



**TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS AND MEETING TO SIGN THE  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING CONCERNING CONSERVATION AND  
MANAGEMENT OF DUGONGS (*DUGONG DUGON*) AND THEIR HABITATS  
THROUGHOUT THEIR RANGE**

*28 - 31 October 2007, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates*

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Agenda Item 1-2

**WORKSHOP OF WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN REGION:  
DISCUSSION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONSERVATION AND  
MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR DUGONGS IN THE WEST INDIAN OCEAN**

**1. Abu Dhabi Declaration (May 2006)**

**Declaration of Intent on Cooperation on the Conservation of Dugongs and their  
Habitats in the Arabian Gulf, Red Sea and Western Indian Ocean Region  
Abu Dhabi, 29 – 31, May, 2006**

Dugong range countries of the Arabian Gulf, Red Sea and Western Indian Ocean, hither to called “the region”:

*Aware*, based upon the best available scientific evidence, that most of the dugong populations and their habitats are threatened throughout the range of their occurrence in the region;

*Recognizing* that dugongs travel over large distances and have a wide range of distribution within the region, thereby requiring regional cooperation and coordination among the range states in the region;

*Acknowledging* that dugong populations are threatened, directly or indirectly by some human activities including fishing activities (especially gillnets), unsustainable coastal development, pollution, uncontrolled mariculture, tourism, boat strikes, and illegal hunting and damage to seagrass habitat;

*Noting* that dugongs have a priority for conservation action by virtue of their being listed in IUCN Red list and various international agreements including the Convention of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);

*Realizing* that there is a general lack of scientific information required for conservation of dugongs in the region, especially pertaining to the status of dugong populations and their habitats;

*Acknowledging* that, despite limited resources, government and non-government agencies, and international organizations have taken up varying degrees of conservation actions for dugongs and their habitats at local, national and regional levels; and

*Further noting* recommendations of relevant international organizations including the seventh and eighth sessions of the Convention of Migratory Species (CMS) Conference of the Parties and the first and second meetings on Dugong conservation and management held in Thailand in August 2005 and May 2006 respectively, calling on dugong range states to develop and actively participate in regional cooperative endeavors on dugong conservation;

Hereby agree:

1. To work closely together to improve or maintain as appropriate the conservation status of dugongs and the habitats on which they depend.
2. To make every effort to formulate, review, revise and harmonize local/national legislation or regulations pertaining to dugongs and their habitats as appropriate.
3. To develop mechanisms towards facilitating exchange of scientific expertise, information, research findings and outcomes of conservation actions among the countries of the region.
4. To undertake joint research programmes and collaborative studies on population abundance, distribution, biology, ecology and conservation of dugongs and their habitats especially across transboundary sites and including the studies of social and economic aspects of conservation initiatives.
5. To develop and implement a Memorandum of Understanding and regional and sub regional conservation and Management Action Plans on dugongs and their habitats.
6. To endeavor to participate in all regional and international initiatives on dugong conservation and work towards concluding agreements designed to foster cooperation in dugong conservation as appropriate.
7. To develop research and management capacity within and among the range states.

## **2. Implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan**

Conservation and Management Plan for Dugongs (*Dugong dugon*) and their habitats of the Arabian Gulf, Red Sea and Western Indian Ocean Region

## Goal 1: Improve Understanding

<b>Objective 1. Improve our understanding of dugong through research and monitoring</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Time-scale</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>
1.1 Determine the distribution and abundance of dugong populations	High	Immediate	Information population estimates and distribution patterns
1.2 Conduct research and monitoring of dugongs	High	Continuous	Regular research and monitoring to assess and review conservation efforts
1.3 Identify causes of mortality and other possible threats to dugongs and their habitat.	High	Continuous	Data to improve conservation practices

<b>Objective 2. Improve our understanding of dugong habitats through research and monitoring</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Time-scale</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>
2.1 Identify critical dugong habitats including foraging areas and migratory routes	High	Immediate	To identify important areas for conservation
2.2 Conduct research and monitoring of dugong habitats	High	Continuous	Promote dugong conservation on the basis of findings of research and monitoring

## Goal 2: Conserve Species

<b>Objective 3. Reduce direct and indirect causes of dugong mortality</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Time-scale</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>
3.1 Identify, assess and evaluate threats to dugong populations and develop appropriate measures to address these threats	High	Continuous	Data will help develop the appropriate conservation measures for the different types and levels of threats.
3.2 Reduce incidental capture and mortality of dugongs	High	Continuous	Reduce mortality rates
3.3 Reduce dugong mortality due to anthropogenic activities such as boat hits, marine pollution etc.	High	Continuous	Reduce mortality rates
3.4 Reduce illegal take of dugongs.	High	Continuous	Control of illegal take of dugongs

## Goal 3: Conserve Habitat

<b>Objective 4. Conserve and manage dugong habitats.</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Time-scale</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>
4.1 Identify and map dugong habitats such as seagrass beds and migratory routes	High	Immediate	Critical habitats identified and mapped
4.2 Identify direct and indirect pressures on dugong habitats	High	Immediate	Identify pressure on dugong habitats.
4.3 Develop necessary measures to protect and /or conserve dugong habitats	High	Continuous	Measures to protect dugong habitats are developed and implemented
4.4 Rehabilitate degraded dugong habitats	Medium	Continuous	Recovery of degraded dugong habitats

#### Goal 4: Promote Awareness and Education

<b>Objective 5. Develop awareness for conservation of dugong and its habitat</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Time-scale</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>
5.1 Develop and implement education and awareness programs	High	Continuous	Increase awareness of the different stakeholders
5.2 Encourage participation of local communities in conservation efforts	High	Continuous	Involvement of local communities in conservation activities
5.3 Work towards including marine biodiversity particularly endangered species such as dugongs in school curriculum.	Medium	Continuous	Increase awareness on dugongs and their habitats

#### Goal 5: Develop legal framework

<b>Objective 6. Develop legal protection of dugongs and their habitats</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Time-scale</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>
6.1 Work towards incorporating dugong and habitat conservation measures into national legislation.	High	Immediate	Dugong and its habitats are provided with appropriate legal protection
6.2 Review, and where necessary, strengthen national legal protection for dugongs and their habitats	High	Continuous	Laws and regulations protecting dugongs are strengthened

#### Goal 6: Enhance national, regional and international cooperation

<b>Objective 7. Develop national, regional and international cooperation on dugong research and conservation</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Time-scale</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>
7.1 Develop and adopt mechanism for effective exchange of information	High	Continuous	Mechanism for cooperation and information sharing by range states are established.
7.2 Improve coordination amongst government and non-government agencies in for the conservation of dugongs and their habitats.	High	Continuous	Coordination between various agencies established.
7.3 Develop regional database of relevant information in relation to dugong conservation and management	Medium	Continuous	Shared database on dugongs and their habitats.
7.4 Promote capacity building at all levels to strengthen conservation measures	High	Continuous	Capacity building of researchers in range states