the Third Meeting of the Signatories, in the Dugong MOU section of the CMS website at www.cms.int/dugong/en/meeting/third-meeting-signatories-dugong-mou.

countries had effective enforcement and in some countries corruption was a factor. In some locations, dugongs were worth more dead than alive, and selling an animal caught as bycatch could make a significant difference to a family's income.

23. The GEF-5 Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project was a most significant initiative, with numerous partners, eight countries and many sites involved. The funding would soon expire, and further work was needed. The project had also only covered eight of the Range States, and dugong populations in many of the other countries needed support.

24. Dugong conservation required a comprehensive approach taking into account the animals, the threats that they faced, their seagrass habitats and local human communities. There was also no need to 'reinvent the wheel' and researchers should concentrate on collecting the essential information required for conservation. It was essential to establish whether dugongs were present, identifying hotspots and threats. The most cost-effective techniques should be considered, bearing in mind that where dugong numbers were low, there was no guaranteed method of detecting the animals. It was often hard to see dugongs from boats and acoustic devices were not effective if the animals did not vocalize. Feeding trail surveys were also not reliable or fully effective. The best way of ascertaining dugong presence was to interview fishermen, as they were at sea virtually every day. Aerial surveys with manned or unmanned aircraft could be used for assessing distribution and abundance. It made sense to act on robust assumptions, which included that populations of fewer than 100 animals could not afford any human-induced mortality. Populations of 1,000 might withstand 13 deaths, and populations of 10,000 perhaps as many as 130.

25. There was little to be gained in dedicating resources to trying to detect declines or recoveries in small populations. Some performance indicators should also be viewed with scepticism; for example, a reported decrease in bycatch in gill nets might point to better management and safer deployment of gear or that fewer animals were in the area being fished.

26. Professor Marsh concluded her remarks by reporting experiences in Bazaruto Bay in Mozambique, a country ranked 180th of 189 in the Human Development Index. Good data had been obtained from an aerial survey, but it also became apparent that bycatch in illegal nets set for sharks to meet demand for fins was very high. The financial incentive for the fishermen to continue their illegal activities was overwhelming. This was a problem that the GEF-5 Project sought to address.

27. In the question and answer session following Professor Marsh's presentation, the representative of Bahrain said that, while dugongs were not targeted by fishermen, bycatch did occur and often attempts were made to release the animals. Stranded animals were also found but it was not always evident what the cause of death was. Professor Marsh said that often to the untrained eye there were no signs of the animals having been caught in nets; experienced veterinarians could however determine the cause of death. In all likelihood, the reason for an animal to have stranded was bycatch. It would be helpful if veterinarian capacity could be increased in the region.

28. In response to the question whether aerial surveys were the best method for locating Dugongs, Professor Marsh said that this depended on what the aims of the project were. For covering large areas, such surveys had been useful in the past (such as in Saudi Arabia in the 1980s when helicopters had been deployed). Drones might now be available, but much depended on the quality of the photographic equipment and the environmental conditions. As technology advances, it can be difficult to continue to compare results with 30-year-old data when different techniques of analysis were used. With any type of dugong survey, while the technique was important, the design of the questions was paramount.

29. The best way to reduce bycatch was to ban the use of gillnets in dugong hotspots, as had happened around the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. This had however been a costly programme and it might not be easily replicated in other countries, where fishing was a matter of survival. Developing

new and better informed fisheries management approaches and providing alternative livelihoods were key elements of the GEF-5 Project. In areas such as the Torres Strait between Australia and Papua New Guinea, where hunting had been carried out for thousands of years and could be sustainable, it was necessary to work with the traditional owners to ensure it remains sustainable. The well-managed population of the Torres Strait was in better condition than the one off east Queensland where there was no hunting but where agricultural run-off was a threat to seagrass habitats.

30. In response to a question about the home range of dugongs, prompted by reports of sporadic sightings of animals off Sarawak, Professor Marsh said that complex movement patterns varying from animal to animal had been observed. Satellite tracking of two animals caught in the same place showed one moving up and down the coast whereas the other stayed in the same place for 15 months. Another animal had been tracked on a 500-km journey over a few days. To establish a clear idea of dugong behaviour, it would be necessary to have a large sample, but this involved risks because of the possibility of injuring the animals while fitting tags.

31. A GEF-5 Project representative from Indonesia said that fishermen were reluctant to report dugong deaths, not wishing to draw attention to themselves or run the risk of trouble with the authorities. Often fishermen would try to sink dugong carcasses. Such behaviour emphasized again the need to win the trust of local communities.

32. The CMS Executive Secretary said that new technologies were revolutionizing conservation work, both in terms of surveying techniques and allowing enforcement authorities to operate more effectively. With the CMS COP approaching, he asked whether it would be useful to consider adding some dugong populations to Appendix I of the Convention.

33. Professor Marsh welcomed technological advances but warned against obsession with gadgetry to the detriment of the original aims of the research. Drones were all well and good, but were still subject to errors in high turbidity water, in which the dugongs could not be seen. The idea of listing certain populations of dugongs on both CMS Appendices I and II might help deal with the problems of protecting long-ranging species facing different threats.

34. Dr Kwan introduced Mr Len McKenzie, a Principal Researcher at James Cook University who, together with Dr Richard Unsworth from Swansea University, spoke about 'Seagrass: Global Conservation Challenges'.

35. Mr McKenzie said that lay people often confused seagrass and seaweed, but there were significant botanical differences. Seagrass meadows provided food and habitat for other species and was an important nursery for fisheries, as well as absorbing large amounts of carbon (more than rain forests) and stabilizing the coast by stopping erosion. Seagrass also had a proven role in preventing the spread of disease.

36. Seagrass was experiencing a serious decline with 58 per cent of species having lost some of their distribution and an area the equivalent of two football fields was being destroyed each hour.

37. The conservation challenges included gaining recognition of the fact that seagrass was important. This could be achieved through education and engagement, raising children's awareness, and emphasizing the protection of livelihoods and the species' survival. Local government and the media should also be targeted.

38. It was important to understand the status of seagrass which meant compiling an inventory of the species present, their extent and their condition. So far 177,000 km² had been mapped of a total which probably covered an area of between 300,000 and 600,000 km². In the Coral Triangle, an app had been developed for citizen science spotters, with differing degrees of complexity depending on the user. The Great Barrier Reef had been monitored for over 15 years and fluctuations in the condition of 60

sites had been recorded. Seagrass coverage ranged from 10 to 20 per cent, with the worst level recorded in 2011 following a cyclone.

39. Dr Unsworth, whose expertise lay in the area of seagrass and food security, described the challenges posed by human activities. There were direct threats: dredging, the building of port installations and the use of nets, and indirect threats such as agricultural run-off, urban and industrial waste and overfishing. Losses were being observed but less frequently quantified, and local expert witnesses should be asked.

40. Conservationists faced a difficult balancing act, having to reconcile their work with the needs of people having to use the resources, economic growth and food security.

41. More research was needed to support conservation action. Scientists were aware of cumulative factors but lacked detailed knowledge, especially in dugong habitat, to underpin good decision-making.

42. There were grounds for optimism despite the challenges. Bad news should be balanced with success stories, in order to motivate people and to demonstrate that conservation action could make a difference. 'Doom and gloom', however, tended to sell more newspapers. A survey of 135 seagrass scientists indicated that progress was being made and most were optimistic about the future of seagrass in their countries. The specialist press was also showing an interest, with features on seagrass appearing on the front page of Nature and Science.

43. In the question and answer session, Dr Unsworth said he was unaware of there being any wind farm developments within the area of the MOU, but in North-west Europe, they could have positive effects, providing as pretext for restoring seagrass meadows. However, restoration of seagrass was an emerging science and while some successes had been reported, it was an expensive process and it was preferable to protect intact areas rather than try to restore damaged ones. It was also important to address the destructive factors, otherwise restored meadows might be lost again.

44. Agricultural runoff had been identified as the main cause of damage, worsened with higher rainfall and poor management of pesticides. The Australian and Queensland Governments had been spending large sums of money on improving farmers' practices to reduce nitrogen input onto the land. Much of the effort being made to protect the Great Barrier Reef was being done inland.

45. Dr Kwan then introduced Dr Christina Shaw, the founder of the Vanuatu Environmental Science Society (VESS), a GEF-5 Project Partner who gave a presentation entitled 'Catalysts for Community Change' about dugong conservation in Vanuatu.

46. Vanuatu was situated on the eastern edge of the dugong's range. It was an archipelago of volcanic islands, which was a former British and French colony. It was covered in copra forests and had a coastline measuring 3,000 km. The country had a maritime area of 600,000 km².

47. Very few studies had been carried out in Vanuatu. One dated from 1987 and eleven animals had been recorded. In 2015 a single image taken from drone contained 23 animals.

48. It was often claimed that Vanuatu was a safe haven for dugongs as the main threats were not present, but this assertion had to be tested. There was a long tradition of communities protecting the environment, and the Vanuatu Government had signed the dugong MOU and was active in the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Dugongs were a protected species under the Fisheries Act.

49. Dugongs were often seen by divers and surfers and the local animals had a reputation for being friendly. They often used mooring ropes as scratching posts. Some were found not far from the national capital.

50. Two studies of seagrass had been undertaken; one had been done in the 1980s as part of a general assessment of marine resources and the other had focussed on a single island. Nine different species of seagrass had been identified.

51. Vanuatu was classified as a least developed country with limited financial resources. It had a population of 250,000, and was mainly dependent on subsistence agriculture. Travelling between the islands was difficult and the country was prone to earthquakes, volcanic activity and cyclones. It shared the South Pacific University, hosting the law faculty (the science faculty was in Fiji).

52. For the GEF-5 Project work VESS collaborated with the Departments Fisheries and Environmental Protection in conducting interviews with villagers and fishermen. Transport was a challenge as the roads were poor and runways overgrown. The most reliable methods of transport were banana boats or travelling by foot. A two-day workshop might require one weeks per diems because of the infrequency of ferries between the islands. The GEF-5 Project in Vanuatu was managed by a steering committee (National Facilitating Committee) with representatives of Government Departments and NGOs.

53. Dr Shaw showed a video interview with the chair of the local conservation area, who explained the effects of the project on his community and how income from the project and tour guides was divided between the various actors.

54. The project aimed to harmonize activities with those being carried out elsewhere. The tools developed under the Dugong MOU such as the CMS Dugong MOU Standardised Dugong Catch and Bycatch Questionnaire was used and the advice of the DTG, and Dr Nick Pilcher (DTG) had attended a Workshop. Posters and booklets produced through a grant from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund had been distributed to the communities and a further funding agreement for more research work was about to be signed.

55. VESS had been set up as a result of the project, and was the first NGO to support the Government in this area of activity and had built on the existing commitment at the national and local level to protect dugongs and seagrass. VESS had served as a catalyst to help turn the good intentions into tangible actions.

56. Dr Shaw commented that the rural communities were very environmentally conscious, having a subsistence lifestyle with strong bond to nature. Port Vila, the capital, was rather different but churches and schools were able to muster volunteers, and some expatriates were involved in campaigns. In answer to a question about the gender profile of environmentalists, Dr Shaw said that women's groups were active, and while most seaborne fishing was done by men, women did collect crustaceans from the shoreline and the head of the biodiversity department was a woman.

57. The next speaker was Ms Maitha Al Hameli Specialist, Marine Threatened Species and Habitats, EAD. Her presentation concerned dugongs within the waters of the UAE.

58. Ms Al Hameli showed a map of the UAE and the surrounding region, indicating where dugongs were found. She provided some statistics on the country, such as its population and area, average temperature and rainfall, the species found there and the nature of the surrounding seas.

59. It was known from records that in the past, dugongs had been hunted for consumption and in the 1960s and 1970s between 60 and 70 animals had been brought to market each year. Hunting of

dugongs had however been prohibited. Archaeologists had found bones in the region dating back thousands of years.

60. The local dugong population had been subject of studies since 1997 and successful education and awareness-raising programmes had been undertaken. Aerial surveys had been carried out to monitor the population. Mortality incidents through ghost nets and boat strikes had been recorded, and studies were being done of dugong habitat and of the animals' migration. The local dugongs were very shy making it difficult to approach them for tagging.

61. Designated Marine Protected Areas hosted the greater part of the country's dugong population as well as significant numbers of marine turtles.

62. The EAD was cooperating closely with the Dugong MOU, its Secretariat and the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment to enable access to data.

63. In the question and answer session, the representative of Bahrain stressed the importance of working with fishermen and educating them about the role of seagrass and dugongs. Two-way communication was also important which involved listening to the fishermen's opinions given their wealth of traditional knowledge. Fishermen were also keen to learn, wanting to know the appropriate action to take when a dugong was caught in nets.

Agenda Item 10. Reports

10.1. Report of the Dugong MOU Secretariat

64. The Chair invited Dr Kwan to present the report of the Secretariat, which was contained in document CMS/Dugong/MOS3/10.1, and highlighted the main activities undertaken in the period 2013-2016.

65. Regarding staffing, in addition to a dedicated Programme Manager and a share of the Executive Coordinator's time, a Programme Associate for marine issues was in post for one year in 2013-14. An Associate Programme Officer was shared with the Raptors Coordinating Unit. Four consultants and four interns had also worked on dugongs in the period covered.

66. There were 26 Signatories to the MOU and the Secretariat was seeking to recruit more. The Secretariat has received positive indications from Indonesia, Malaysia and Timor-Leste about joining the MOU. The Secretariat maintained a list of national focal points (NFPs), and those countries that had not yet nominated theirs, were urged to do so.

67. A great deal of communication work had been done, primarily via electronic means. The MOU had pages on the CMS website, while the GEF-5 Project had its own website. Some media attention had been achieved. Several meetings had been organized or jointly organized, many in relation to the GEF-5 Project and the DTG, as well as one regional bycatch meeting.

68. Participants were also referred to the report on national implementation of the Dugong MOU (Agenda Item 11) and the Programme of Work (Agenda Item 12) as well as the GEF-5 Project (CMS/Dugong/MOS3/Inf.3) and the report of the DTG (Agenda Item 10.2).

69. The Chair invited the Meeting to provide feedback to the Secretariat on the channel, quality and frequency of their communications and urged Dugong MOU Focal Points to use the updated 'Guidance for National Focal Points of the Dugong MOU';

70. The representative of Australia expressed their appreciation for the effort the Secretariat had made to promote and coordinate the Dugong MOU and noted that they were very satisfied with the

level of communication provided by the Secretariat. The representative of Australia also queried what the changes to the Guidance for National Focal Points were. In response to this, Dr Kwan said that the Guidance document had been updated to harmonise it with guidance from other CMS instruments and undertook to highlight where changes had been made. Dr Kwan also confirmed that while the GEF-5 Project focused on just eight Range States, others were invited to contribute content to the project website.

71. The Chair invited the meeting to urge Comoros, India, Palau, Sudan and Vanuatu to nominate a National Focal Point and to supply details to the Secretariat forthwith by 1 May 2017; and encouraged Range States and the dugong and seagrass conservation community to utilise the GEF-5 Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project website (www.dugongconservation.org) to share important dugong and seagrass conservation information and initiatives.

72. There being no further comments from the floor, the report was noted and the Chair recommended any feedback be provided in writing to the Secretariat.

10.2. Report of the Dugong Technical Group

73. The Chair invited Dr Kwan to introduce Agenda Item 10.2. Dr Kwan called upon Mr Simon Woodley to present the report of the DTG of which he was a member.

74. Mr Woodley referred to document CMS/Dugong/MOS3/10.2 which contained the DTG's report describing the role of the DTG, its members and its role in the GEF-5 Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project.

75. The role of the DTG was to provide technical and scientific support to the Secretariat and Signatory States. Its membership was made up of individual experts, who did not represent the institutions for which they worked. Most of the time dedicated to the DTG by the members was unpaid, and the work was done pro bono. All members were linked to wider networks of experts and practitioners. The members were world renowned experts on marine ecology, species and management, community-based work, strategic planning, programme management, the use of incentives and citizen science. He acknowledged that the experts were overwhelmingly from Anglophone countries, and it was recognized that cultural sensitivities had to be respected; many of the members had long experience of working in other Indo-Pacific countries.

76. For the GEF-5 Dugong Seagrass Conservation Project, the DTG had reviewed all the component projects. The DTG had helped develop the Dugong and Seagrass Research Toolkit, and was aware of the need for choosing the best methods to fit the varying local circumstances, capacities and budgets.

77. In concluding his comments, Mr Woodley said that the DTG members were all motivated by the passion and commitment showed by people with a firm belief in conservation. The DTG members were happy to share their knowledge to enhance community well-being and were prepared for the challenges ahead, looking forward to the rewards of new understanding to further the cause of Dugongs and seagrass conservation.

78. In response to a question from the representative of the Seychelles, the Secretariat suggested that the best way of handling requests for assistance from the DTG would be to channel them through the Secretariat, who would be better placed to decide which member of the DTG to approach and assess any financial implications.

79. The Chair invited the Meeting to note the Report of the DTG and to reappoint the current members of the DTG for another three-year term (Annex 4). Australia proposed the endorsement of reappointing all the members of the DTG en bloc but suggested that the term should run until the next

Meeting of the Signatories rather than a specific calendar date given the uncertainty of the timing of the next Meeting. This proposal was accepted by the meeting.

Agenda Item 11. Implementation Activities: Dugong, Seagrass and Coastal Communities Initiative

11.1. National Reports of Signatories

80. The Chair invited Dr Kwan to present agenda Item 11.1. Dr Kwan stressed the importance of National Reports in providing information concerning the implementation of the MOU. They helped identify areas where the Signatories needed assistance and provided a record of achievement. A response rate of 88 per cent had been managed, with 23 of the 26 Signatories having submitted reports along with four non-signatory Range States.

81. Dr Kwan drew attention to Addendum 1 (CMS/Dugong/MOS3/11.1/Add.1) which provided a detailed analysis of the national implementation activities by Signatories. The Addendum showed that the highest implementation rate had been achieved for Objectives 1.1 and 3.2, addressing threats to populations and protecting habitats. According to 83 per cent of the reports, seagrass habitats were being protected, while 55 per cent of reports indicated that fundraising was a priority. Another high priority was promoting capacity-building, while the lowest were combating illegal trade, unsustainable use and illegal take.

82. The Chair invited the meeting to note the National Reports and Analysis. The representative of Australia shared their support for the revised template, which contained less repetition, but requested that Signatories receive an unlocked version on Microsoft Word to facilitate dissemination of the Report to various offices that needed to contribute information.

11.2. Conservation Initiatives

83. The Chair invited Dr Kwan to introduce Agenda Item 11.2. Dr Kwan referred to document CMS/Dugong/MOS3/11.2 on key conservation initiatives led by or involving the Secretariat. At the heart lay the Dugong, Seagrass and Coastal Communities Initiative, which included the CMS Dugong MOU Standardized Dugong Catch and Bycatch Questionnaire, the GEF-5 Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project, the Global Dugong Genetics Project, the Gulf Collaboration Concept and the Conservation Incentive Pilot Projects.

84. Five countries were selected for the Conservation Incentive Pilot Projects: India received seed funding to develop a GEF small grant but this was not successful; the pilot in Myanmar did not proceed beyond the scoping stage; the work in Bazaruto Bay, Mozambique was incorporated into the GEF-5 Project; the work in Papua New Guinea was planned but did not eventuate; and the scoping work in Thailand is in progress.

85. The representative of Seychelles asked that when publications were released, such as that of the Global Dugong Genetics Project, the Secretariat circulate details and a link to the publication to Signatories.

86. Short presentations were given by Dr Nicolas Pilcher (CMS Dugong MOU Questionnaire); Dr Himansu S Das (Dugong and Seagrass Research Toolkit), Dr Almeida Guissamulo (WIOMSA Dugong Project), and Ms Maya Bankova (GEF-5 Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project) on a number of conservation initiatives undertaken in collaboration with the Secretariat.

87. Dr Kwan introduced the Executive Director of the Marine Research Foundation, Dr Nicolas Pilcher, who reminded the meeting that he had reported at the Second Meeting of Signatories on the Questionnaire. The results had been published and were available on the website as a PDF. He proceeded to give an updated report (CMS/Dugong/MOS3/Inf.4).

88. The key questions to ask were: whether dugongs were present? In what numbers? In what locations and what threats they were exposed to?

89. The Questionnaire had been developed in 2010-2011 and had been designed to be easy and inexpensive to use. The main cost involved travelling to the places where the Questionnaire was to be used. There were in total approximately 100 questions, although some people felt that this was too many. Seven thousand questionnaires had been completed, many in the countries taking part in the GEF-5 Project, but in addition, an Egyptian PhD student had used it. The Questionnaire could also be adapted for other species – particularly river dolphins, manatees and other river and marine species.

90. Graphs could be automatically generated showing the number of encounters with dugongs and the fate of the animals. A large percentage of fishermen had never seen a dugong, but most encounters occurred either when fishing operations were happening or while the vessels were traveling between port and the fishing grounds. The trend of reducing numbers of dugongs being caught as bycatch could be explained either by better fishing techniques or by there being fewer animals present. There was a correlation between animals being caught as bycatch and the perception of the presence of dugongs.

91. A spatial component of the database allowed sightings to be plotted on a map, upon which the location of seagrass and fishing effort could be overlaid, enabling dugong conservation hotspots to be identified, which helped choose the areas where resources should be deployed.

92. The robustness of the data acquired was tested when compared with an aerial survey conducted by Dr Christophe Cleguer in New Caledonia. There was good correspondence between the questionnaire data and the results of the aerial survey.

93. The representative of Seychelles indicated that they had not used the Questionnaire because fishing was not thought to be the main pressure but other groups such as the tourism sector might be approached. Mr Pilcher said that it was not too late to implement the questionnaire and submit data.

94. A ten-question follow-up survey form had also been designed where it was envisaged that repeat interviews should be conducted.

95. Dr Kwan introduced Dr Himansu S. Das, Head of Unit, Marine Endangered Species, EAD, where he had been working for 15 years and was one of the Secretariat's main contact points in EAD. Through his presentation, he sought to explain the background and process to develop the Dugong and Seagrass Research Toolkit (CMS/Dugong/MOS3/Inf.4). Work had begun in 2015 and had been sponsored by TOTAL and Total Abu Al Bukhoosh.

96. The toolkit had been designed based on question-driven guidelines and took account of the capacity of the different Range States. The difficulties to be overcome included the lack of standardized methods, incompatible datasets and operating procedures and the disparity between methods of investigation of mortality and necropsy procedures. The protection of seagrass habitat had also not been a priority in any of the Range States and there was little appetite for the authorities to develop alternative livelihoods. Intended outcomes from developing the toolkit were greater international compatibility, the establishment of best practice and better equipped experts.

97. The toolkit was practical and credible having been designed by experts. It could also be used by grant-making bodies to assess grant applications. The toolkit would also be used by thousands of practitioners worldwide and would be promoted at the twenty-second biennial meeting of the Society of Marine Mammology taking place in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

98. Dr Kwan introduced Dr Almeida Guissamulo, a lecturer at the Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique, who gave a presentation on the Western Indian Ocean Region Identity Distribution,

Status, Threats and Management Project. The project had been led by the Associação para a Conservação e Protecção dos Dugongos e Espécies de Mamíferos marinhos (dugongus.org) and partners in other countries, with three principal investigators supported by co-investigators for each country.

99. Work had started in 2013 and the end date had been pushed back to March 2018, completion originally having been foreseen for 2017. A grant of US\$ 489,278 had been obtained and a further US\$ 767,000 raised in co-funding. The rationale for the project was the perceived decline in dugong numbers over the past 30 years, and the aims were to improve the conservation status of dugongs in the region. Specific objectives were to identify range, improve knowledge of population genetics, gather abundance estimates, conduct simulation modelling (Population Viability Analysis (PVA) and Population and Habitat Viability Assessment (PHVA)), assess threats and identify areas where impacts were worst and to develop implementation strategies.

100. Sites covered by the project were located in Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania, Mayotte/Comoros and Mozambique.

101. The expected outcomes were accessible spatial data, the designation of new Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), the development of models for site-specific community-based conservation, management guidelines for responsible use of resources, the establishment of a regional Dugong Working Group for the Western Indian Ocean, the publication of genetic analyses, a reassessment of the Dugong's conservation status and lists of threats at a local and regional level.

102. With regard to capacity-building, two PhD students and one MSc student had been involved and research teams had received training on aerial survey techniques.

103. Accomplishments to date were a literature review, the mapping of hotspots, 916 surveys (mainly in the United Republic of Tanzania), the acquisition and distribution of acoustic loggers, a training workshop, the deployment of the acoustic loggers, and a series of meetings with National Governments. A number of publications had been produced or were in the pipeline including the management plan. Planned activities included aerial surveys, genetic analyses and more questionnaires.

104. The representative of the United Republic of Tanzania said that a large MPA had been gazetted but its management plan still had to be developed with the fisheries operations in the area having to be considered. The representative of Kenya said that there were two MPAs in southern Kenya and as cooperation with the United Republic of Tanzania was important, there was a proposal for a transboundary MPA. The GEF was being approached and the proposal had the support of the Indian Ocean Commission.

105. Dr Kwan turned attention back to document CMS/Dugong/MOS3/11.2 and introduced Ms Maya Todorova-Bankova, the coordinator of the GEF-5 Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project (CMS/Dugong/MOS3/Inf.3), to give her presentation.

106. Ms Todorova said that the grant of US\$5.58 million had been awarded for the period 2015-18 for activities to be undertaken in eight Range States, two in Africa and six in the Asia-Pacific region. Twenty-six partner organizations were taking part in 19 regional projects at 120 sites. The project was being executed by the Mohammed bin Zayed Species Fund which was administered in Abu Dhabi.

107. The goal of the project was to improve the conservation status of dugong and seagrass in the area and there were four main components: research, policy, awareness-raising and incentives. The eleven existing protected areas covered by the project had an area of 524,368 hectares and it was intended to raise this to one million.

108. The project should lead to a reduction in bycatch by eliminating the use of the worst offending nets and fishing practices. Using incentives mortality should be minimized. Incomes would be increased by providing alternative livelihoods and women would be actively encouraged to participate in the project. The challenges were a weak baseline of data, communities dependent on marine resources with no incentive or capacity to change their practices, few alternatives and a poor policy and legal framework.

109. The next steps were to consolidate and interpret results, to monitor and adapt community-based models, to continue with awareness-raising and educational activities and to measure the impact.

110. Although US\$5.58 million seemed to be a great deal of money, spread over the duration of the project and the eight participating countries, it was proving not to be enough.

111. The representative of Bahrain raised the issues of female and community involvement and the importance of respecting their views and needs. Other projects had failed because these aspects had not been taken properly into consideration. Incentives and ecotourism were also important factors.

112. With regard to ecotourism, project partners were explaining why protecting the species and habitats was important and one of the incentives and alternatives being promoted was aquaculture to lessen the impact on the marine environment.

113. The Chair asked the meeting to note the conservation initiatives summarised during this agenda item and to endorse the Dugong and Seagrass Research Toolkit. There being no objections from the floor the Toolkit was endorsed and the Meeting agreed to encourage its use and to promote it nationally and regionally, as appropriate.

Agenda Item 12. Programme of Work

12.1. Draft Programme of Work (2017-2019) to Support the Implementation of the CMS Dugong MOU

114. The Chair invited Dr Kwan to present document CMS/Dugong/MOS3/12.1, which included an outline of the priorities for the three years 2017 to 2019. Also relevant were documents CMS/Dugong/MOS3/10.1 (Report of the Secretariat) and 11.2 (Conservation Initiatives) and the Dugong and Seagrass and Coastal Communities Initiative. She indicated as well the importance of sufficient financial resources to deliver the Programme of Work (POW) and that this issue would be addressed in Agenda Item 13.

115. The priorities for the POW were to continue to develop incentive-based projects, and seek other sources of finance such as the GEF, the International Climate Initiative (IKI) and funds aimed at implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

116. Priority initiatives identified for the coming period were the South-east Andaman Initiative, involving an innovative partnership with a hotel and NGOs; the Aquacelerator Initiative led and funded by the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs in partnership with SecondMuse; and the Gulf Collaboration Concept and Red Sea Collaboration.

117. Among the tools and resources to be used would be the CMS Dugong MOU Questionnaire described by Dr Pilcher (see paragraph 84 above). The average cost of the Questionnaire was US\$5,000 per country. Dr Kwan stressed the importance of obtaining more genetic material, the main source of which was stranded animals. She urged that the DTG be asked for its advice and that the new Dugong and Seagrass Research Toolkit be used.

118. The Secretariat would seek to collaborate with private sector businesses especially those in the hospitality sector, such as the Anantara Si Kao Resort. Capacity-building initiatives would continue and training workshops would continue to be organized, such as the one scheduled for the two days immediately after the Meeting. Communications would focus on using the existing MOU network to share stories and experiences, primarily through the website. The Secretariat would also continue to provide general support to Signatories and non-signatory Range States, work with the DTG, and work towards Dugong and seagrass conservation better incorporated into mainstream policies and liaise with the wider CMS Family on cross-cutting issues such as bycatch, marine noise and ship strikes.

119. Subject to the issue of the availability of funds, Dr Kwan sought the meeting's endorsement of these priorities.

120. The representative of the UAE thanked the Dugong MOU Secretariat for preparing the working and information documents related to this Agenda Item and submitted the following written statement:

In 2003, the UAE ratified the GCC Wildlife and Natural Habitat Conservation Convention which aims to conserve species and ecosystems in particular migratory species which migrates across the GCC region, one of which is dugongs.

The Gulf is estimated to host a population of approximately 7,000 dugongs along with many other migratory species. The GCC have been collaborating to conserve and protect many species under the umbrella of GCC convention.

Consequently, the delegates of Gulf Range States met yesterday to discuss ways to further enhance our collaboration to better conserve dugongs and their habitats which are both under the umbrella of CMS and GCC Wildlife Convention. One of the main gaps that we identified was the assessment of dugong's status in the Arabian Gulf. Giving that the UAE have been conducting periodic aerial surveys since 1999 and gained lots of experience in this matter, we have agreed that the UAE will deliver trainings on the methodology of surveying to standardize the process and get a clear idea on the status of the species.

We also discussed other matters such as conservation, awareness and outreach programmes, and suggested developing a GCC action plan to align our efforts. Therefore our recommendation for the way forward was for each party to contact their GCC Convention focal points in regard to this matter to raise it as a recommendation in the coming meeting of the GCC Convention standing committee to ensure the inclusion of non- signatories gulf countries.

In regards to the information documents on Gulf Collaboration Concept as well as the Conservation Initiatives document (Agenda Item 11.2) the UAE have few comments, and we would like to submit them in writing as we have not been consulted officially. Finally, the UAE look forward to be consulted in the future in the process of drafting such documents with the secretariat.

121. The representative of France expressed thanks to the Secretariat, the Chair and to the Host Government. While recognizing that bycatch was the main threat, France stressed that other factors had to be taken into account, such as disturbance and habitat loss. The CMS Dugong MOU Questionnaire could be used to collect data, and might well be adapted for other species, in sparsely populated areas such as Mayotte and New Caledonia. The idea of collecting genetic samples was welcomed and there was scope for collaboration in the Strait of Mozambique, and studies should be done to establish the genetic diversity of New Caledonian and Australian populations. Regarding ecotourism, guidelines were available for whale watching and these could be adapted for application to dugongs.

122. Dr Kwan commented that dugongs were not the best species for wildlife watching operations, as they were difficult to see and interaction was discouraged. The Secretariat was pursuing the eco-tourism industry with the idea of seeking support for conservation efforts.

123. The representative of Australia endorsed the priorities set out in the POW but was aware that the activities came at a price and the budget was the next item on the agenda. The representative of Australia also endorsed the use of the CMS Dugong MOU Questionnaire as a basic tool for gathering data, noting that it needed to be adapted to fit local circumstances.

124. The observer from Occidental Oil and Gas International noted that Qatar was listed as Range State of the dugong but was still not a Signatory to the Dugong MOU and asked how the MOU had been engaging with the country. Mr Glowka in response confirmed that approaches had been made to the Qatar Ministry of Municipality and Environment and other partners in the country to attend the meeting particularly as Qatar is a Range State for a significant portion of the Gulf's dugongs and was working with the private sector on a dugong project. He noted that participants from Qatar would be attending the technical workshop following the Meeting of Signatories, and it was hoped that Qatar would attend the Fourth Meeting of Signatories as a Signatory of the Dugong MOU.

125. The representative of Seychelles also endorsed the POW. Regarding the Dugong and Seagrass Research Toolkit (Agenda Item 11.2), no objection was raised but procedural guidance was sought, as the Toolkit had not yet been demonstrated and it was not clear what the Signatories had been asked to endorse under that Agenda Item. Dr Kwan acknowledged that the Toolkit had not yet been fully explained to Signatories, and that a demonstration of the Toolkit would be provided later in the meeting.

126. The Chair asked the Meeting to endorse the POW. There being no objections from the floor, the POW was adopted. Signatories were urged to work together to support its implementation including the mobilisation of financial and in-kind resources.

12.2. Consideration of the Need to Review Dugong MOU Conservation and Management Plan

127. The Chair invited Dr Kwan to introduce Agenda Item 12.2. Dr Kwan said that the Conservation and Management Plan (CMP) had not been reviewed since its adoption in October 2007. It was a central element of the implementation of the MOU, so it needed to be current and relevant. She proposed that all the elements of the CMP should be comprehensively reviewed and some of the more recent international mandates such as the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (SPMS) adopted at CMS COP11 should be taken into account.

128. The Secretariat would work with the DTG to develop the Terms of Reference for the CMP's review. The option of commissioning consultants to undertake the review would be considered and it was expected that a revised draft would be presented to MOS4 for its consideration. The initial review would examine the CMP's correlation and consistency with international mandates. No need for additional goals within the CMP had been identified so far. Some adjustments might be necessary to the National Reporting template as it currently mirrors the CMP.

129. The representative of France indicated it could accept the document, but requested that two elements be included, namely threats other than bycatch (e.g. habitat loss, collisions and disturbance) and sustainable wildlife watching. The Secretariat agreed and noted these comments. The representative of France also asked where the funding would come from to pay for the proposed consultancy. Dr Kwan confirmed that France's request would be incorporated into the final Terms of Reference and that the consultancy would be funded from the core operational budget of the Dugong MOU.

130. The representative of Australia asked whether the review would include an assessment of how successful Signatories had been so far in implementing the CMP, in addition to updating and aligning it with other commitments. The Secretariat confirmed that the review would cover both these

elements. The representative of Australia also asked that the Secretariat share the Terms of Reference for the review of the CMP with Signatories, and the Secretariat agreed.

131. The Chair asked for the Meeting's endorsement. There being no objections, the meeting endorsed the need to review the CMP and the process to undertake this.

Agenda Item 13. Financial and Administrative Matters

13.1. Current Financial Status and Future Funding

132. The Chair invited Dr Kwan to introduce document CMS/Dugong/MOS3/13.1 on the Current Financial Status and Future Funding.

133. Dr Kwan thanked EAD, who on behalf of the Government of the UAE, provided financial support which had covered the Secretariat's staffing and activities over the past three years.

134. Annex I of the document contained details of relevant expenditures, some of the key items of which were: the Secretariat staff – the Programme Officer, a dedicated Programme Associate, a shared Programme Associate and a percentage of the Executive Coordinator's time together with four consultants and four interns; the Second Meeting of the Signatories in Manila in 2013, held in parallel with a workshop on the GEF-5 Project; the Sirenian Symposium and Marine Mammal Conference; and various small-scale funding agreements.

135. The annual average expenditure on activities over the last reporting period, other than staffing and office-related costs, had been approximately US\$126,000.

136. During the past triennium, the Secretariat had been very active in seeking additional funding to support projects, and this would continue in the coming triennium. Over the reporting period, twelve proposals had been developed, some successful and others not. The greatest achievement was the GEF-5 Project and it was hoped that the Secretariat would be invited to submit a full proposal to the German Government's International Climate Initiative (IKI).

137. The Secretariat recognized the need to diversify and broaden the financial resource base of the MOU to complement the very generous contribution of the UAE.

138. Dr Kwan presented a possible model which aimed to raise US\$120,000 through voluntary contributions from the Signatories based on an amended UN Scale of Assessment. The model had a cap limiting the highest contributions to 20 per cent with a minimum contribution of US\$2,275 (Annex 2 of the document). Signatories were invited to consider this option or suggest alternative means of raising resources for programme activities.

139. The representative of France understood the concerns raised by the Secretariat about the need for reliable income, but was not in favour of assessed voluntary contributions. By their nature voluntary contributions were offered when circumstances permitted. Other methods of raising funds for programme activities would have to be examined.

140. Mr Glowka noted that there were precedents within the CMS Family for adopting such a system, and that some of the countries participating in those fora were also signatories to the Dugong MOU and attending the meeting. He stressed that the existing precedents were all voluntary since CMS Memoranda of Understanding were legally non-binding. The Secretariat had suggested a target of US\$120,000 to be raised to finance programme activities and the model presented would be one way of reaching it. Another option could be to rely on ad hoc voluntary contributions. Either way, he was certain that after the UAE had already invested approximately US\$4.2 million in the Dugong MOU since

2009, and the results of this investment had been so significant, other Signatories would also want to contribute their share.

141. The representative of the Seychelles expressed gratitude to the UAE for having so generously supported the MOU over the years. The target of US\$120,000 seemed reasonable and the Seychelles having made voluntary contributions in the past was amenable to doing so again.

142. The Chair asked for the meeting's endorsement of the target of US\$120,000 noting that concerns had been raised to adopting a system of voluntary assessed contributions. There was no objection and the Secretariat undertook to contact Signatories with the aim of raising the funds.

Agenda Item 14. Adoption of Outcomes

143. The Chair invited Dr Kwan to present the outcomes of the Meeting for adoption. Dr Kwan noted that the Secretariat had prepared a summary of the key outcomes of the meeting. These were projected on the screen and Dr Kwan was invited by the Chair to read through each in turn. One of the items considered was the endorsement of the Dugong and Seagrass Research Toolkit, and Dr Tara Sayuri Whitty from the University of California in San Diego gave a demonstration of the toolkit. The outcomes subject to some amendments proposed by participants, such as the representative of the Philippines' suggestion that the role of the Programme of Work in guiding the Signatories in implementing the MOU should be more clearly defined, were adopted by the Meeting. The agreed Summary List of Key Outcomes can be found at Annex 2 of this report.

Agenda Item 15. Date and Venue for the Fourth Meeting of Signatories

144. The Chair invited Dr Kwan to introduce Item 15. Dr Kwan said that the Fourth Meeting of Signatories was scheduled to take place in 2020. Mr Glowka said that hosting the Meeting of Signatories could be seen as a voluntary contribution. He also pointed out the desirability of holding the Meeting of Signatories in different locations through the MOU range. None of the Signatories present expressed interest at this point in hosting the next MOS.

Agenda Item 16. Any other Business

145. The Chair invited the Meeting to raise any other business. The representative of the Philippines reminded the Meeting that the Executive Secretary had earlier mentioned that the CMS COP12 would be taking place in Manila in October 2017. As host, the Philippines looked forward to seeing as many as possible of the people present at the current meeting at COP12.

Agenda Item 17. Closure of the Meeting

146. The Chair invited Dr Kwan to make remarks in closing the meeting. Dr Kwan thanked all the participants for their active engagement over a busy two-day period. The meeting had been conducted in an amicable spirit. She expressed her thanks to EAD, the UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, her colleagues in the Secretariat, volunteers, the hotel staff and the Chair for presiding over the meeting with tact and skill.

147. Mr Glowka echoed Dr Kwan's sentiments and presented flowers to the Chair and Dr Kwan. He remarked on the passion of the participants which served as an inspiration to the Secretariat.

148. The Chair added her thanks to the participants and declared the meeting closed.

Annex 1

**RULES OF PROCEDURE
FOR SIGNATORY STATE MEETINGS OF THE DUGONG MOU**

(as amended by and adopted at MOS3)

Rule 1 – Purpose

1. These Rules of Procedure shall apply to the Signatory State Meetings to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs (*Dugong dugong*) and their Habitats throughout their Range, hereinafter referred to as the “MOU”.
2. Insofar as they are applicable, these Rules shall apply *mutatis mutandis*² to any other meeting held in the framework of the MOU that does not have its own terms of reference or rules of procedure.

Rule 2 – Signatory State Meetings

1. Signatory State Meetings shall take place once every three years, unless the meeting decides otherwise to address specific, emerging issues.
2. Unless there is an offer from a Signatory, the Signatory State Meeting shall take place at the seat of the Dugong MOU Secretariat or another United Nations duty station taking into consideration cost-effectiveness.
3. The Secretariat shall notify the venue and the dates of each Signatory State Meeting at least six months before the meeting is due to commence. The notification shall include a deadline for submission of proposals to be discussed at the meeting.
4. Documents for Signatory State Meetings shall be made available at least thirty days before the start of the meeting.

Rule 3 – Signatories

1. Each Signatory to the MOU, hereinafter referred to as a “Signatory”, shall be entitled to be represented at the meeting by a delegation consisting of a Head of Delegation and such Alternative Representative(s) and Advisers as the Signatory may deem necessary.
2. The Representative of a Signatory shall exercise the voting rights of that Signatory. In their absence, an Alternative Representative of that Signatory shall act in their place over the full range of their functions.
3. Logistical and other limitations may require that no more than three delegates of any Signatory be present at the meeting. The Secretariat shall notify Signatories of any such limitations, including available funding, in advance of the meeting.

Rule 4 – Observers

1. The United Nations, its Specialized Agencies, and any State not a Signatory to the MOU may be represented at the meeting by Observers who shall have the right to participate but not to vote.
2. Co-operating Partners that have signed the MOU shall have the right to participate but not to vote.

² changing [only] those things which need to be changed

3. Any agency or body technically qualified in the conservation and management of dugongs and their habitats, and which has informed the Secretariat of its desire to be represented at the meeting by Observers, shall be permitted to be represented unless at least one-third of the Signatories present object. Once admitted, these Observers shall have the right to participate in discussions but not to vote.
4. Bodies and agencies desiring to be represented at the meeting by Observers shall submit the names of their representatives to the Secretariat prior to the opening of the meeting.
5. Logistical and other limitations may require that no more than two Observers from any non-Signatory State, body or agency be present at the meeting. The Secretariat shall notify Observers of any such limitations in advance of the meeting.

Rule 5 – Credentials

1. The Head of Delegation, any Alternative Representative(s) or other members of the delegation of a Signatory shall have been granted permission by, or on behalf of, an appropriate authority, being the Minister of the focal Ministry for the MOU or a higher body, enabling the delegation to fully represent the Signatory at the meeting and to vote.
2. The credentials shall include: the full title and date of the meeting; a full list of representatives authorized to represent the Signatory and to transact all such matters with an indication of who is the Head of Delegation; a full signature of the appropriate authority as indicated above and printed on official letterhead, preferably with a seal, clearly indicating that the credentials have been issued by the appropriate authority. Prior to the Meeting, the Secretariat shall provide a credentials template as an example.
3. The credentials shall be submitted in their original form to the Secretariat within 24 hours of the start of the meeting. If credentials are presented in a language other than the working language of the MOU they shall be accompanied by an official translation into English.
4. The secretariat, in consultation with the Chair or the Vice-Chair (see Rule 7 below) shall examine the credentials submitted and report to the Signatory State Meeting thereon for final approval. Pending a decision on their credentials, delegates may participate provisionally at the meeting.

Rule 6 – Secretariat

The Dugong MOU Secretariat shall service and act as secretariat for the meeting.

Rule 7 – Officers

At its first plenary session the meeting shall appoint a Chair and a Vice-Chair for the Meeting.

Rule 8 – Seating

Delegations shall be seated in accordance with standard United Nations practice which uses the alphabetical order of the full official names of the Signatories in the English language.

Rule 9 - Quorum

No Signatory State Meeting shall take place in the absence of a quorum. A quorum for initiation of a Signatory State Meeting and plenary sessions to the Signatory State Meeting shall consist of one third of the Signatories respectively.

Rule 10 – Speakers

1. The Chair shall call upon speakers in the order in which they indicate their desire to speak, with precedence given to Signatories, followed by non-Signatory Range States, Co-operating Partners and other Observers, in that order. A Representative of a Signatory or an Observer may speak only if called upon by the Chair, who may call a speaker to order if the remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.
2. The Chair may, in the course of discussion at the meeting, propose to the meeting inter alia:
 - (a) Time limits for speakers;
 - (b) Limitations on the number of times members of a Signatory’s delegation or Observers may speak on any subject;
 - (c) The closure of the list of speakers;
 - (d) The adjournment or the closure of the debate on the particular subject under discussion;
 - (e) The suspension or adjournment of the meeting.
3. The Chair, in the exercise of the functions of that office, remains under the authority of the Signatory State Meeting.

Rule 11 – Procedural Motions

During the discussion of any matter, a delegate representing a Signatory may make a point of order. The point of order shall be immediately decided by the Chair. A delegate representing a Signatory may appeal against any ruling of the Chair. The appeal shall immediately be put to a vote, and the Chair’s ruling shall stand unless a majority of the Signatories present and voting decides otherwise.

Rule 12 – Voting

1. The Signatories shall make every effort to reach agreement on all matters of substance by consensus. If all efforts to reach consensus have been exhausted and no agreement reached, subject to paragraph 4 below, the decision shall, as a last resort, be taken by a two-thirds majority vote of the Signatories present. Votes on procedural matters shall be decided by a simple majority of votes cast.
2. Without prejudice to the provisions of Rule 3, paragraph 2, each Representative duly accredited according to Rule 5 shall have one vote.
3. The meeting shall vote by a show of hands. The Chair may in an exceptional case request a roll-call vote. The roll-call vote shall be taken in the seating order of the delegations.
4. Decisions on financial matters and on amendments to the MOU shall be taken by consensus.

Rule 13 – Committees and Working Groups

1. The Signatory State Meeting may establish such Committees and Working Groups as may be necessary to enable it to carry out its functions.
2. Unless otherwise decided, each Committee and Working Group shall elect its own officers. As a general rule, sessions of Committees and Working Groups shall be open to Signatories and Observers, unless the Chair of the Committee or Working Group, on request of a Signatory, determines otherwise.

Rule 14 – Language

1. English, the working language of the MOU, shall be the working language of the meeting.

2. A delegate may speak in a language other than the working language. They shall be responsible for providing interpretation into the working language. Any document submitted to the Secretariat in any language other than the working language shall be accompanied by an appropriate translation into English.

Rule 15 – Records

Summary records of the Signatory State Meeting in English shall be circulated.

Rule 16 – Amendments to the MOU

1. The MOU (including the Annex thereto) may be amended at any session of the Signatory State Meeting.
2. Proposals for amendment may only be made Signatory States.
3. The process and timing for submission of proposals for amendment is as follows:
 - a) The text of any proposed amendment, with supporting rationale included, and if appropriate, supporting scientific evidence, shall be provided to the Secretariat at least 150 days before the Signatory State Meeting at which it is to be considered.
 - b) The Secretariat shall, within 14 days of receipt, communicate the proposal to all Signatories, and, in the case of technical amendments, to the Dugong Technical Group (DTG).
 - c) Comments on the proposed amendment may be provided to the Secretariat up to 60 days before the Signatory State Meeting.
 - d) The Secretariat shall communicate any comments received to the Signatories as soon as possible after receipt.

Rule 17 – Procedure

These Rules of Procedure shall enter into effect immediately after their adoption. Amendments to these Rules shall be adopted by consensus by the Signatory State Meeting.

Rule 18 – Authority

In the event of a conflict between any provision of these rules and any clause of the MOU, the MOU shall prevail.

Annex 2

**SUMMARY LIST OF KEY OUTCOMES OF
THE THIRD MEETING OF SIGNATORIES TO THE DUGONG MOU**

OUTCOME #	AGENDA ITEM	DOCUMENT	OUTCOME
1	3.1. Adoption of the Rules of Procedure	CMS/Dugong/MOS3/3	Secretariat to review CMS procedures regarding proxy signature of letters of credentials and report back to Signatories as appropriate.
2	3.2. Proposed Amendments to the Rules of Procedure	CMS/Dugong/MOS3/3	Corrections to Rules of Procedure for use at future sessions of the Meeting of Signatories adopted.
3	10.2. Report of the Dugong Technical Group	CMS/Dugong/MOS3/10.2	Current members of Dugong Technical Group reappointed until next Meeting of Signatories.
4	11.1. National Reports of Signatories	CMS/Dugong/MOS3/11.1; CMS/Dugong/MOS3/Inf.9	Secretariat to distribute 'National Report Template' to Signatories in an unlocked Microsoft Word format to enable track changes functionality and enhanced usability.
5	11.2. Conservation Initiatives	CMS/Dugong/MOS3/11.2; CMS/Dugong/MOS3/Inf.8	Secretariat to notify Signatories and stakeholders after 'Global Dugong Genetic Project' report is made publicly available.
6	11.2. Conservation Initiatives	CMS/Dugong/MOS3/11.2; CMS/DugongMOS3/Inf.7	Dugong and Seagrass Research Toolkit endorsed.
7	12.1. Draft Programme of Work (2017-2019) to Support the Implementation of the CMS Dugong MOU	CMS/Dugong/MOS3/12; CMS/Dugong/MOS3/Inf.11	Programme of Work and priority areas of action endorsed, taking into consideration comments made by Signatories. Secretariat to distribute officially for comment the Gulf Collaboration Concept to the Gulf Range States. CMS Dugong MOU Questionnaire, GEF-5 Dugong and Seagrass website endorsed for use, where appropriate, by Range States.
8	12.2. Consideration of the Need to Review the Dugong MOU Conservation and Management Plan	CMS/Dugong/MOS3/12.2; CMS/Dugong/MOS3/Inf.5	Review of CMP endorsed taking into consideration comments made by Signatories. The Scope of CMP Review to be shared with Signatories. The SPMS and the CMP's alignment with it endorsed.
9	13.1. Current Financial Status and Future Funding	CMS/Dugong/MOS3/13.1	A target for voluntary contributions by signatories of a minimum of USD 120,000 per annum endorsed. Secretariat to invite Signatory States to make voluntary contributions to achieve this target.

Annex 3

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

SIGNATORY STATES

AUSTRALIA

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