

*Minutes*  
*Partners Debriefing on the Integrated Protected Area Co-management (IPAC) Project*  
*17 June 2008, Nishorgo / IPAC, Banani Office*

**Purpose and Participants**

A meeting was held on June 17, 2008 at the Nishorgo / IPAC project office in Banani, to bring together USAID, IRG and representatives of the principal implementing partners of the IPAC project with the following objectives:

- introduce the partners to one another
- provide an opportunity for the USAID representative to share information about the context, scope of actions, main challenges and anticipated results of IPAC
- provide information to the partners about the project statement of work and proposed technical approach, and review the main anticipated roles for each partner
- present information about administration and contracting procedures and discuss contracting issues

See attachment for a list of participants. Additional meetings are planned in coming weeks to share information about IPAC with key government agencies and other stakeholders.

**Initial Presentations on IPAC**

Dr. Azharul Mazumder of USAID provided the participants with his perspective on the context and scope of IPAC. The origins of IPAC date back to 1996, when flood control structures severely impacted the productivity of wetlands and aquatic ecosystems in Bangladesh. USAID through ISPAN assessed these negative impacts and considered how to restore the biodiversity of wetlands and the productivity of inland fisheries. The design of MACH – the Management of Aquatic ecosystems through Community Husbandry project – emerged from the recognition of these problems and challenges to inland fisheries management. In 1998, the USAID funded MACH project was launched, and after the initial successes of this pilot approach in community husbandry and community based fisheries management, USAID designed and supported the Nishorgo program with Forest Dept, to extend participatory co-management to protected forests and terrestrial ecosystems.

Now, in 2008, following the accomplishments of MACH and Nishorgo, USAID intends to fund the IPAC project over the next five years to:

1. consolidate and strengthen the strategic framework for the integrated co-management of an expanded protected area network
2. to further develop the institutional capacity to manage such an expanded network of co-managed protected areas
3. to support the scaling up of MACH and Nishorgo pilot activities and the field level implementation of the expanded IPAC network.

Philip DeCosse, COP of Nishorgo Support Project and Bob Winterbottom, COP for IPAC, then commented on the documentation provided to the participants, beginning with the information on the statement of work and technical proposal for the

implementation of IPAC. Documentation was distributed with a description of the major components and anticipated results. Key elements of the proposed technical approach for achieving these results were presented, along with tables listing the targeted sites, organizational structure for the project and main partners.

Philip briefly described the rationale and key roles for each of the key implementing partners for IPAC represented at the meeting:

- World Fish Center – high quality scientific information and applied research related to the management of fisheries and aquatic ecosystems; technical support for best practices in community based fisheries management
- RDRS – support for field level implementation of PA co-management including social mobilization, biodiversity conservation and income generation for the NE and Central clusters
- CODEC – support for field level implementation of PA co-management in the SE and Sundarbans clusters
- CIPD – support for field implementation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts cluster
- Asiatic Communications – technical support related to communication, social marketing, awareness raising, including naming and branding of IPAC
- Module Architects – oversight of infrastructure design and construction, funded by \$2.5 million in local currency mobilized through USAID/US Dept of Agriculture
- IUB-JU – organization of joint public / private sector training programs in support of IPAC
- Oasis Communication – assistance with value chain strengthening and income generation among local producers and user groups, for bamboo and other products
- BELA – support of legal reforms and empowerment at the policy and local levels

The role of US subcontractors and other strategic partners was also briefly presented.

#### **Questions and commentary on IPAC:**

Rizwana Hasan (BELA) suggested that the accomplishments, bottlenecks encountered and other information from Nishorgo be passed along to the IPAC partners. A great deal of useful information can be accessed via the Nishorgo website ([www.nishorgo.org](http://www.nishorgo.org)) and the IPAC management team will follow up to provide additional relevant materials, including more information about Nishorgo’s model of co-management and key government stakeholders. In response to a question about these government stakeholders, a graphic was distributed listing the major IPAC stakeholders, including the two leading ministries with a stake in the project: Ministry of Environment and Forests and Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock.

What is meant by public-private partnerships and what about the environmental record of the private sector partners? In IPAC, PPP’s are mainly intended to leverage additional resources through a mutually beneficial partnership between private sector operators committed to conservation and IPAC stakeholders.

Alan Brooks (WFC) asked about the definitions of existing direct, new direct and indirect sites. A table was distributed, indicating that “existing direct sites” were those sites that

had been supported by MACH or Nishorgo; “new direct sites” will be fully supported by IPAC and its partners, and more limited support will be provided to “indirect sites” located within a “cluster” that includes the existing and new direct sites.

The partners also discussed some elements of the proposed team organization, and measures to foster information sharing, collaboration, teamwork and integration.

The work planning process will serve to review, adjust and validate the proposed performance targets with respect to each key indicator listed in the statement of work for IPAC.

Mention was also made of the importance of recruiting site coordinators that have the charisma, authority and knowledge needed to work effectively with the DC, UNO and others at the field level.

Mention was also made of the need for communication specialists working in the clusters to be supported and managed by the specialists and resources persons working with the central communications team.

Syed Samsuzzaman (RDRS) asked for clarifications about the role of all stakeholders, including government line agencies. A Steering Committee is being proposed to include the key government stakeholders, and could also include members of co management committees as representatives of local stakeholders. Implementing partners would be engaged through the preparation of materials to be reviewed and endorsed by the Steering Committee.

Each partner supporting field level implementation of IPAC in the clusters will need to designate a primary point of contact or technical coordinator, although it will also be necessary to empower the site coordinators and to support them with specialized expertise in governance, communications, enterprise, etc.

### **Administrative and Contract Issues**

Dee Cottrill (IRG/Washington) and Khaled (DAF, NSP/IPAC) presented information on administrative and contract management issues, including requirements for approvals by IRG/IPAC management, reporting, invoicing and other aspects. (See attached summary).

As has been done with Nishorgo, IRG will endeavor to pay subcontractor invoices promptly in order to minimize cash flow problems, however, with a cost reimbursable contract, it is not possible to provide an advance of funds for start-up and to serve as a rolling fund for expenditures.

### **General Discussion**

As no further questions or issues were raised on administrative and contract issues, the group came back to several other issues, including that of the Steering Committee composition and terms of reference. USAID is developing a proposal and will continue discussions with key GOB stakeholders including the co-chairs MOEF, MOFL and

others, most likely to include Ministry of Lands, Finance, Planning, Law-Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Social Welfare, CHT and Local Government – along with representatives of CMC. The main TOR for the Steering Committee will be to endorse proposed plans, assess progress and to help address problems and issues arising as IPAC is implemented.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Azharul provided some additional context for IPAC in his concluding remarks. After working as a pilot project for 9 years, MACH has brought about 20,000 ha or 1% of the wetlands of Bangladesh under co-management. After 5 years, Nishorgo has supported 5 pilot field sites covered about 24,000 ha or 1% of the declared forest protected areas. A major challenge for IPAC will be to scale up and extend co-management to more than 350,000 ha, including some 50 Protected Areas to conserve biodiversity in aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems.

To be successful, IPAC will need to address a number of challenges, including the development of an accepted national strategy and a common platform for supporting PA co-management. The concept and definition of Protected Areas needs to be formally incorporated into the GOB policy framework. Government approvals need to be secured for sharing of entry fees and other revenues associated with PA co-management.

This will require facilitation of the participation of many partners, going beyond the current list of IPAC implementing partners to include additional “strategic partners” from the private sector, projects and donors with a stake in the goals of IPAC, and others. USAID anticipates that additional funding for integrated PA co-management will be mobilized through collaboration with the European Community (over \$10 million) and others.

IPAC is also aiming to demonstrate the relevance of integrated PA co-management to reducing vulnerability and increasing adaptation to global climate change; it is anticipated that IPAC will also serve to mobilize additional funding for PA co-management through carbon financing and clean development mechanisms.

Ultimately, these efforts will not only build capacity and support field level operations aimed at the improved conservation and management of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, but also their increased productivity with expanded prospects for sustainable use, more secure local livelihoods and increased well-being among the local communities engaged in co-management. Conservation and integrated PA co-management are critically important for the welfare of communities and for a better future for Bangladesh – and IPAC has a vital and significant role to play.

### **Summary of follow up actions:**

1. prepare and circulate meeting minutes
2. distribute additional background information, and provide links to Nishorgo website; establish a partners page to post information for IPAC partners

3. inform implementing partners about further developments for IPAC Steering Committee and the involvement of GOB stakeholders, and of the outcomes of additional start up meetings with other key stakeholders
4. prepare and disseminate guidance and a proposed timetable for work planning, consultation about subcontract statement of work, priority actions for the first year, staffing, budget revisions – to enable the IPAC team to submit the first annual work plan by July 15.
5. Circulate draft formats for subcontracts, templates for invoicing and guidance / coupons for exemption from VAT.
6. follow up with discussions and organization of thematic teams
7. review and develop mechanisms (regular meetings, work planning and reporting procedures, etc.) to ensure effective coordination, teamwork, information sharing among partners

## Overview of Key Points in IPAC Subcontract Agreements

The subcontractor will assist IRG in performing tasks outlined in the prime contract to achieve the overall objectives of the prime contract Statement of Work. IPAC is a results-focused activity with specific deliverables and performance targets. In order to meet the objectives outlined in the approved IPAC work plans, IPAC subcontractors will need to strictly adhere to the schedule of deliverables by task and subtask detailed in the subcontract Scope of Work (*Section C* of subcontract). Subcontractors should notify IRG if they are unable to meet the deadlines presented in their SOW. Below we provide an overview of other key points outlined in the IPAC subcontracts.

### 1. Approvals

Prior written approval requirements for IPAC subcontractors are detailed in *Section H* of your subcontract, and include:

Labor (also see *Section B* of your subcontract)

Any changes to the labor line items detailed in your subcontract requires prior written approval from IRG-IPAC, including:

- Changing or replacing Key Personnel
- Adding new LT employees or consultants
- Increasing number of labor days (level of effort)
- Adjusting daily rate

Branding and Marking

All IPAC-funded communications products, promotional materials, and other commodities must follow the IPAC branding plan and require approval from IRG-IPAC before production (see *Sections D and I*).

Travel

International travel charged to the IPAC project requires prior written approval from IRG-IPAC including international travel required for training or study tours.

Procurement of Equipment or Services

Procurement of equipment, commodities or services for use under the IPAC project requires prior written approval from IRG-IPAC. Subcontractors must follow the IPAC Procurement and Inventory Guidelines. Please note that IPAC subcontractors must retain a copy of all approvals and other supporting documentation pursuant to their subcontracts for audit purposes.\*

### 2. Reporting

Progress and financial reporting requirements are detailed in *Section E* of your subcontract. A format for quarterly and annual reports will be sent to IPAC subcontractors after USAID/Bangladesh approves the first annual work plan, deliverables and performance targets. USAID has informed IRG that any delay in furnishing progress reports may result in withholding payment in an amount not to exceed US\$25,000 (or local currency equivalent) or 5 percent of the amount of the subcontract, whichever is less. Subcontractors must notify IRG when they reach 75% of their obligated funding under their subcontract.

### 3. Invoicing and Payment

Invoicing and payment clauses for IPAC subcontractors are detailed in *Section G.5* of the subcontract. The line item breakdown of each voucher should follow the order of the cost categories authorized *Section B*. With each invoice, the subcontractor shall provide a breakdown

of amounts invoiced during the invoice period and cumulatively for the subcontract. Payment shall be made by no later than sixty (60) calendar days after receipt and acceptance by IRG-IPAC of the subcontractor's proper invoice. IRG reserves the right to withhold payment of those costs that are either unauthorized or not properly and sufficiently documented (see *Section G.7* of the subcontract.) NOTE: IPAC is VAT exempt.

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\*IRG reserves the right to perform audits of IPAC subcontractors to review contract compliance, verify the use of proper accounting standards, and ensure all reimbursed costs were reasonable, allocable, and allowable under the terms of the subcontract agreement.