



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Baa Atoll  
Biosphere Reserve since 2011  
Man and the Biosphere Programme

## Minutes of 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of Baa Atoll UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Advisory Board

Date: 06 December 2012

Venue: Ministry of Environment and Energy

Time: 13:00hrs

### AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Confirmation of the minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Advisory Board meeting
3. Adoption of the revised Terms of Reference of the Advisory Board meeting
4. Progress Report June-November 2012
5. Planning of the Biosphere Reserve for 2013
6. Terms of Reference of the Task Forces
7. Overview of the governance and institutional arrangement of the BR for 2013
8. Report on the Atoll Ecosystem Conservation and Baa Atoll Conservation Fund
9. Dates of next meetings

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING

#### 1. Welcome and Introduction of the members

The meeting was chaired by Director General of Environmental Protection Agency Mr Ibrahim Naeem. In his opening remarks he highlighted the purpose of the meeting and welcomed all the participants. He invited all the members to introduce themselves. Mr. Ibrahim Rasheed, Atoll Councillor replaced the Vice president of the Baa Atoll Council Mr. Abdulla Abdurahman Ali.

Members representing the Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture, the representatives from Baa Island Council, and the Live aboard Association were not able to participate in the meeting.

#### 2. Confirmation of the minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Advisory Board meeting

The Chairman presented the minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Advisory Board meeting which were adopted.

#### 3. Adoption of the revised Terms of Re of the Advisory Board meeting

This item was postponed to the last item of the agenda.

After discussions between some of the members, mainly Mr Hussain Naeem and the Chairman, the Chairman proposed that the original version of the ToR was maintained and that the membership is not changed. The Advisory Board agreed and the original version of the ToR was adopted. The election of the Vice-Chairman was postponed to the next meeting

#### **4. Progress Report June - November 2012**

The Progress Report of the Biosphere Reserve for the period June-November 2012 was presented by the Managing Director (MD). The report summarizes the activities undertaken in each Programme by the BR staff. The main discussions related to the management of the Hanifaru Marine Protected Area. There were questions about the disputes between the local fishermen and the resorts / live aboard; The MD answered that there are not records of the previous year, There are some incidents with fishing boats from other Atolls bait fishing in the Hanifaru Core Area; the Rangers informed them about the Regulations and in all cases they left the area without any hassle.

An updated and more complete monthly report of Hanifaru Control was presented. One of the experts, Mr Hussain Naeem, raised a question whether the BR Office keep a record of those boats which continue to breach the Regulations. Mr Shibau explained how the research permit of the Manta trust was not renewed, though they were making a great scientific contribution to the BR. He added that it is likely that their permit will be renewed for the next season.

#### **5. Planning of the Biosphere Reserve for 2013**

The draft work plan of the Biosphere Reserve for 2013 was presented by the Capacity Building Consultant, Mr. Pere Tomas-Vives. The members discussed about the workplan, which included the activities planned for the Conservation, Outreach and Livelihoods Programme of the Biosphere Reserve. It was agreed that the draft workplan would be circulated to all members for comments after the meeting.

#### **6. Terms of Reference of the Task Forces.**

The draft Terms of Reference of the Task Forces were presented by the Capacity Building Consultant, Mr. Pere Tomas-Vives. He explained about the roles, membership, activities and working procedures of the Task Forces. It was proposed to create three Task Forces, one for each Programme of the BR. The role of coordinator of the Task Forces was also discussed; most of the members were in favour that the coordinator of each Task Force be the Technical Officer in charge of each respective programme.. It was decided to send the draft TOR to all members for comments and necessary amendments.

#### **7. Overview of the governance and institutional arrangement of the BR for 2013**

This was introduced by Mr Shibau, who explained that the AEC project be completed at the end of this year and it is time for the Biosphere Reserve staff to take the lead and make it a success, with the technical support from EPA. He explained the new organization of the BR and the new structure, which will be supported by the Ministry of Environment and Energy and the BACF. He said that the recruitment of the new staff will be done by the Civil Service Commission.

## **8. Report on the Atoll Ecosystem Conservation project (AEC) and on the Baa Atoll Conservation Fund (BACF)**

Mr Shibau, AEC Project Manager, explained that the project has achieved the designation of BAA Atoll as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve together with the assistance of concerned institutions of the government, the Atoll Council, the Island Councils, the resorts and the people of Baa Atoll. He highlighted that with the establishment of the Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve Office and the Baa Atoll Conservation Fund, it is hoped that the Biosphere Reserve status will be maintained in the future. He also noted that the AEC project will terminate by the end of December 2012 and it is at present handing over the key responsibilities of managing Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve to the Ministry of Environment and Energy and to the Environmental Protection Agency for the continuation of this work. Moreover, he noted that the Baa Atoll Conservation Fund was inaugurated and held its first Board meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2012; he will share the minutes of this meeting with the Advisory Board members. He also continued that the Fund will support projects for the Biosphere Reserve management, biodiversity conservation, livelihoods, education and research carried out in Baa Atoll, and that the BACF Board finalized to make available USD 100,000 for small grants by the beginning of 2013. A Terminal Evaluation has been undertaken in November-December by an UNDP consultant and the report will soon be available.

## **9. Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting will be in March 2013, and that the subsequent meetings are provisionally scheduled for July and November 2013.

## **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS/AGREEMENTS:**

- ✓ The Advisory Board agreed to maintain the original version of the Terms of Reference.
- ✓ The AB agreed to postpone the election of the vice-chairman until the next meeting.
- ✓ Mr. Shibau will circulate the Terminal Evaluation Report to the members.
- ✓ Mr. Shibau will send the minutes of the first meeting of the Board of the Baa Atoll Conservation Fund.
- ✓ The AB agreed that the Work Plan of the Biosphere Reserve for 2013 will be sent to all members for comments.
- ✓ The AB agreed that the Task Forces ToR will be sent to all members for comments and that any necessary amendments will be included.