



Minutes of the Steering Committee meeting- II

Venue: UN House, 6th Floor meeting room

Date: 18 Sep 2020, 09:00-11:00 AM

Chair of the meeting: Elaine Conkievich, UNDP Resident Representative

Attendance – 7 out of 7 members or, all members present in the meeting

No	Members of Steering Committee	Non-members
Attendees	1. Elaine Conkievich, UNDP Resident Representative	9. Kh. Khishigjargal, Analyst, UNDP
	2. Ts. Erdenebat, Economic and industrial policy advisor to the President	10. V. Shinenemekh, Manager, MSCP
	3. T. Bulgan, Head of Green Development Policy and Planning, MET	11. O. Odgerel, Communications manager, MSCP
	4. D. Altantsetseg, Executive Director, Mongolian Wool and Cashmere Association	12. N.Tsolmon, Associate, MSCP
	5. N. Gankhuyag, Executive Director, Mongolian National Federation of Pasture User Groups	
	6. A.Amgalan, Technical advisor, FAO	
	7. Ts.Enkh-Amgalan, Representative of Advisory Committee	

Outcome of the Steering Committee meeting:

1. Decision on the organization of the Plenary meeting;
2. Approval of the Platform's Communications Strategy;
3. Review of work progress conducted to date;
4. Review and approval of workplan and budget adjustment for Sep-Dec 2020.



AGENDA

Time/Duration	Topic	Chair/presenter
08:30-09:00	Registration, coffee and refreshments	
09:00-09:10	Opening remarks and introduction of meeting agenda	Elaine Conkievich, Resident Representative, UNDP
09:10 –09:30	Comments and feedback from SC members on Platform’s work progress	Shinee Volooj, Manager, MSCP, UNDP
09:30 –09:40	Comments and feedback from SC members on planned activities for Sep-Dec 2020	SC members
09:40 –10:00	Discussion on Plenary meeting, decision making	SC members
10:00 –10:20	Presentation and approval of Platform’s Communications strategy	O.Odgerel, Comms Manager, MSCP, UNDP
10:20 –10:40	Platform’s work focus in 2021	Shinee Volooj, Manager, MSCP, UNDP
10:40 –10:50	Closing remarks	Elaine Conkievich, RR
10:50 –11:00	Group photo	



Summary of the discussion

Elaine Conkievich, Resident Representative, UNDP Mongolia, opened the meeting.

E.Conkievich, RR, UNDP Mongolia: It is a very pleasure to be joining this Steering Committee board for the Cashmere Platform today. I regret that I cannot participate in the meeting in person as I am in the quarantine now after visiting my family. But this is very important that we have this meeting to discuss the progress of the Platform achieved in the past half a year.

I want to thank you first of all very much for taking your time to come to the meeting on this Friday morning. Overall, for UNDP the work in cashmere and Mongolia is one of our top priorities. We are looking very much at climate change, natural resource management issues that are the highest priorities of our country office acknowledging that the special role of cashmere sector to the Mongolian economy, traditional nomadic herding culture and we are always looking opportunities how to enhance lifestyle of the herders, livelihoods of the herders and also protecting the heritage of Mongolia. This Platform is a way to consolidate and bring together synergy between different Agencies doing on cashmere. This a positive achievement because I truly believe that by working together we achieve more and better results for the herders of Mongolia. So, we really look forward to your participation and contribution and ideas of the work of the Cashmere Platform.

V.Shinee, Manager of the MSCP introduced the meeting agenda, 4 main issues to be discussed and activity plan in the frame of 8 objectives planned for 2021. She informed that as of August 2020, 9% of the Platform's 2020 funding of \$ 306,000 has been spent due to canceled or delayed activities caused by current circumstances related to Covid and other specific reasons which means \$ 240.00 should be delivered by end of the year. She pointed out that the Platform team has an ambitious plan to reach that amount of delivery. She also said that the ENSURE Project Steering Committee will discuss whether the remaining funding can be transferred to next year. There are several stages of cooperation, and the Platform has entered a phase of cooperation and coordination, and will keep this level ascending, she added.

T.Bulgan, MET: It has been acknowledged that the project team has been active and productive over the past six months. Performance and indicators should be expressed by actual results. The platform is still in its infancy, but it is not clear how active the other teams besides the Platform are. Chapter 6 of Mongolia's Long-Term Policy 2050, Green Development, contains a clause on establishing a sustainable business platform and system. Our Ministry of Nature, Environment and Tourism, in cooperation with the Banking sector, has developed sustainable financial principles, related laws, manuals and guidelines, and organized trainings on sustainable business.

As stated at the previous SC meeting, one of Mongolia's wealth is agriculture sector, which has a diverse ecosystem, natural resources, and its benefits based on them. In order for the agriculture sector to be sustainable and risk-free, it is necessary to protect the pasture as a source and resolve pasture capacity related issues. At the processor's level, industrial waste issues should also be addressed. The definition you are developing should include these principles, environmental friendliness, international standards, and Mongolian standards in detail. At the national level, enterprises are required to comply with two standards specifically set out in the Water Law. It would be good that the wool and cashmere sector should be well informed about this law and work towards reducing industrial waste and comply with standards. For the Platform, the delivery task of \$ 200,000 can be partially spent on this purpose.



Also, how are you going to spend the \$ 50,000 funding related to Covid recovery? I want to see unequivocal outputs and would recommend you pay attention to these areas.

V.Shinee, MSCP: Thank you! Your recommendations have been well noted. We intend to spend the funding for Covid recovery for collective solution of the issues, ensuring better cooperation, and implementing systemic change into the sector for building forward better. One of the shortcomings of the sector is cooperation and joint solutions, so we are working in this direction.

Kh.Khishigjargal, ENSURE, UNDP: In response to Ms.Bulgan's question, a multi-stakeholder discussion was held to identify ways to address the challenges facing the industry during Covid's tenure, identify possible actions to be taken in the first instance, and identify actions that need to be taken urgently. The workshop materials have been finalized and analyzed and an action plan has been developed. This means putting the results of the discussion into real actions.

N.Gankhuyag, NFPUGs: Our consultants are involved in the activities of the Platform. Due to Covid, a number of planned activities in the countryside were canceled. However, we managed to do some work online. Information on the Platform's activities, goals, ongoing activities, sustainable wool and cashmere needs to be provided to rural communities, herders and cooperatives in a timely manner. What are the human resource capacity building, training and information plans for herders, cooperatives and professional associations?

V.Shinee, MSCP: Yes, this is an important part of our Platform's work. Together with the ENSURE project, we plan the first field mission trip in the first week of October. We are going to visit Shinejinst soum of Bayankhongor aimag and one to two soums of Arkhangai aimag to get acquainted with the good experience of the sustainable cashmere projects in the local area, provide information about Platform and its operation along with the purpose of studying the situation on the spot.

The Advisory Committee meeting was held two days ago. During this meeting, we exchanged views with the Advisory Committee on online cooperation in rural areas. There was a very constructive recommendations and agreement on the preparation of e-learning materials and joint preparation of e-learning database. In addition, we have planned very innovative and novel activities for 2021. A report on this has been prepared and will be presented soon after.

V.Shinee, MSCP: Introduced the work direction for 2021.

D.Altantsetseg, MWCA: Within the framework of the Platform's work, many projects and initiatives have established working groups and discussed the issue of sustainable cashmere at the same table, which is considered to be a successful start of Platform's work. The platform has a lot of work planned. If we come to a conclusion on the challenges we face regarding the cooperation and expanding the collaboration in the future, the general foundation will be laid. The Platform is committed to support and accelerate the shift from a quantitative to a quality-based business. Within the framework of this work, a certification office was established at the MWCA within the framework of close multilateral cooperation between the government, private sector, international organizations, NGOs and research institutes. The main goal is to establish quality control in each value chain step from raw materials to finished products, to establish a quality control system, to introduce international standards, and to participate in the development of environmentally friendly and socially responsible textile production. In addition, certifying the quality of Mongolian cashmere is another mission. Please pay attention to keep momentum of results reached by the multilateral participants and initiatives in the sector and consider capacity building issues of the cashmere sector human resource. We also recommend the Platform focus on linking to the international market, expanding foreign trade



and increasing sales channels. In addition, according to Director Gankhuyag, there is a need to build capacity, introduce good external practices, create a flexible mechanism that is beneficial to all parties, and organize capacity building training.

Ts.Enkh-Amgalan, GGAHP: Our project is involved in the Platform Advisory Committee. We have been working in the field of sustainable cashmere for the last 16-17 years. In order to address the cashmere sustainability, we need to talk about pasture, which covers 70-80% of Mongolia's territory. As of today, 65% of pastures have been degraded. If no action is taken, after another 5 years, this amount of land and pastures are in danger of complete desertification. In other words, if the issue of pasture capacity management and the number and quality of livestock suitable for pasture capacity are not discussed and resolved, there will be no reason for Mongolia to produce sustainable livestock products. I think an important part of the platform's work will be the issue of pastureland sustainability and provide the Government with relevant information to make change in policy.

V.Shinee, MSCP: Thank you! One of the main objectives of the platform is to work on the policy and legal environment. I hope that today's discussion will go in the same direction. That's the way to get real results.

N.Gankhuyag, NFPUGs: I would like to make a comment on the previous issue. There are a number of issues and challenges that can be addressed without waiting for 2021 years in relation to the implementing work plan and the balance of funding. For example, this year, herders in 4-5 aimags in the western Gobi region are moving to otor due to severe drought, and there are risks of severe winter. Our Association has more than 80,000 herder household members in more than 100 soums. We have a hard time meeting with herders and cooperatives every day. In particular, there are problems with the Internet and the lack of equipment for online meetings. Is it possible to financially support active cooperatives? I would like to ask for real support in connection with the cashmere harvesting season. I would like to suggest that one of the technical working groups mentioned by the manager Shine be established in cooperation with our Association. According to Director Altaa, I would like you to pay attention to capacity building of the Association's staff and training to improve their communication skills with member herders.

Kh.Khishigjargal, ENSURE, UNDP: I would like to give an answer to the suggestion to work on improving the legal environment. The main ENSURE project is a project aimed at protecting biodiversity. In order to protect biodiversity, it is necessary to talk about the pasture sustainability. Therefore, the ENSURE project is planning to improve pasture management and amend the relevant laws on wildlife grazing. So I don't think there is a need to duplicate this issue in many places.

A.Amgalan, FAO UN: There are questions about delivery of the budget. In the first 8 months, 9% has been completed. The rest is said to be delivered in the last quarter of the year. This seems a bit unrealistic. Or do you have a work plan that needs this amount of spending? The next question is about the cashmere tracking system. You need to deal with tracking system if you are talking about cashmere sustainability. Or this system is included somewhere? Is the certificate issued only for processed cashmere or does it include each value chain steps from herder to processor?

V.Shinee, MSCP: There are reasons such as the comparative analysis that should have been done is in the procurement stage, the Platform team was fully operationalized only at the end of this August etc. However, we will try our best to complete the rest of the work, which will cost a lot of money, such as paying \$ 30,000 for GCP consultants and international and local consultants for doing comparative study.



As for the tracking system, a working group called Technology will be established and a tracking system will be effective in this area from the pasture to the buyer. We will support and cooperate with the initiatives that have best experiences and results in implementation of the tracking system successfully.

Ts.Enkh-Amgalan, GGAHP: The tracking system implemented under our project extends from the herder's town to the factory gates. As the tracking system and certification of tracking system are a very complex issue in the context of Mongolia, I agree that we need to develop a specific model reflecting the unique feature of nomadic way of livestock herding practices. In determining the welfare of animals, it may be different for nomadic pastoralism too. We are sharing the results and good practices of our 10 years of work with the Platform.

V.Shinee, MSCP: Thank you! Any other comments?

B.Badruun, MoFALI: I have both a question and a suggestion. Will the Steering Committee team be the same or in a slightly different way? The goals and objectives we are talking about here are large-scale and have of national and political importance. But the members of the Committee, the top one is Department head of the Ministry, director of Associations and some International organizations. The chair of the Steering Committee is a foreigner. What about the State's ownership? Shouldn't the platform be transferred to the highest political level in order to be stable, and politically effective?

E.Conkievich, RR, UNDP Mongolia: That is a very good point. For the longer term vision of the Platform, the handover should be discussed. UNDP here is only to facilitate over the next period. Then we can discuss how the Platform could be managed potentially in a different way. We can take collective decision how the SC going forward. We can have one more member, for example, Parliament member, Ministry representative or member of Cabinet Secretary, Government member someone who is decision making related to sustainable cashmere. But this is only a proposal from my side. You can consider it as a way. Thank you!

V.Shinee, MSCP: Thank you for your comments! If there is no other proposal, will we go to the discussion of organizing the Plenary Meeting? The Plenary Meeting plays an important role in the Platform Model. All parties are meeting together to approve a joint action plan. At this year's first meeting, the purpose and structure of the Platform will be introduced to the public, a definition of sustainable cashmere will be presented and reach to consensus. According to Mr. Badruun, there will be a discussion on who will run the Platform in the long run and what its operating principles will be. During the Plenary meeting, the participants will also discuss the results of the comparative analysis and baseline of collective action plan for 2021 will also be created. The first meeting is scheduled for November 20. What are your suggestions on the date? The meeting will have 100-150 participants in person including herders and 50-60 foreign partners through online. Could you please give comments on the suggested online approach? Your comments on the agenda are also valuable. The signing of the MOU-type cooperation proposal will also take place during the meeting. We ask you to cooperate in the development and consulting of this document. Do you agree on the timing?

The members agreed on the date of the meeting.

T.Bulgan, MET: We have a good experience. Together with the Banking Association, we have been organizing the TOS Forum every year. The example of the TOS Association is a very good example of managing the ownership of the Platform. The government supports the Association and work together on projects and programs. However, as for the Platform, herders are also coming in, so they will have to come up with their own unique versions.



Ts.Erdenebat, Office of the Mongolian President: I have a suggestion. There is a Commodity Exchange under the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. Involving this Exchange in the organization of the Plenary Meeting will be closely related to your work.

V.Shinee, MSCP: Thank you! We will send you the information in a timely manner, so please share your comments and suggestions from time to time. Now let us move to the introduction of the Platform's communication strategy plan.

O.Odgerel, MSCP: The platform's strategic communication plan was introduced.

V.Shinee, MSCP: Another thing we are planning to do in the field of information communication is the Interagency communication group. It means the Information Communication Platform next to the Platform will be established. It is planned to set up such a group in order to make the information available to the public through a wider channel, to promote and integrate activities.

Ts.Enkh-Amgalan, GGAHP: Target group needs to be clarified and herders need to be well informed about sustainable cashmere. There are also interesting experiences in our country. For example, the messages given to the citizens by the Ecological police had a very interesting content and form based on national customs, religions and beliefs. Reflect this approach into the strategy as well.

T.Bulgan, MET: There is a question. Table 2 shows the "influence over resource". What does this mean? How are you scoring? What is the content? Make your translation clearer and more concise.

O.Odgerel, MSCP: The content assesses the impact on decision-making and the extent to which resources are available to take action.

A.Amgalan, FAO UN: I have a suggestion. You seem to be trying to organize the Plenary Meeting with great importance. Therefore, is it possible to organize it within the MoFALI or the Office of the President according to its level of importance? The importance and the participation both will increase in this case. At the moment, it could be looked only the work of UNDP.

E.Conkievich, RR, UNDP Mongolia: Thank you for the comment which we will certainly consider! As far as the launch, it should be joined with local ownership because the Platform is made up by many stakeholders. I think we would need to consider how to manage that with potentially multiple local stakeholders. Certainly, everyone will be engaged in the preparation of the PM in the launch. But as far as the ownership suggestion, MoFALI is good. But maybe it is because the Platform is meant to be kind of collaborative, many integrated partners, we have to look at some model potentially to engage the preparation and launch of the Platform with different partners irrelevant for the future work of the Platform. Thank you very much for that comment and for the introduction of communications strategy. Of course, we can adjust the strategy depending on the audience. Thank you for those comments that are valuable!

V.Shinee, MSCP: First of all, thank you very much for attending the Steering Committee meeting! We have discussed the issues we intended to. Today we presented the work progress achieved in the first three quarters. There is a lot of ambitious work planned for the remaining quarter. Contact us if you have any work or research proposals that can be implemented together. There are also a number of capacity building proposals. There are some works that can be implemented within 2020 of which outputs can be visible. We will pay attention to the issues due to the difficult summer conditions in the regions and aimags mentioned by Director Gankhuyag. The need for a political solution is a very good idea. When we first established the SC, we discussed for a long time what level of members we should have and what kind of participation we should have. In the end, it was decided to be as it is today. It is noted that in



the long term, the Platform should be positioned as a national leader. The date of the Plenary Meeting has been set. We will focus on involving local people and herders. I think the proposal to hold branch meetings in preparation for the Meeting is very appropriate. In these meeting, we will define the topics and agenda of the Meeting sessions. Let's study and introduce Mongolia's best practices and initiatives in the field of information and communication strategy. We will work on the Mongolian version again and introduce it to you.

E.Conkievich, RR, UNDP Mongolia: Thank you very much again for taking the time! Development of the sustainable cashmere Platform is indeed meant to be a collective effort, shared Platform which UNDP is acting only a facilitator for the establishment of the Platform to bring all the interests to the table, space for collective discussion and consideration of the needs of the cashmere sector, needs of herders. So we very much value your contribution, your direct influence and comments. We will do some follow-up emails about issues raised here. Also sending around revised communication plan that you can e-approve it over the couple of weeks. Shinee, as a Platform manager, will address questions more specifically and the other aspects raised today. Regarding the change in SC members, shall we add one more member from the Parliament? We need to have your views on that. Is there any objection regarding Member of Parliament or are you in favor of that? Or shall we keep SC as it is?

Ts.Erdenebat, Office of the Mongolian President: The more people who provide political support, the better. However, it would be better if the member is not only a member of the Parliament and but who can be a champion in this area and has experience in the field. In my opinion, it would be better to look at participation in the Plenary Meeting and choose from there, if necessary, rather than decide on it right now.

Closing remarks:

E.Conkievich, RR, UNDP Mongolia: Your idea of adding a Member of Parliament who directly deals with issues we are dealing with is great. We can follow up on that by email as well. We have all agreed that the Plenary meeting will be held on 20th November and it is a very significant achievement for Mongolia. The Platform team will work diligently to prepare for the Plenary meeting and your support, contribution will also be highly valuable. UNDP has been supporting such commodity platforms in other countries, but this is the first commodity Platform that deals with the fiber, in this case cashmere. UNDP is very excited to be involved in this initiative and to be able to have it come reality. We very much rely on your support, influence, network in your contact to be providing information, talking about the Platform and its benefits for Mongolia for long term. Thank you very much for your time today!

Decisions:

1. Approved the planned date of Plenary Meeting which is on 20th Nov 2020;
2. The discussion on adding one more member to the SC will be continued by email over the next weeks;
3. Revised Communication Strategy Plan of MSCP will be sent to the SC members by email for e-approval;



Approved by:.....Elaine Conkievich, UNDP Resident Representative

Minutes taken by:N.Tsolmon, MSCP Associate

Reviewed by:Kh. Khishigjargal, Analyst, UNDP