



BAA ATOLL CONSERVATION FUND BOARD MEETING

Meeting No: 02

Date: 22 July 2013

Time: 13.30hrs

Venue: Ministry of Environment and Energy / Meeting Room 1

Minutes of the Meeting

The second meeting of the Baa Atoll Conservation Fund Board of Directors was attended by 6 participants from 6 Stakeholders and 3 other participants (participant's list attached, Annex 1).

The meeting was chaired by the Director General of the Ministry of Environment and Energy, Mr. Ibrahim Naeem.

In his opening remarks he welcomed all members who attended the meeting and briefed the participants on the agenda (Annex 2) scheduled for the meeting.

Agenda, Item 2

Update on the BACF and Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve

This number on the agenda item was performed by the managing Director, Baa Atoll Conservation Fund. In his brief presentation he informed all members the current status of of BACF and the Baa Atoll UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

Regarding the issue of BR the following was brought to the Board's attention.

1. It was brought to the notice of the Board that all existing staff of AEC Project who had worked earlier in the Eydhafushi Office had been transferred to the civil service by the end of last year and are at present working in the BR Office. He also stated that an Administrative Officer, an Office Assistant, 2 Rangers have also been recruited within the last 6 months and also announcements have been made through government gazette for the vacant pots of IT Assistant, Accounts Officer and the Assistant Directors position.
2. He also highlighted that even though recruitment process for the vacant positions of the BR office started early January, finding suitable candidates for the advertised posts had been lengthy due to lack of applicants and also owing to candidates with the required qualifications not applying.
3. In concluding he stressed that that by the end of September if everything goes as planned, all vacant posts of BR Office would be filled and the office would be fully functional by the end of September.
4. BR Office website which is under construction is its final stage and would be completed by the end of August once populated.

Regarding the issue of BACF the following was brought to the Board's attention.

1. Although it was decided in the first meeting of BACF Board that the Managing Director of BACF to be recruited as soon as possible it took longer than expected to undertake this process. In order to recruit a candidate for this post the first announcement via the government gazette was made late 2012. Only one single application was received for the announcement and hence a solitary application was submitted it was decided that this should be re-announced.
2. The second announcement was made in February 2013 and a single application was received for the second time round as well and the application was evaluated and BACF MD was recruited in April.
3. Baa Atoll Conservation Fund website which is under construction is its final stage and would be completed by the end of August once populated.
4. All Invoices had been raised with all partners of BACF and the Biosphere Reserve.
5. Hanifaru Access Permits are available from EPA and from BR Office for all those who wish to purchase them.
6. Government of Maldives has already transferred US\$ 100,00.00 (One Hundred Thousand United States Dollar) in two installments in 2012 and 2013 out of the US\$ 250,00.00 (Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars) committed by GOM to BACF and has already budgeted its third installment of US\$ 50,000 (Fifty Thousand United States Dollar) for the state budget of 2014.

Agenda, Item 3

Presentation on Mangroves for the Future Project

This presentation was given by Environmental Analyst of Ministry of Environment and Energy. The members of the Board were made aware on the MFF process in applying for grants, the evaluation process and awarding of grants.

The presenter from MEE answered questions raised by the Board members on the experiences of MEE and advised on how BACF should proceed in awarding grants from the fund.

Agenda, Item 4

Presentation on Small Grants Project/UNDP

A presentation was given by the National Coordinator for GEF/SGP by UNDP Maldives. The presentation was based on the existing GEF Small Grants project implemented by UNDP Maldives, how the project works, how grants are awarded, how projects are evaluated and what the major focus themes were in awarding grants.

The presenter from UUNDP answered questions raised by the Board members on the experiences of UNDP and advised on how BACF should proceed in awarding grants from the fund.

Agenda, Item 5

Sharing of Experiences by NGO Federation of Maldives

The President of NGO Federation of Maldives shared his experiences mainly relating to livelihood projects that he had been involved with through grants in the form of projects undertaken.

The presenter from NGO Federation also answered questions raised by the Board members on the experiences of the Federation and advised on how BACF should proceed in awarding grants from the fund.

Agenda, Item 6

Discussion on proposed BACF Grants for 2013/2014

The Board discussions regarding the proposed grants of BACF for 2013/2014 was based on the documents prepared by the AEC project and also on the presentations given by UNDP, MEE and the NGO Federation.

The draft paper developed for Call for Pre-proposals by BACF and other documents was discussed by the Board and the following revisions were recommended:

1. Delete Individuals as recipients from BACF.
2. Include Councils as recipients of funds from BACF Board for the next 2 years.
3. US\$ 15,000.00 (Fifteen Thousand Dollars) as the maximum ceiling for a grant to be awarded under BACF grants.
4. Project Evaluation Committee to be formulated by BACF, comprising of representatives from EPA, an NGO, a Conservationist, UNDP and Environment Ministry.
5. The proposals for grants should come from registered organizations and not from individuals for accountancy and transparency purposes.

In terms of livelihood the following areas were identified as beneficiaries for grants:

1. Agriculture: Project proposals on Composting and use of environment friendly fertilizers.
2. Handicraft Works: Project proposals on extensions of existing lacquer works activities undertaken.
3. Other areas: Project proposals on adding value to the existing work undertaken by the community.

In terms of conservation and management of biological and natural resources, biodiversity and nature protection in Baa Atoll the following areas were identified as beneficiaries for grants:

1. Project proposals on sustainable aquaculture programs focusing on Ornamental Fishery.
2. Project proposals on Community engagement programs related to biodiversity and environmental protection.

In terms of awareness raising, research and education program the following areas were identified as beneficiaries for grants:

1. Project proposals on awareness programs on Baa Atoll UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

Agenda, Item 5

Other Issues

As a special issue the Chair brought to the attention of the Board a request made by the Ministry of Environment and Energy concerning a letter sent by Baa Atoll Dhonfan in relation to erosion of the island.

The Ministry inquired as mentioned in the letter the possibilities of obtaining funds from BACF to protect the shore of the island of Dhonfan as it is facing severe erosion problems especially the area of the Waste yard.

After discussing this issue the following decision was made by the Board:

1. BACF funds can only be used to fund activities that are in line with priority spending areas of BACF.
2. A precedent would be made by BACF if funds are allocated for the shore protection of Dhonfan and the Board would not want to set this precedent as other islands in the atoll would follow suit if this is so.
3. BACF funds will not be allocated for shore protection of Dhonfan as requested by MEE or to any other island in the atoll.
4. The island of Dhonfan should inquire the possibilities of obtaining funds through GEF Small Grants programme implemented by UNDP under the adaptation to climate change theme and other donor funded initiatives.

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion the Chair announced the following in relation to BACF grants for 2013/2014.

1. Two to three weeks time to be allocated for completion of pre-Call for proposals and other relevant documents.
2. Public announcement through government gazette, BACF and the Ministry's websites once all documents completed.
3. Four weeks time to be allocated to develop proposals.
4. Two weeks time to be allocated for evaluation of proposals.
5. Two weeks time to be allocated in refining of all shortlisted proposals.
6. Shortlisted proposals to be tabled for BACF meeting in November.
7. Grants to be awarded once BACF Board approves the shortlisted proposals in November.

Annex 1

Participant's List

	Name	Designation	Organization
1.	Ibrahim Naeem	Director General	Environment Protection Agency
2.	Mohamed Adhil	Baa Atoll Councilor	Baa Atoll Council
3.	Mohamed Fathuhee	ECB Coordinator	DIS
4.	Ahmed Zubair Adam	Director	LAM
5.	Naseeema Saleem	Advocator	LGA
6.	Abdulla Shibau	Managing Director	BACF

Other Participant's

	Name	Designation	Organization
7.	Ahmed Nizam	President	NGO FEDERATION of Maldives
8.	Muhusina Abdul Rahman	Coordinator, Mangroves for the Future Project	MEE
9.	Fathimath Ghina	National Coordinator, GEF Small Grants Project	UNDP