

No.14-2/2016-NRM-I (48562)
Government of India
Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare
Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare
(RFS Division)

118, B-Wing, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi

Dated: 14th May, 2019

Subject: Minutes of the Video Conference held on 30th April, 2019 to finalise the fund flow mechanism and next steps for implementation of Global Environment Facility (GEF) project titled 'Green Agriculture: Transforming Indian Agriculture for global environmental benefits and the conservation of critical biodiversity and forest landscapes' -reg.

A Video Conference was held on 30th April, 2019 under the chairpersonship of Dr. Alka Bhargava, Additional Secretary with operational partners to finalise the fund flow mechanism and next steps for implementation of Global Environment Facility (GEF) project titled 'Green Agriculture: Transforming Indian Agriculture for global environmental benefits and the conservation of critical biodiversity and forest landscapes'.

2. I am enclosing a copy of the minutes of the Video Conference for further necessary action.
3. This issues with approval of Competent Authority.

Encl: as stated.



(R.A.S. Patel)

Asstt. Commissioner (RFS)

Distribution:-

1. Principal Secretary (Agri.) or his Representative from the states of Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand. (Email ids: agrimizoram@gmail.com ; agrsec.or@nic.in; bhaskar.sarma@nic.in ; cpd-wmd.uk@gov.in ; dagpa@mp.gov.in ; diragri@mp.gov.in; hmingtea.ias@gmail.com ; psagriculture@mp.gov.in ; psagriculture@mp@gov.in ; s.garg@gov.in; vsbhale@gmail.com)
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5. Mrs. Neena Grewal, Project Director, Uttarakhand Decentralized Watershed Development Project Phase-II (GRAMYA), Watershed Management Directorate Indira Nagar, Forest colony, Dehradun-248006; Email id: wmd-ua@nic.in
6. Shri. Mr. K C Meena, Joint Director Agriculture (ATC), Commissionerate of Agriculture, Government of Rajasthan, Pant Krishi Bhawan, Jaipur, Phone: 0141 5101965, Email id: jdagr_atc1@rediffmail.com , ddagro_bls@rediffmail.com
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PS to AS/ JS (RFS/ IC)/ PS to ADC (RFS)/ PS to Dir (RFS), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi

Minutes of the Video Conference held on 30 April 2019, under the chairpersonship of Smt. Alka Bhargava, Additional Secretary with Operational Partners to finalise fund flow mode and next steps for implementation of "Green-Ag project: Transforming Indian Agriculture for Global Environmental Benefits and the Conservation of Critical Biodiversity and Forest Landscapes"

A Video Conference was held on 30 April 2019, under the chairpersonship of Dr. Alka Bhargava, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare with Operational Partners to finalise fund flow mode and the next steps for implementation of "Green-Ag project: Transforming Indian Agriculture for Global Environmental Benefits and the Conservation of Critical Biodiversity and Forest Landscapes". At the outset, the Additional Secretary asked the Operational Partners (OP) for updates on preparation for project implementation and requested FAO Representative in India to brief the Operational Partners (OP) about the recent development of projects. FAO Representative in India shared his experience of the visits to the States of Uttarakhand and Mizoram while attending the State Steering Committee (SSC) meetings. He also expressed his eagerness to participate in the SSC meetings in the remaining States.

2. Representatives from the Government of Odisha, the Director, IMAGE Informed that the SSC will be finalized and notified after the general elections are over. The Director, Soil Conservation and Watershed Department will be the nodal officer for project implementation. The State and District level preparations have been completed and two convergence meetings have been held. The State Steering Committee would be held to approve the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) after notification of SSC and Technical Support Groups (TSG). IMAGE will create a separate GEF project account and forward the details to FAO to finalize the Operational Partner Agreement (OPA).
3. Representatives from the Government of Uttarakhand, Project Director (UDWDP Phase-II) from the Watershed Management Directorate, informed that the SSC has already been notified and the first SSC meeting was held on 22 February 2019. During the meeting, the SSC approved the AWPB for project year 1 and has revised the area. However, official consent for the revised area from the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare is awaited. Project Director informed that the Government order for TSG constitution has also been issued. However, final site selection will be done using available GIS maps as soon as project implementation begins. An official memorandum will be issued after identification of office space for setting up Green Landscape Implementation Units (GLIU) at Kotdwar, Pauri. The Project Director also informed that the Secretary, Finance Department has approved the request for opening a separate bank account by the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). The State Government has also set aside INR 2 Crore under the Green Agriculture Budget Head created for the project. Now, they have been advised not to use it, as the funds would be transferred in advance.
4. Representatives from the Government of Madhya Pradesh, Director Agriculture, Farmer Welfare and Agriculture Department informed that the SSC will be set up immediately after the elections. Other preparations are going on and will be finalized soon. He also informed that they could accept funds through the State

treasury in Madhya Pradesh. To this, the Joint Secretary (IC), Government of India suggested that they should create a Special Purpose Vehicle to accept funds so that there is no further delay in transfer of funds for implementation of project activities. The Director Agriculture informed that the SPV and the bank account would be created only after the general elections. The SSC constitution and the SSC meeting would also be finalized after the elections.

5. Representatives from the Government of Mizoram, Directorate of Agriculture (Crop Husbandry) informed that the SSC has been constituted. The first SSC meeting was held on 23 April 2019. The department has created a separate GEF project account (joint account in the name of the Director Agriculture and Secretary, Agriculture) to accept funds directly from FAO. The SSC meeting minutes will be issued soon.

6. Representatives from the Government of Rajasthan, Joint Director Agriculture, Department of Agriculture informed that the Treasury mode is preferred as Budget head was already created. For creation of SPV and opening of separate project account, approval will have to be sought from the Department of Finance. On enquiry about budget for vehicles, travel etc., it was informed that the project details were shared with the Joint Director Agriculture and FAO would also orient him on the project during their visit to Rajasthan in May.

7. On being enquired about advance fund transfer or reimbursement by the Additional Secretary (NRM), all the State representatives expressed that they would prefer advanced funds transfer mode, except for the representative from the Government of Rajasthan, who said they would confirm the mode, only after the decision of Government of Rajasthan. The Additional Secretary requested to expedite SSC formation in Rajasthan and to hold the SSC meeting so that the SSC can clarify on the fund transfer mode. The Additional Secretary (NRM) as well as Joint Secretary (IC&RFS) advised that fund flow mechanism should be the same for all States to avoid complications and they suggested that a single mode and advanced release will be better for project implementation.

Further, the Additional Secretary urged the OPs to start preparing by identifying the community institutions in the field. Furthermore, as project landscapes intersect between forest and agricultural land, and also have tribal populations, the relevant departments of forest, agriculture and tribal development and other relevant departments must be the member of the SSC for smooth planning and implementation of the project.

8. The following recommendations/ action points have emerged from the deliberations:

- i. All States should create separate bank account for the project and share the bank details with FAO in an official letter, specifying the mode of fund transfer, so that the OPAs can be finalized for signature.

(Action: All Operational Partners)

- ii. The States of Odisha, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh should expedite finalization of SSC notification and formation at the earliest.

(Action: Odisha, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh)

- iii. State level officers of forest, agriculture, tribal affairs and other related departments should be included as members of the SSC for synergising a cluster. The SSC should be multi-disciplinary and should include members of CSOs and technical experts from relevant fields.

(Action: All Operational Partners)

- iv. Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh should review the AWPB and discuss the same with FAO so that it can be finalized at departmental level before the SSC approval.

(Action: Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh & FAO)

- v. A meeting of the National Coordination Committee under the chairpersonship of Secretary, DAC&FW would be held in early June, to update the members on project progress, and for approval and review of the consolidated AWBP.

(Action: NRM Division of DAC&FW &FAO)

9. Video conference ended with thanks to the chair.

List of participants in the Video Conference

Government of India:

1. Dr. Alka Bhargava, Additional Secretary, DAC&FW, GOI –Chairperson
2. Shri Rajbir Singh, Joint Secretary (RFS&IC), DAC&FW, GOI
3. Shri Pankaj Tyagi, Director (RFS), DAC&FW, GOI
4. Shri R.A.S.Patel, Asst.Commissioner (RFS), DAV&FW,GOI
5. Smt. Sunita Bhardwaj, Sr.Statistical Officer (RFS), DAC&FW, GOI
6. Shri Narendra Kumar Saroj, STA(RFS), DAC&FW, GOI

FAO:

7. Shri. Tomio Shichiri, FAO Representative in India, FAO India
8. Shri. Konda Reddy, Assistant FAO Representative in India, FAO India
9. Shri. P.V.Sunil, Field Programme Associate, FAO India
10. Ms. Jirlyne Ingti Katharpi, Project Associate, FAO India
11. Smt. Uma Balaji, Administration and Operations Officer, FAO India

State Governments:

12. Shri. Mukesh Shukla, Director Agriculture, Farmers Welfare and Agriculture Development Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh
13. Shri. Harish Malviya, Deputy Director, Agriculture, Farmers Welfare and Agriculture Development Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh
14. Shri. Pradeep Guha, Assistant Statistical Officer, Farmers Welfare and Agriculture Development Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh
15. Smt. Neena Grewal, Project Director, UDWDP-II (GRAMYA), Watershed Management Directorate,
16. Shri. Gulshan Singh Bisht, Addl. Statistical Officer, Watershed Management Directorate
17. Shri. Satyanarayan Mishra, Director, IMAGE, Odisha
18. Shri. Hemanta Kumar Panda, Director, Soil Conservation & Watershed Development-cum-Nodal Officer, Odisha
19. Shri. Biswajayee Mishra, Asst. Director, IMAGE, Odisha
20. Smt. Lalengzami Haolai, Deputy Director (Soil Survey), Government of Mizoram
21. Shri. VL Hmangaihchhunga, Subject Matter Specialist (Forestry), Government of Mizoram
22. Shri. Davendar Choudhary, Joint Director Agriculture, Government of Rajasthan