

Minutes of the First meeting of Provincial REDD+ Management Committee Gilgit-Baltistan held on 30th March, 2017 at Forest Secretariat Gilgit-Baltistan

The 1st meeting of the Provincial REDD+ Management Committee (PRMC) held under the chairmanship of the Secretary, Forest Wildlife and Environment, Government of Pakistan on 30th March, 2017. The meeting was attended by the members of (PRMC) and representatives from National REDD+ Office, Ministry of Climate Change, Government of Pakistan (**Annex I**).

The meeting started with the recitation from the Noble Quran followed by welcome remarks by the chair who mentioned that the objectives of the meeting are (i) to sensitize the Provincial REDD+ Management Committee (PRMC) on the process and state of progress on REDD+ Readiness Preparation for Pakistan, (ii) review and discuss the provincial progress of Gilgit-Baltistan on REDD+ governance and management arrangements, (iii) to get endorse the additional budget requirements for provincial REDD+ readiness activities and (iv) sensitize and take on board the members of the PRMC to ensure support, transparency and facilitate effective and efficient communication and coordination for successful implementation of REDD+ Readiness activities in Gilgit-Baltistan. The secretary forest also introduced representatives of National REDD+ Office to the members of PRMC and mentioned that the representatives from National REDD+ Office, Ministry of Climate Change arrived a day before and worked with REDD+ Cell to assess the current progress, identify missing items and budget requirements for provincial REDD+ Readiness to support implementation of National REDD+ Strategy. He also informed the members that the budget needs will be incorporated in proposal to be submitted by Government of Pakistan seeking additional potential funding of USD 5.00 million from Forest Investment programme (FIP) of FCPF of the World Bank.

AGENDA ITEM 1: INTRODUCTION TO CONCEPT OF REDD+ AND COUNTRY PRE – REQUISITES FOR REDD+ READINESS

Mr. Kamran Hussain, National Forest Inventory (NFI) Expert from National REDD+ Office sensitized the participants and gave detailed presentation on the concept of REDD+ and the country pre-requisites for REDD+ Readiness. Thereafter, the NFI Expert requested Mr. Afrasiyab, GIS Expert from National REDD+ Office to appraise the participants on the progress of Pakistan's Readiness Process.

AGENDA ITEM 2: PROGRESS OF PAKISTAN'S REDD+ READINESS PROJECT

Mr. Afrasiyab mentioned that various mile stones have been achieved at national level under REDD+ Readiness Grant by the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) of the World Bank (WB) to strengthen the capacity of Pakistan to monitor deforestation and reduce forest and land use change related greenhouse gas emissions through a socially, environmentally, and technically sound national REDD+

strategy. He referred to decisions of Conference of Parties (COP) of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that REDD+ is to be implemented in three phases i.e. phase 1 (awareness raising, capacity building and institutional strengthening), phase 2 (further capacity building and piloting) and phase 3 (result based financing) and that this project will bring Pakistan to be in phase 2 or early phase 3 by mid of 2018. Mr. Afrasiyab also mentioned that four pre-requisites i.e. (i) National REDD+ Strategy or Action Plan, (ii) National Forest Monitoring System (iii) Forest Reference Emission Levels/ Forest Reference Levels and (iv) Safeguard Information System have to be developed by the country under the Cancun Agreement. He further explained the National and Provincial REDD+ Readiness Management arrangements and its current implementation status which was much appreciated by the participants.

Mr. Kamran also added that Provincial REDD+ Management Committees (PRMCs) have been notified by Government of Gilgit-Baltistan and Government of Sindh. Rest of the provinces will notify their PRMCs by end of March, 2017. The visit of National REDD+ Office Team to the respective provinces will be in April, 2017 to convene the first meeting of PRMC of the respective provinces.

AGENDA ITEM 3: UPDATES ON PROVINCIAL REDD+ READINESS AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS IN GILGIT-BALTISTAN

Mr. Ismail, Provincial REDD+ Focal Point gave a detailed presentation on the status provincial REDD+ readiness and management arrangements in Gilgit-Baltistan. He explained that Gilgit – Baltistan Forest Department started REDD+ initiatives since 2010 to support the process of REDD+ Readiness in Pakistan. He further added that the Government of Gilgit Baltistan, in collaboration with forestry wing of the Ministry of Climate Change Islamabad, initiated readiness activities under the approved project of “REDD+ Readiness Phase in Gilgit Baltistan” of worth Pakistani Rupees (PKR) 30 million through ADP and now at the forefronts to take REDD+ further ahead as compared to other provinces. He elaborated the progress so far been achieved under the above mentioned project and informed the participants that (i) a REDD+ Cell and GIS lab has been established in Forest Wildlife and Environment Department through notification, (ii) REDD+ Coordinator, *GIS Specialist*, Accounts Officer, Driver and *Office Boy* was appointed under REDD+ Readiness Project for GB and the posts have now been approved under regular budget through finance department, (iii) procured latest forest Inventory and Measurement Equipment (Vertex-IV Transponder, Relaskope, Digital caliper, GPS, Increment Borer, Soil sampling related tool box etc), (iv) about 42 officers attended different REDD+ related *training courses* abroad and in country, (v) arranged almost 8 *workshops* at regional, District and valley Level for communities and other

stakeholders, (vi) Revised Forest Acts, Rules, and Codes i.e. Forest Act 1927, Wildlife Act 1975, Working Plan Code for GB, Rules for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, Forest Manuals (I,II,III) and preparation of management plans, on pilot basis, for three districts i.e. Skardu, Astore and Gilgit targeting protected forests and irrigated plantations are under way and expected to be completed by mid of current year, (vii) developed allometric equations, biomass tables, volume tables, basic wood densities, biomass expansion factors for 5 conifer trees (Deodar, Kail, Fir, Spruce, Chalghoza) and one broad leaved tree (Oak) through destructive sampling and available for use, (viii) Field data collection from 536 randomly distributed (Stratified random distribution) plots has been completed and analysis of data to get final results is under way, (ix) satellite image of 2.5 m resolution for all the natural forest of GB was purchased from SUPPARCO but due to cloud cover and non-availability of seasonal data, land use classification was done on Sentinel-2 with spatial resolution of 10 meter with technical support from ICIMOD Nepal and SUPARCO Pakistan. He also presented the latest Land Use Map for Gilgit – Baltistan developed by REDD+ Cell.

AGENDA ITEM 4: DISCUSSION ON PROVINCIAL REDD+ READINESS AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS IN GILGIT-BALTISTAN

The presentation by Mr. Ismail opened discussion on various aspects including reliability of new land use map, capacity building of communities, REDD+ demonstration, addressing the drivers of deforestation, awareness raising of academia and local communities, frequency of meetings of PRMC, participation of relevant stakeholders including women representatives in PRMC.

Mr. Mayur Khan, Country Director, Wildlife Conservation Society Gilgit presented his concerns that most of the villages in District Diamer have much dependency on forest resources due to lack of alternatives. He also pointed out that (i) local communities need to be aware about the new concept of REDD+ and (ii) there should be representation of one member from Mountain Area Conservancy Programme – MACP (a cluster organization of seven Community Based Organizations – CBOs).

Mr. Kamran Hussain replied that National REDD+ Office has hired one of the best international firms to develop National REDD+ Strategy and its implementation framework who are being visiting different provinces to assess the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation based on which strategic options will be recommended. He further said that the international firm will soon visit Gilgit-Baltistan for consultative meetings to assess the drivers including the drivers pointed out by Mr. Mayur Khan. Mr. Kamran also added that regarding awareness raising at local, the National REDD+ Office in consultation with REDD+ Cell Gilgit has already assessed the current status of REDD+ Readiness in Gilgit-Baltistan and also identified the missing items and activities (including the need for awareness raising at local

level) for which budget has been planned to be reflected in proposal for potential additional funding of USD 5.00 million from FCPF of the World Bank.

Mr. Shehzad Shigri, Director Environmental Protection Agency, Government of Gilgit-Baltistan inquired the method of selection of standards to define the forest in provincial and district level land use maps.

Mr. Kiramat, GIS Specialist, REDD+ Cell, Government of Gilgit-Baltistan replied that the keeping in view the provincial circumstances and future monitoring requirements, the Minimum Mapping Unit (MMU) for image classification was taken as 0.5 hectare and forest canopy cover thresholds were taken as 10 – 35% as Sparse and above 35% as Dense. He further added that new Land Use Maps are more accurate as the maps have been developed with advanced expertise using sentinel-2 satellite images having spatial resolution of 10 meters and are mostly focused on Land use categories followed by the guidance of Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Director Extension, Agriculture Department, Government of Gilgit-Baltistan raised a question if the agriculture lands can further be classified to develop by-products containing detailed information in specific land use category. Mr. Kiramat responded that by-products can be developed as per information needs.

General Manager, Agha Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) mentioned that AKRSP, through financial support to its network of LSOs, provided 0.15 million free saplings to local communities. He requested that (i) such efforts should also be recognized and supported through building public-private partnerships and (ii) a representative of network of LSOs may also be included as member of PRMC.

Mr. Alam, Chief NRM, Planning and Development Department, Government of Gilgit-Baltistan raised an issue that collaborative management must be ensured to effectively implement REDD+ Readiness activities. He also proposed that a representative from Law Department, Women Development Department of Government of Gilgit-Baltistan and Karakorum International University (KIU) may also be included as member of PRMC to ensure gender equity and promote research in REDD+ related research areas.

Mr. Walayat Noor, Conservator Forests, Gilgit Circle raised his concerns that National REDD+ strategy should align with approved National Forest Policy of Pakistan 2016. He also proposed to review and update (if needed) the draft provincial forest policy of Gilgit-Baltistan to align it with National REDD+ Strategy and National Forest Policy 2016.

Decisions:

Based on the discussion, following decisions were taken under agenda item 4;

- 1) The PRMC will be revised after identifying more relevant stakeholders including representatives from MACP, network of LSOs under AKRSP, KIU, Law Department and Women Development Department.

Action by REDD+ Cell/ Forest Secretariat, Gilgit-Baltistan

- 2) The PRMC will meet after every six months to monitor and coordinate the progress of REDD+ Readiness activities. The meeting will be convened a month before the meeting of National Steering Committee on REDD+.

Action by REDD+ Cell, Gilgit-Baltistan

- 3) A meeting will be convened under the chair of Chief Secretary, Government of Gilgit-Baltistan and with representation of all the provincial secretaries, members of PRMC and experts from National REDD+ Office to present and seek the ownership of the Government of Gilgit-Baltistan on new Land Use Maps developed by REDD+ Cell Gilgit-Baltistan. The meeting will be convened a month after finalization and notification of national standards for National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) and Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) being assessed and analyzed by the International Consulting Firm hired by National REDD+ Office.

Action by REDD+ Cell/ Forest Secretariat, Government of Gilgit-Baltistan

- 4) Agha Khan Rural Support Programme will be requested to share the information related to tree distribution to local communities, plantations and nursery raising activities under their various projects to get them recognized by provincial government and potentially supported under Green Pakistan Programme.

Action by REDD Cell/ Forest Secretariat

AGENDA ITEM 5: APPROVAL/ ENDORSEMENT OF ADDITIONAL BUDGET REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVINCIAL REDD+ READINESS

Mr. Kamran presented the additional budget requirements that were identified a day before in consultation with REDD+ Cell/ Forest Secretariat, Government of Gilgit-Baltistan. The PRMC endorsed and approved the proposed activities and additional budget requirements for provincial REDD+ Readiness activities planned for the duration of 2017 – 2020.

The meeting ended with a note of thanks by the Chair Mr. Sajjad Hyder, with a strong commitment by all the participants to work collectively and contribute to support REDD+ activities both at provincial and national level to protect, conserve and enhance the natural forest resource base of Pakistan. The chair also requested the participants to join for a lunch organized by National REDD+ Office, Ministry of Climate Change, and Islamabad.

ANNEX I : List of participants of Provincial REDD+ Management Committee

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
MINISTRY OF CLIMATE CHANGE
NATIONAL REDD+ OFFICE

Meeting of Provincial REDD+ Management Committee
Gilgit-Baltistan

dated 30th March 2017

S#	Name of participant	Organization	Designation	Contact/Email	Signature
1	Sajjad Haider	GB Govt.	Secy. Forest GB		
2	Muhammad Zaman	AKRSP	NRM Specialist	03468114431	
3	Muhammad Mujib	GB Govt	DS Forest	03489580771	
4	Mahmood Asghar	Agriculture GB	Director	0355559909	
5	Muhammad Alam	PSDD	Assistant Chief	03101269918	
6	Neelofar Khan	PZDD	Research Officer	05211-920344	
7	Diliaz Ahmed	Forest GB	DFO Chief	03462233188	
8	Khanat Hussain	REDD+ Cell GB	GIS Specialist	03424655044	
9	ISMAIL	GB Forest REDD+ focal person	REDD focal person	03465404842	
10	Fuzal Kuzem	Conservation Officer WWF-Pakistan	Conservation Officer	03475133129	
11	Rehmat Ah.	WCS	Conservation Manager	03469751659	
12	Imtiaz Hussain	PSDD GB	Research officer	0355550839	