

Minutes on the First National Steering Committee Meeting

The first National Steering committee meeting for GEF was held on 14th May 2010 in NEC conference hall. The following members were present in the meeting.

1. Mr.Karma Tshiteem, GEF Operational Focal Point
2. Mr.Chencho Norbu, Director, DoA
3. Aum Kunzang C .Namgyel, MD, MFA
4. Mr.Yeshey Penjor, ESD/NEC
5. Mr.Tandin Dorji, DoFPS/MOAF
6. Mr.Tenzin Chophel, PPD, MoA
7. Mr.Pema Wangyel, PPD, MOF
8. Mr.Norbu Wanghcuk, PMCD, GNHC
9. Mr.Wangchuk Namgyel, PMCD, GNHC
10. Ms.Jambay Zangmo, DCD, GNHC

The Chair in his opening remark welcomed the members to the first steering meeting and explained the motivation of setting up NSC meeting. Earlier there was no such forum to capture information systemically especially under land degradation and climate change focal areas. It was felt that there was need to create forum and also under GEF 5 mechanisms there was a requirement to create a national steering committee. The main responsibility of committee will be to review and clear all projects submitted to GEF under Resource Allocation Framework (RAF) and share information and monitor the progress of the projects.

- The chair who also serves as the Operational Focal Point for GEF informed that under GEF 4 , Bhutan was under the group allocation in accessing GEF fund under Climate Change and Biodiversity focal areas. However, in Hanoi workshop it was informed that Bhutan is now under country allocation for the above two focal areas where it can access around USD 4.6 to 5.4 million for period of four years.

There are other opportunities under GEF to explore funding for :

- International water
- SGP projects
- USD 8,000 for GEF OFP
- USD 30,000 for national portfolio identification

The recommended PIFs which were not approved before June 2010 may be resubmitted for consideration under GEF 5 strategic programs to GEF funding.

- Mr. Yeshey Penjore on behalf of the UNFCCC focal point presented the overview of the support under climate change area. He informed that funds under UNFCCC are
- LDF Fund to implement LDC Work Program including the NAPAs. Under NAPA there are 9 prioritized and ranked projects .. Among the 49 LDC countries Bhutan was the first country to access the fund under Adaptation Fund and implement the project.
- Special Climate Change Fund (limited Funds)
- Adaptation Fund of the Kyoto Protocol

Other funding sources for climate change include:

- GEF Trust Fund
- Copenhagen Green Climate Fund (no money and status not clear)
- (Hatoyama Initiative – (initially Cool earth Partnership)
- UN –REDD Programme

He also mentioned about the ADB TA project around US\$ 700,000 mainly for capacity building for NEC in Climate Change. The Director of DOA mentioned that the capacity building needs assessment for climate change under the ADB TA should not be confined within NECS but should include key central agencies and the communities. It is important to learn from each other and share the experiences.

The chair directed the NEC, MOA and PMCD, GNHC to meet once to sort out the issues and see how best to mainstream the activities. TA could be used for capacity building related issues. The CC funding could come together.

Wangchuk Namgyel from PMCD briefed the meeting on the increase in fund allocation to every LDC to 6 million from around 3.4 million to implement NAPA priorities. He also highlighted the need of revising the Bhutan NAPA primarily for two reasons. First, Bhutan NAPA was prepared way back in 2005, therefore the cost and priorities due to change in circumstances and awareness and new knowledge on climate change may have changed. Second, Bhutan NAPA contains very limited prioritized activities.

Wangchuk Namgay suggested NEC as the focal point for UNFCCC to coordinate in accessing the balance fund available under UNFCCC to implement the remaining NAPA priorities and also revise the Bhutan NAPA to take on board the new priorities. In this respect, the meeting however suggested GNHC to coordinate NAPA Bhutan since it cuts across the sectors requiring strong coordination. The meeting decided to have a separate discussion between GNHC and NEC to finalize the lead agency for Bhutan NAPA.

- The Director, DOA presented the overview of the support under land degradation area. He proposed the need to approach these issues from the program wide approach instead of piecemeal so as to maximize the gains from synergy.

Under the SLMP project , NSSC was able to support 8 candidates for masters on soil services.

1. Ugyen from IT section presented the GEF website which was recently developed by the GNHC. The house suggested improvement to the website to make it appear more Bhutanese. Towards

this end, the house recommended inserting some Bhutanese landscapes pictures. The house directed to link Bhutan GEF website , to other important agencies websites such as NECS, NSSC, MoAF, UNCCD, UNFCC etc.

2. The concept paper on Biodiversity Conservation and Rural livelihood Adaptation strategies for Climate Change in High Atitlute Mountains areas of Bhutan amounting to US\$ 4.450m was reviewed and endorsed. The PPD, MOAF was asked to further improve the concept paper in consultation with its Departments and submit the same to GEF in July 2010.

The NEC, MoA and GNHC were asked to relook into the projects received from the sectors under additional NAPA financing window and to package the projects under one program for ease of coordination and to promote synergies .

3. The date for the next NSC meeting was fixed toward the third week of July 2010.