

TERMS OF REFERENCE

FOR THE ATS STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

1. BACKGROUND

The inclusion of Strategic Development Partners (SDPs) into the ATS Regional Governance Mechanism (RGM) was conceived through a comprehensive process of national and regional consultations aimed at identifying the most viable mechanism to foster regional collaboration in implementing the Arafura and Timor Seas (ATS) Strategic Action Programme (SAP) and National Action Programmes (NAPs).

Building on experience and partnerships established under the two phases of the ATSEA projects, it was recognized that the identification and engagement of relevant SDPs will be integral in further enhancing the effectiveness and impact of ATS SAP and NAPs implementation. In particular, SDPs can provide additionality benefits/value add by providing or mobilizing financial resources, fostering partnerships, and offering technical expertise and assistance.

2. COMPOSITION

- a) The SDPs refer to:
- International and regional development and donor agencies (e.g., UNDP, GEF, ADB, WB, etc.),
 - Government development agencies
 - Governments, and
 - NGOs and philanthropic organizations.
- b) Engagement of SDPs in the ATSEA program or SAP and NAPs implementation, will be undertaken through:
- Submission of Expression of Interest for review and consideration at the Regional Coordinating Committee (RCC) meeting; or
 - Invitation from the RCC or Regional Secretariat (RS)
- A more detailed procedure on identification and selection of SDPs is provided in Annex 1, for review and approval by the RCC.
- c) There is no limitation imposed on the number of SDPs to be engaged.
- d) The duration of partnership with specific SDPs will vary depending on the final agreement to be reached between the ATS RCC or NCCs and the SDPs.

3. PROPOSED ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ATS SDPs

- a) Project Development and Funding:
- Support the development and funding of targeted projects or initiatives in line with the environmental component goals of the ATS SAP and NAPs related to reduction of marine plastic pollution including ALDFG, prevention and reduction of oil spills, reduction of IUU fishing incidence, and increasing resilience of regional ETP species and associated critical habitats, as well as the SAP and NAPs governance objectives. Projects may have regional focus or country/site-specific focus. Such support/initiatives may focus on:
 - Research and data collection
 - Capacity and awareness building

- Scientific or technical assistance
 - Knowledge product development and sharing
 - Policy development, review or legal advisory assistance
 - Project implementation and management
 - Innovative financing
 - Other more targeted initiatives
- b) Project Oversight and Guidance:
- Provide technical advice, strategic guidance and oversight on implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of SDP-funded projects that will be agreed upon in support of SAP and NAPs implementation.
 - Identify convergence of SDP proposed projects with existing national and regional programs/initiatives, and foster alignment with relevant international commitments or targets on sustainable development.
 - Share new or emerging opportunities and challenges that will be crucial to the effective implementation of the ATS SAP and NAPs.
- c) Project implementation
- In line with agreed implementation modalities, directly implement SDP-funded projects in support of SAP/NAPs implementation in coordination with the regional and/or national secretariats as appropriate, subject to RCC (and NCC) approval of project details and implementation and reporting arrangements.
- d) Advocacy and Awareness Building:
- Support the ATS RGM and ATSEA program in promoting and sharing experiences, lessons learned, knowledge products and innovations to SDP networks.
- e) Participation to ATSEA Meetings:
- Representatives from the SDPs may be invited to participate or observe at meetings of the RCC, RSWG, NCC and NSWGs to share information on possible joint collaborations and funding opportunities, status or progress on implementation of ATSEA-specific approved projects or collaboration, emerging challenges, as well as information on new/innovative approaches, tools and technologies.

4. WORKING AND COMMUNICATION MECHANISMS

- a) Upon confirmation of an SDP member by the RCC, the Regional Secretariat (for regional level projects) or National Secretariat (for national level projects) will be responsible to communicate and coordinate with the SDP member on relevant meetings or discussions. The SDP member(s) will be requested to identify a contact person for ATSEA-related projects.
- b) The Regional or National Secretariat will be responsible in coordinating with the SDP on the required processes and documents in the development and submission of project/funding proposals.
- c) Updates and guidance regarding pipeline and ongoing projects will be covered either at the annual RCC and NCC meetings or project-specific Steering Committee (PSC) Meetings depending on final agreement/arrangement with the SDP.
- d) For approved projects: Organization and conduct of project meetings (either as part of RCC or separate PSCs) will be supported and coordinated by the Regional Secretariat or the

National Secretariats and specific project staff/team. The Regional or National Secretariat will keep records of the proceedings of the meetings and act as depository of all meeting documents. Frequency of project specific steering committee meetings will depend on the SDP requirement or final agreement/arrangement. Separate detailed TORs for conduct of project-specific meetings will be developed for review and approval either by RCC or project-specific PSCs.

- e) Costs related to organization of SDP project specific meetings, including meeting venues, consumption, supplies, printing, local transportation for Secretariat staff (for face-to-face meetings) and internet connectivity (for virtual meetings), will be covered by the project fund. Participation costs for government representatives and project team to project meetings may be through project funds or counterpart financing from project member governments, depending on final arrangements with SDP.
- f) Out-of-session communications may also be conducted; these may include monthly project specific e-meetings, emails and other means.
- g) Guidelines on management and monitoring of project funds may vary and will be developed separately depending on the requirements and final arrangements with the different SDPs.
- h) Additional or SDP project-specific arrangements and mutual agreements may be developed, as needed, subject to further review and approval of the RCC.

The TOR for the SDPs may be reviewed and revised in the course of implementation of the ATSEA program, as necessary, for approval of the RCC.