

**FOURTH MEETING OF SIGNATORY STATES TO THE MEMORANDUM OF
UNDERSTANDING ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF DUGONGS
(DUGONG DUGON) AND THEIR HABITATS THROUGHOUT THEIR RANGE**

(Riyadh, 6-7 May 2024)

UNEP/CMS/DUGONG/MOS4/Doc.11.1

ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL REPORTS SUBMITTED BY SIGNATORY STATES

(Prepared by Secretariat of the Dugong MOU)

Summary: This document presents a synthesis of national reports submitted by Signatories and Range States on their implementation of the MOU and its Conservation Management Plan. The document considers, i) reports submitted to the Secretariat in 2024 for MOS4, and ii) reports submitted to the Secretariat in 2017 for MOS3, which were part of a national report analysis conducted following MOS3.

The Meeting is invited to: (a) note and review the national reports and analysis; and (b) to offer guidance and directives to the Secretariat on future reporting template and requirements.

Background

1. In accordance with paragraphs 6 and 9 of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs (*Dugong Dugon*) and their Habitats Throughout their Range (Dugong MOU), Signatory States are required to report on the implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan for the Dugong MOU (CMP) to each Meeting of Signatory States (MOS).
2. These national reports provide vital information on the implementation of the Dugong MOU and CMP, assisting the Signatory States and the Secretariat of the Dugong MOU in determining progress in achieving the objectives and targets of the CMP, highlighting areas for attention, and identifying adaptive measures and collaboration initiatives. They also serve as a valuable record of national achievements for dugong and seagrass conservation.
3. The Dugong MOU [National Report Template](#), endorsed by Signatory States at the Second Meeting of Signatory States (MOS2, Manila, Philippines, February 2013), was designed to mirror the structure and content of the CMP as well as address requirements of CMS Resolution 10.9 on the [Future Structure and Strategies of the CMS and CMS Family](#).
4. The national report template shall be revised to reflect any changes to the CMP agreed upon to at the present meeting (refer to document [UNEP/CMS/Dugong/MOS4/Doc.13](#)). A revised National Report Template, reflecting these changes, will be presented to the Fifth Meeting of Signatory States (MOS5) for consideration and adoption.

National reports submitted in 2024 for MOS4

5. The national report format was shared with all Signatory States on 14 December 2023, with a request to submit their national reports by 29 February 2024. As of 12 March 2024, the Secretariat had received six national reports out of a possible 27 Signatory States. No national reports were submitted by countries within the range of dugongs that are not Signatory States to the MOU. The Secretariat extends its gratitude to the Signatory States that provided national reports: Australia, Eritrea, Madagascar, Philippines, Somalia and Thailand.
6. All submitted national reports were uploaded to the meeting [website](#) as they were submitted.
7. Of the six reports submitted, two used an incorrect format and could not be included in this analysis.
8. Objective 2 of the CMP, 'Improve our understanding of dugongs through research and monitoring,' was unanimously identified as the highest priority by all countries. Similarly, all three actions listed under Objective 2 ('Determine the distribution and abundance of dugong populations to provide a base for future conservation efforts and actions' - Action 2.1, 'Conduct research and monitoring into dugongs' - Action 2.2, 'Collect and analyse data that supports the identification of sources of mortality, the mitigation of threats, and improved approaches to conservation practices' - Action 2.3) were marked as high priority by 100% of countries.
9. Similarly, 100% of countries reported implementing the following Example Actions listed under Objective 2:
 - Conducting baseline studies or gathering secondary information on dugong populations using cost effective techniques, including community-based monitoring ([Objective 2/ Action](#)

2.1/ Example Action (a)¹.

- Promoting the use of traditional ecological knowledge in research and management studies, where possible (Objective 2/ Action 2.2/ Example Action (d))²
- Involving local communities in research and monitoring programmes, providing training as required (Objective 2/ Action 2.2/ Example Action (e))²

10. Seventy-five percent (75%) of countries ranked the following Actions as high priority:

- 'Identify, assess and evaluate the threats to dugong populations and develop appropriate measures to address these threats' (Objective 1/ Action 1.1)³.
- 'Assess the risk of, and develop measures to mitigate against, the degradation of dugong habitats' (Objective 3/ Action 3.3)⁴.
- 'Conduct research into and monitoring of important dugong habitats' (Objective 4/ Action 4.1)⁵.
- 'Consult with local communities to encourage their active participation in conservation efforts' (Objective 5/ Action 5.2)⁶.
- 'Develop and implement mechanisms for effective exchange of information' (Objective 6/ Action 6.2)⁷.
- 'Develop and implement a regional database of relevant information in relation to dugong conservation and management' (Objective 6/ Action 6.4)⁷.
- 'Encourage all Range States to participate in the MOU and its conservation and management activities' (Objective 7/ Action 7.1)⁸.
- 'Create links and develop synergies with other relevant regional conservation conventions, MOUs and Agreements' (Objective 7/ Action 7.4)⁸.

11. The Actions identified as ones of the lowest priority by 50% of responding countries were:

- 'Identify and where appropriate, rehabilitate degraded dugong habitats' (Objective 3/ Action 3.4)⁴.
- 'Collaborate with and assist Signatory and non-Signatory States to combat illegal international and domestic trade, and to cooperate in enforcement activities relating to dugong products' (Objective 6/ Action 6.1)⁷.

12. Twenty-five percent (25%) of reporting countries listed the following Actions as their lowest priority:

- 'Reduce to the greatest extent practicable the incidental mortality of dugongs arising from other anthropogenic activities' (Objective 1/ Action 1.3)³.
- 'Ensure that subsistence and customary use of dugong is sustainable in areas where it is permitted' (Objective 1/ Action 1.5)³.
- 'Assess the risk of, and develop measures to mitigate against, the degradation of dugong habitats' (Objective 3/ Action 3.3)⁴.

National reports submitted in 2017 for MOS3

13. In 2020, the Secretariat supported an analysis of the national reports submitted in 2017 before

¹ Objective 2: Improve our understanding of dugong through research and monitoring; Action 2.1: Determine the distribution and abundance of dugong populations to provide a base for future conservation efforts and actions.

² Objective 2: Improve our understanding of dugong through research and monitoring; Action 2.2: Determine the distribution and abundance of dugong populations to provide a base for future conservation efforts and actions.

³ Objective 1: Reduce direct and indirect causes of dugong mortality...

⁴ Objective 3: Protect, conserve and manage habitats for dugong.

⁵ Objective 4: Improve our understanding of dugong habitats through research and monitoring.

⁶ Objective 5: Raise awareness of dugong conservation.

⁷ Objective 6: Enhance national, regional and international cooperation.

⁸ Objective 7: Promote implementation of the MOU.

and after the Third Meeting of Signatory States (MOS3, Abu Dhabi, March 2017), as reported in document [CMS/Dugong/MOS3/Report, para.130](#). The full report of the analysis carried out, titled '2016-2019 National Report Analysis – Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs and their Habitats throughout their Range', is available in document [CMS/Dugong/MOS4/11.2/Add.1](#).

14. Out of the 28 reports submitted to the Secretariat by the end of 2017, 25 were in the correct format and included in the analysis.
15. Ninety percent (90%) of countries reported on the Example Action 'Establish baseline data collection and monitoring programmes to gather information on the nature and magnitude of threats' under [Objective 1/ Action 1.1/ Example Action \(a\)](#)⁹.
16. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of countries reported on the Example Action 'Designate and manage protected/conservation areas, sanctuaries or temporary exclusion zones in areas of critical habitat, or take other measures (e.g., modification of fishing gear, banning destructive fishing practices, restrictions on vessel traffic) to remove threats to such areas and involving the local community as much as possible', under [Objective 3/ Action 3.2 / Example Action \(a\)](#)¹⁰.
17. Eighty-four percent (84%) of countries reported on Example Action 'Encourage the participation of government institutions, intergovernmental government organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and the general community (e.g., students, volunteers, fishing communities, local communities) in research, conservation and management efforts', under [Objective 5/ Action 5.1 / Example Action \(j\)](#)¹¹.
18. Eighty percent (80%) of countries reported Example Action 'Consider protecting dugong habitats as part of ecosystem-based management (e.g., networks of marine protected areas)¹² and 'Develop partnerships with universities, research institutions, non-government organizations, training bodies and other relevant organizations to support capacity building initiatives¹³.
19. Only 4% of countries reported Example Action 'Develop a web-based information resource for dugong conservation (including data on populations, migration, on-going projects) based on the IUCN website', under [Objective 6/ Action 6.2/ Example Action \(c\)](#)¹⁴.
20. Only 12% of countries reported Example Action 'Develop a streamlined format for reporting and exchanging information on the state of dugong conservation at the national level'¹⁴ and, 'Encourage Signatory States to become contracting parties to global fisheries agreements such as the UN Fish Stocks Agreement (1995) and the FAO Compliance Agreement (1993) and to implement the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (1995)¹⁴.
21. The report features a 'Suggestions for a way forward' section, offering recommendations for enhancing the national reporting template. The Secretariat acknowledges the necessity of

⁹ Objective 1: Reduce direct and indirect causes of dugong mortality; Action 1.1: Identify, assess and evaluate the threats to dugong populations and develop appropriate measures to address these threats.

¹⁰ Objective 3: Protect, conserve and manage habitats for dugong; Action 3.2: Establish necessary measures to protect and conserve dugong habitats.

¹¹ Objective 5: Raise awareness of dugong conservation; Action 5.1: Establish education, awareness and information programmes.

¹² Objective 3: Protect, conserve and manage habitats for dugong; Action 3.2: Establish necessary measures to protect and conserve dugong habitats.

¹³ Objective 9: Enhance national, regional and international cooperation on capacity building; Action 9.1: Promote capacity building at all levels to strengthen conservation measures.

¹⁴ Objective 6: Enhance national, regional and international cooperation; Action 6.2: Develop and implement mechanisms for effective exchange of information.

reviewing and modifying the national reporting template and invites feedback from Signatory States.

Action requested

22. The Meeting is invited to:

- a) Acknowledge and review the analysis of national reports submitted in 2024 for MOS4.
- b) Acknowledge and review the 2016-2019 National Report Analysis.
- c) Offer guidance and directives to the Secretariat on future national reporting requirements and reporting template.