

SECTION C – DESCRIPTION / SPECIFICATIONS/STATEMENT OF WORK

C.I PURPOSE AND SCOPE

USAID/Bangladesh seeks to continue its support to the environment sector through a new, five-year project, entitled “Integrated Protected Area Co-management (IPAC).” This Task Order is procured under the Prosperity, Livelihoods and Conserving Ecosystems (PLACE) IQC, and is USAID’s main vehicle for achieving results under the IPAC Project. The duration of the task order will be from the award date until June 4, 2013. The Contractor will provide technical advisory and assistance services to a range of stakeholders, including the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) and relevant ministries and technical agencies to promote and institutionalize an integrated protected area (PA) co-management system for sustainable natural resources management and biodiversity conservation that results in responsible, equitable economic growth and good environmental governance. The definition and core of co-management is the full participation of local stakeholders, such as communities and government to sustainably manage natural resources. IPAC will be a continuation of two ongoing USAID co-management activities: the Management of Aquatic Ecosystems through Community Husbandry (MACH) project and the Nishorgo Support Project (NSP, Co-management of Tropical Forest Resources in Bangladesh).

The IPAC Project will embark upon a *strategic goal* of scaling-up natural resource co-management at the policy and operational levels by achieving recognition, acceptance and integration of this approach by the GOB into its management tactics. IPAC will achieve its goals through three major components: (1) development of a coherent integrated protected areas co-management strategy, (2) building stakeholder and institutional capacity, and (3) site-specific implementation. IPAC will also use windows of opportunities to advance its goals.

The purpose of this Task Order is therefore, to:

- Provide high quality technical advisory services to GOB environment, forestry and fisheries agencies to support the further development of the natural resources sector and the conservation of biological diversity;
- Develop a protected area strategy that applies to all ecologically and economically significant areas, including those outside of freshwater and forest ecosystems;
- Build technical capacity within national and local level institutions for protected areas co-management;
- Expand the geographic area of Bangladesh under co-management to ensure the long-term success of the co-management model;
- Address within IPAC a series of short-, medium-, and long-term climate change mitigation and adaptation issues.

C.II EXPECTED RESULTS

USAID’s strategy empowers poor people by giving them a central role in resource management and by addressing the fundamental issues of inequality and risk. In

addition, USAID strongly promotes a transparent process of environmental governance by ensuring a participatory, multi-stakeholder approach to resource management. USAID has developed a “co-management” model, which devolves management authorities to local communities, whose lives are directly or indirectly dependent on natural capital. Through this model the sustainable management of the nation’s natural resource base is becoming the joint responsibility of local communities, local government bodies and the central government.

The fundamental question of why a country so rich in natural resources finds itself in such a dire ecological situation is, ultimately, a question of both policy and governance. While USAID’s pilot efforts and co-management model have shown some spectacular successes, there still remain unmet challenges in the sphere of national policies as well as in local management approaches. IPAC will not be able to address all natural resource and livelihood issues facing Bangladesh, but it will strategically focus on a few key challenges, including the lack of a coherent strategy for PAs, weak institutional capacity and the need for sustainable conservation financing.

The following are expected results that IPAC contractor will achieve over the five-year period.

- Formal policy recognition of PA as a system and management unit, and approval of a national Integrated Protected Areas Co-management Strategy and Action Plan that devolves co-management authority to communities.
- Institutionalization of co-management by the GOB as the accepted approach for PA management and biodiversity conservation.
- Implementation of the approved IPAC strategy establishing sustainable, more productive and resilient PAs. Through IPAC, USAID will provide targeted assistance to institutionalize and ensure the sustainability of gains achieved to date in the 3 freshwater ecosystem areas under the MACH project and the 5 forest PAs under NSP. Furthermore, USAID under IPAC will increase the number of hectares under co-management and the visibility of the approach, by expanding co-management into at least 3 additional PAs, which can include forest protected areas, freshwater wetlands, coastal ecosystems and the GOB’s designated Ecologically Critical Areas (ECA). These sites will demonstrate the success of co-management in PAs under varying GOB ministry jurisdictions and will incorporate larger PAs with international ecological significance.
- Pragmatic conservation financing mechanisms developed and approved by the GOB to mainstream conservation financing in favor of co-management implementation at the national and local levels. At the local level, financial support through conservation financing mechanisms will facilitate adaptation of the communities as well as the GOB to climate change related vulnerabilities.
- Successful implementation of the conservation financing mechanism and demonstration of its sustainability.
- Climate change mitigation through improved land use and adaptation of the communities as well as the GOB to climate change related vulnerabilities.
- A cadre of professionals trained in PA management and co-management within the GOB institutions, as well as community organizations.

- Community-based natural resource management organizations involved in IPAC are sustainable, transparent, pro-poor and equitable.
- Development and demonstration of ecological restoration plans to rehabilitate degraded critical ecosystems through co-management while building stakeholder capacity for restoration. Recovery of areas of the Sundarbans damaged by Cyclone Sidr may be a target area.
- Public-private sector alliances for PA co-management established and successfully operating.

These expected results will lead to more sustainable natural resource management and enhanced biodiversity conservation that will assist in the further preservation of the country's natural capital while promoting equitable economic growth and instilling stronger environmental governance systems.

It is understood that some of the expected results may appear to be outside USAID and the Contractor's manageable interests within this time frame. However, the Contractor will be requested to carry out its tasks in such a manner as to help facilitate achievement of these results rather than purely focus on task outputs.

Under Component 1, Development of a Coherent Integrated Protected Areas Co-Management Strategy, expected results include:

- Active support from the relevant GOB stakeholders demonstrated by the development of a coherent, integrated PA management strategy and action plan.
- The approval of a coherent, integrated protected areas system strategy and action plan that institutionalizes and scales up co-management as the approach for PA management at the national level.
- Development with the GOB and approval by the GOB of a formal conservation financing mechanism for sustainable natural resources management with part of the benefit reaching the poor communities directly along with implementation of the mechanism with the GOB.
- Development of an effective conservation partnership involving the GOB, private sector and other civil society organizations.
- Communities able to adapt to climate change related vulnerabilities.
- A Communication Strategy and Action Plan designed and implemented
- A series of targeted outreach activities carried out throughout the implementation period.

Expected results under Component 2, Building Stakeholder and Institutional Capacity, include:

- Needs for institutional capacity assessed and training plan developed.
- A series of in-country, Asia regional and US-based training and site visit programs on various aspects of PA management for GOB officials at various levels executed;
- Development of a foundation course on integrated PA management;
- Strengthened capacity of the existing training centers;

- A series of training programs at the community level conducted;
- Capacity increased of the agencies and stakeholders involved in PA management during IPAC implementation and beyond.
- Capacity of the GOB to participate in international climate change negotiations and effectively implement National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA) increased.
- Development at the community level of a pool of trained extension agents.

Expected results under Component 3, Site-Specific Implementation of Co-Management in Protected Areas, include:

- Sustained co-management of existing MACH and Nishorgo project sites through targeted assistance.
- Increased number of hectares under co-management and heightened visibility of co-management model through work in at least 3 additional PAs, which may include one or more areas of international ecological significance.
- A number of alternative income generation (AIG) activities involving targeted beneficiary groups of men and women in demonstration sites implemented.
- Business plans for community-based eco-tourism developed and viability of these enterprises assured.
- Outreach activities that contribute to the successful implementation of co-management in selected sites carried out with communities.

C.III STATEMENT OF WORK

A. Overview

This Task Order is USAID's main vehicle for achieving results under IPAC and the Contractor will be responsible for developing and implementing tasks to help achieve the Project's objectives. The results of these tasks will lead to more sustainable and participatory natural resource management and enhanced biodiversity conservation that will assist in the preservation of the country's natural capital while promoting equitable economic growth and instilling stronger environmental governance systems.

Implementation of the IPAC project requires the following 3 components:

1. Development of a Coherent Integrated Protected Areas Co-Management Strategy
2. Building Stakeholder and Institutional Capacity
3. Site-Specific Implementation

Component efforts will work in parallel to: develop and gain agreement on an IPAC strategy; identify, and subsequently select appropriate training organizations, protected areas, and co-management curricula in the country and region; and select appropriate field implementation sites. The eventual establishment of demonstration sites will enhance the visibility of PA management and reinforce the institutionalization of the approach.

Services to be Provided

Services to be provided under this Task Order will include, but are not limited to, technical advisory and consulting services, policy dialogue and support, training and capacity building services, workshops and conferences, logistical support, small-scale infrastructure and a limited purchase of commodities. The major thrust of the project will be to support the relevant environment, forestry and fisheries agencies to develop and implement a coherent strategy for integrated protected areas co-management based on existing policies, rather than seeking to legislate new policies or bring about broad changes to the policy framework. This strategy therefore requires that the contractor takes into account the different policies, strategies, action plans, rules and approaches that each government institution has for areas of high conservation value, high economic value and/or critical ecosystems and consider how to organize an overall national, strategic framework that would institutionalize co-management as the approach for conservation.

It will be critical that close dialogue is maintained with USAID and appropriate GOB entities throughout this project to ensure that there is full buy-in and high level commitment throughout its implementation. The project has incorporated specific measures to be implemented to: 1) help ensure that all relevant stakeholders (including community members, the private sector, local governments, NGOs and other civil society organizations) are able to see measurable short-term benefits from the IPAC strategy; 2) build credibility and operational experience of the concerned agencies; 3) demonstrate to the GOB the benefits of expanded implementation of the strategy to help further prospects and commitment for the sound governance of natural resources and biodiversity that promotes sustained economic benefits; and 4) assist the country in adaptations to climate change.

Address Biodiversity Threats and Climate Vulnerabilities

For the implementation of the three major components noted above, the Contractor will review, recommend and conduct interventions as feasible. It is also recognized that the contractor may also have to consider additional interventions as appropriate for the overall success of the IPAC strategy. Examples of such additional interventions might include addressing the specific threats to biodiversity at project sites to ensure biodiversity conservation and improving overall livelihood well-being and security in the face of vulnerabilities that may be exacerbated by climate change, particularly as conflicts over resources may arise. Due to the fluid political climate in the country, the situation and agency roles may change from time to time, and the Contractor must be sensitive to such changes and be prepared to make adjustments as necessary. The Contractor must also be cognizant of gender and youth issues in the design of tasks in pertinent intervention areas and take appropriate measures in support of gender equity/equality. The Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO) for this Task Order will be the USAID/Dhaka Environment Unit Leader, otherwise referred to as the USAID CTO, who will provide technical direction.

Partner Leverage and Collaboration

The contractor with USAID will proactively seek to leverage the funding and resources of other development partners including the GOB and those listed below. The Contractor will also be responsible for ensuring that all component tasks under this Task Order are sufficiently coordinated with USAID and other donor and multi-lateral environment activities, notably the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Bank and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The interventions under the Task Order are expected to be closely coordinated with two other Mission activities: the "*Policy Analysis Monitoring and Assessment*" (PAMA) and "*Poverty Reduction by Increasing the Competitiveness of Enterprises*" (PRICE) to establish a natural product value chain, as well as build market partnerships. (Information on activities currently implemented by USAID/Bangladesh can be obtained by accessing the website: www.usaid.gov/bd.)

The Contractor shall primarily coordinate with the Forest Department (FD) and the Department of Environment (DOE) under the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MOEF) and the Department of Fisheries (DOF) under the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock (MOFL). In addition, the Ministry of Land and the Ministry of Finance will be among the other important government stakeholders, including the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives and the Ministry of Water Resources, which will receive IPAC's focus. IPAC will be a continuation of USAID's ongoing effort in community co-management of natural resources. The co-management organizations and participatory management processes at the local level will, therefore, be the prime targets that IPAC will work with. All the above mentioned entities will receive capacity building support from IPAC and, at the same time, will be simultaneously engaged in implementing IPAC so that they form a strong constituency for conservation and institutionalize the co-management approach across the country in different natural resource settings.

Two USAID projects MACH and NSP, have successfully demonstrated co-management models (www.machban.org, www.nishorgo.org).¹ Together, MACH and NSP have functioned as pilot activities that provide the architecture and logical progression for the proposed future interventions outlined in this SOW. As the pioneer in natural resources co-management in Bangladesh, USAID has worked with a number of international and domestic organizations for about a decade now. The contractor will collaborate with NGOs and other organizations with experience in co-management. Even though MACH and Nishorgo were implemented by U.S. primes, a good number of local entities, particularly NGOs, have partnered with the primes. The local NGOs have developed notable expertise in implementing various crucial components of co-management, even

¹ MACH achievements were summarized in a recent USAID publication, *Issues in Poverty Reduction and Natural Resources Management* (http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/agriculture/landmanagement/poverty/pubs/poverty_nrm_report.pdf). The MACH program was also featured in the Agency's recent Fisheries Opportunity Assessment (P:\EGFE Office\Current Projects\Environment\New Programs\New Programs\ADD\Draft_Fish_Opport_Assess_160806.doc). An excellent summary of MACH co-management experience, published in the World Resources Report 2006, is available at P:\EGFE Office\Current Projects\Environment\New Programs\New Programs\ADD\WRR_06_Bang_Case_to_reviewers-MACH_edits-v4.doc.

though linking conservation with other mechanical parts of co-management still poses a challenge. For example, linking social mobilization and community mobilization with conservation and sustainable natural resources management remains difficult. Nonetheless, there is a critical mass of local expertise available now. There is also available a critical pool of academics, civil society groups and private sector entities that IPAC will tap into. While leadership of international experts may be called upon and beneficial for the development of the PA strategy, including a sustainable financing mechanism, there are a number of local experts available to form an efficient team. Moreover, the contractor will continue to deploy and move forward USAID's public-private conservation partnerships for large-scale and long-term PA financing.

The contractor will provide technical oversight of the habitat restoration and infrastructure development activities by hiring a local architectural and engineering (A&E) firm that will monitor the planning and design, expenditures, construction and other activities. It is anticipated that approximately \$2.5 million equivalent in local currency funds will be available for these purposes.. This provision is within the requirements contained in the PLACE IQC that allow implementers to engage in A&E activities as long as they do not exceed a designated level. The A&E services that will be conducted fall within the PLACE guidelines.

B. Component 1 - Development of a Coherent Integrated Protected Areas Co-Management Strategy

Objectives

The aim of a coherent Integrated Protected Areas Co-management Strategy will be to take the co-management successes of MACH and NSP to the national level by including all valuable areas of biodiversity. The goal of this intervention will be to develop a strategy that encompasses the existing policies (without creating new ones), and enables them to be implemented such that they establish a PA system explicitly managed with the participation of local stakeholders.

Discussion

The MACH and NSP projects have had notable success in institutionalizing the co-management process in management of inland capture fisheries and forest areas under the jurisdiction of DOF and FD, respectively. There is still the need to go beyond these areas to other important areas of biodiversity throughout the country. However, in Bangladesh a variety of Ministries have jurisdiction for managing areas of ecological importance and there is no common protected area strategy.²

² To demonstrate the complexity, it can be noted that the Forest Department (FD) has officially recognized 20 areas under its jurisdiction as Wildlife Sanctuaries, National Parks and Game Reserves. The Environmental Conservation Act (1995) provided the Department of Environment (DOE) with the authority to declare any area of the country as an Ecologically Critical Area (ECA). Using the authority, DOE has declared eight areas as ECAs. Despite a lack of institutional capacity, the DOE, with funding from UNDP, is now in the process of developing Rules for ECA Management. Numerous critically endangered wetland habitats are under the administrative jurisdiction of the Ministry of Land (MOL) although the management controls for fisheries improvements have largely been vested with the DOF, but there also are exceptions which complicate the situation even more.

The PA strategy developed through this intervention will enable all agencies involved in natural resource management to work from the same framework through co-management.³ It will not replace their existing policies, but assist them to utilize the co-management approach for effective resource conservation, economic growth and civil-society strengthening. Eventually this approach will allow all ecologically important areas, regardless of administrative or management jurisdictions, to be labeled as PAs. This strategy will introduce an integrated, co-management concept for all PAs nationally. It also will work to strengthen the GOB's capacity to better understand the crosscutting linkages between natural resource management, economic growth and good governance, to establish the formal, legal basis for co-management, and to establish a basis for sustainable financing of PA co-management.

The people around the PAs are victims of extreme poverty; therefore, the contractor will be responsible for community empowerment to improve their livelihoods and the sustainable management of natural resources. Furthermore, given the country's demographics, PAs will increasingly become involved in intractable social conflicts especially under a global climate change scenario. Conflict between powerful vested interests and poor communities over natural resources, as well as between local communities and the government agencies, will undoubtedly increase; therefore, the contractor will address methods of conflict prevention that take into account the needs of the traditionally marginalized poor communities. The IPAC strategy and action plan will ensure that the ultra-poor do not suffer from any socioeconomic exclusion; but instead, have the opportunity to be at the center of implementation. Most of the PAs and their vicinities also have ethnic and religious minorities as inhabitants. As the PAs are remotely located, women often face additional social, cultural and religious barriers. There is also the challenge of the role of youth, many of whom have dropped out of school and a few opportunities for their futures. The IPAC strategy and action plan will be sensitive to ethnic, gender and youth issues and will make a focused effort in addressing them. Please see the Gender and Youth Statement section below for additional information about how gender will be integrated throughout IPAC.

To achieve the goal of developing a coherent, integrated PA co-management strategy, the following tasks will be required:

- Constituency Building
- Development of new PA Strategy
- Partnership Building for Sustainable Financing
- Outreach

Task A. Constituency Building

The IPAC contractor will conduct interventions with stakeholders to begin discussion of the need for a PA system and to build a constituency for such a strategy and system. The interventions (which likely will include a range of stakeholder meetings), will emphasize the value of biodiversity with particular reference to equitable economic growth and

³ These interventions will also work towards carrying out the vision outlined in the *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)* for Bangladesh, the *Nishorgo Vision 2010* and the *Inland Capture Fisheries Strategy (ICFS)*.

responsive governance. The key stakeholders will be actors responsible for bio-diverse areas as well as relevant in implementing a new PA financing system, such as government ministries, local government leaders, NGOs, the private sector, and communities.

Task B. Development of a New PA Strategy

In conjunction with the building of a conservation constituency, the contractor will develop a vision among these stakeholders for a PA system that includes co-management as its cornerstone. Given that currently, Bangladesh's natural resource management approach is characterized by, "...conflicting and fragmented policies and mandates within government agencies, and a long-standing focus on production at the expense of conservation and sustainable management" (National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, NBSAP), the contractor will analyze with government agencies the existing legal framework and the types of changes that might be needed to institutionalize an integrated protected area co-management system. This analysis will compare existing policies and the opportunities for harmonizing them while developing a coherent integrated protected areas co-management strategy.

In the design and adoption of a national IPAC strategy, the contractor will utilize as building blocks, the successes of MACH in leveraging GOB approval of the Inland Capture Fisheries Strategy (ICFS) and NSP in having the FD establish its own nationwide PA management program, Nishorgo. The design and adoption will require from the contractor intense interaction and collaboration among government officials of at least four key ministries: 1) Land, 2) Fisheries and Livestock (MOFL), 3) Environment and Forest (MOEF), and 4) Finance. The MOEF is responsible for the implementation of the NBSAP and the National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA) to combat climate change impacts. As a result, MOEF will be a key partner in the process of developing IPAC. Similarly, the MOFL will play an equally important role as it is charged with the responsibility for implementing the ICFS.

Task C. Partnership Building for Sustainable Financing

Partnership building for sustainable financing will occur at the national and local levels. At the national level, the contractor will seek broad support from other development partners, including the GOB, for PA management and conservation and will deploy a range of approaches to ensure sustainable financing for PA co-management. At the local level to help co-management be fully successful, the GOB will need to officially recognize that communities that invest in the protection of natural capital deserve to receive benefits from the revenues generated as a result. The contractor will therefore work to permanently establish pragmatic financial approaches such as revenue generation from PA and benefit-sharing with participating communities.

USAID through the NSP has achieved a breakthrough in that the Ministry of Finance agreed to return a portion of revenues generated by a NSP-managed PAs to the site. The contractor of IPAC will work to scale up this approach beyond the NSP-managed PAs to the rest of the country. In this regards, the contractor may view a recently signed a multi-

year Program Agreement (ProAg) between USAID and the GOB as another building block because it includes an explicit provision for retention of entry fees for use by the Co-management Committees and Councils (CMC). The experience under NSP and the ProAg provide a foundation for IPAC's intervention to establish a permanent financial mechanism for PA co-management. Sustained benefit-sharing by the CMC will result in more direct and immediate economic benefits to the participating communities as payments for their conservation efforts as well as an increase in economic activities undertaken by the CMC (such as social forestry and eco-tourism services). These activities, in turn, will provide additional benefits to communities through improved land use and adaptations that increase their resiliency to climate change-related extreme events such as floods, cyclones and drought.

In addition, the IPAC contractor will be to build from the Nishorgo Conservation Partnership Program. This program marked a paradigm shift in the MOEF, in that it involves the private sector and micro-finance institutions in PA infrastructure development and, broadly, PA financing. The IPAC contractor is expected to "adopt" the existing partnerships and build from the successes. Moreover, IPAC is expected to work closely with the Arannayk Foundation (Bangladesh Tropical Forest Conservation Foundation)⁴, which has recently started PA co-management with technical assistance from NSP.

Task D. Outreach

Building upon existing successes and materials developed and practiced by MACH and NSP, the contractor shall develop an outreach and communication strategy at the outset with a clearly focused action plan. The contractor's plan will detail how it will reach out to stakeholders and build a constituency for conservation at national and local levels. This constituency includes government officials, other donors and the rural poor, particularly women, youth, and urban residents. An overall objective will be to raise awareness among the public of the biological richness of Bangladesh and the laws that pertain to biodiversity conservation and PAs.

C. Component 2 – Building Stakeholder and Institutional Capacity

Objective

The objective of the capacity building intervention under IPAC is to assist the GOB and relevant NGOs and communities in implementing co-management within PAs and to develop the ability to continue such programs on their own.

⁴ Authorized under the U.S. Tropical Forest Conservation Act (TFCA) of 1998, the USG and GOB established the Arannayk Foundation (*Bangladesh Tropical Forest Conservation Foundation*) as an independent, grant-making entity. Arannayk was registered under the Bangladesh Companies Act framework, in July 2003, as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. The mission of the Foundation is the effective protection of a viable representative population of Bangladesh's remaining tropical forests and its biodiversity.

Discussion

Capacity is pivotal to a successful co-management approach. Capacity is more than financial and human resources; it also includes motivation and commitment, which, in turn, require appropriate incentives at all levels. Ultimately, for co-management to be sustained, it will be anchored within existing contextual systems (government), frameworks (e.g., Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and the Annual Development Plan – ADP), and processes (devolution)⁵, even where these are imperfect or insufficient. Capacity building will require specific training programs, along with the establishment of an in-country PA management training program within an existing institute. Staff of the Wildlife and Nature Conservation Circle of the FD will be critical to implementation of the PA co-management strategy and will receive specific attention and training. Similarly, the ECA Cell and Climate Change Cell within the DOE and the newly formed Inland Capture Fisheries Management Wing at the DOF will be targeted for capacity building.

To achieve this goal the following tasks will be required:

- Training
- Local Support Services

Task A. Training

The contractor will develop and provide training to various GOB departments at the national and local level, NGO staff, and community members to develop the skills needed to implement the IPAC strategy with the full participation of communities. The NSP has carried out a detailed PA capacity needs assessment for the FD. This needs assessment can be used as a basis for assessing the capacity of the DOE and DOF. IPAC will also help GOB develop capacity for climate change negotiations as well as developing competitive grant proposals to access intergovernmental climate funds or private carbon markets⁶ that will help the GOB implement the NAPA.

The contractor will focus on the following training priorities under IPAC: (1) strengthening the capacity of the existing training centers; (2) developing an integrated foundation course on applied conservation biology (e.g. nature conservation, biodiversity, sociology, PA co-management, alternative livelihoods, and community-based eco-tourism) that will include all PA management issues and community-based adaptation to climate change; and (3) designing and implementing in-country and overseas short-term training programs. Local and regional academic/professional training institutions will play a vital role in PA capacity building efforts and the Contractor may use a combination of international and national expertise. The Contractor, in order to avoid any duplication, will fully utilize the existing co-management working model, databases and methodologies that have already been developed.

⁵ Devolution refers to transferring certain public sector responsibilities (particularly administrative or managerial) from the Central Government to sub-national levels of government.

⁶ For example, the NSP has helped the FD develop programs targeting voluntary carbon markets, some of which are being considered by GEF and other financing agencies.

The contractor will determine specific training interventions as the project is implemented and with the participation of stakeholders to identify and prioritize needs. One likely intervention may include the establishment of an in-country PA management training program through, for example, the development of a foundation course at a local institution to train a broad range of staff from all GOB departments. The curriculum elements would focus on training in the co-management approach for biodiversity conservation and natural resources management. The option of developing a training center that focuses on training the trainers will also be explored so that trainers could then spread out across the country implementing co-management on a larger scale. Training courses and approaches will build upon and strengthen existing training facilities and resources in order to avoid duplication and ensure cost-effectiveness. The training center would also link to MACH or Nishorgo sites as training sites.

One requirement for the long-term sustainability of IPAC is the ability of the GOB to move away from the traditional “mandate” regime of managing natural resources and embrace modern environmental and sustainable development concepts through adoption of PA co-management. Implementation of the PA co-management approach will enable it to successfully attract and seek outside funding from other donors, such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and commercial markets⁷. Therefore, in addition to building GOB capacity in PA co-management, the contractor must also provide training assistance to the GOB in applying for funding as well as the ability to be accountable for funds received. Similarly, assistance to NGOs and communities in proposal writing and funds accountability will be given. Furthermore, for local communities and resource committees, training in alternative forms of income generation will be given.

Task B. Local Support Services

MACH and NSP have invested in building the capacity of resource user groups and their related organizations. This investment has resulted in a large pool of local human resources for co-management. The villagers themselves are now proficient in the concept of co-management. They have been the major actors for on-the-ground change and improvements in the natural resource base as well as being an integral part of the social mobilization for co-management. As the IPAC strategy becomes institutionalized and nationalized; having a cadre of experienced personnel in co-management will be important in scaling up across the country. The pool for this cadre could be existing members of resource user groups.

The contractor will work to take advantage of this local human resource pool and design and implement methods by which experienced villagers/members of resource user groups are trained to become extension agents for peer-to-peer trainings with other villagers who are to be beneficiaries under the IPAC strategy. There are several advantages to this approach. First, other villagers may more readily and rapidly understand and accept co-management if explained by a fellow farmer or fisher. Second, it is envisioned that they

⁷ To illustrate, the DOF’s concept of wetland management is confined within the traditional realm of fisheries production management. However, the MACH project has helped the DOF prepare a proposal for declaring the Hail Haor – one of the MACH sites – as an internationally recognized wetlands area, known as a Ramsar site. Similarly, the FD still feels more comfortable in forestry development activities.

would be paid for providing such local support services (or professional services), which would result in a lower cost than hiring consultant extension agents. Third, the establishment of co-management in MACH, NSP and this project recognizes the need for alternative income generation as a replacement to any lost income due to conservation and/or an incentive for conservation; therefore, it is highly appropriate that past resource users with experience be given an opportunity to earn income and provide professional services from their co-management experience as another means of alternative income generation. Therefore, the contractor will provide a feasibility analysis of the utilization of this local human resource pool and design an implementation plan for its long-term success and sustainability.

D. Component 3 – Site-Specific Implementation of Co-Management in Protected Areas

Objective

The goal of the IPAC Site-specific Implementation intervention is to implement and continue field testing of integrated PA management in a targeted number of new and existing aquatic and terrestrial PAs, including those where MACH and NSP worked, aiming to institutionalize gains.

Discussion

Much of the formation of the IPAC Strategy will occur at the national level. While progress is being made on the strategy's adoption, demonstration sites at the local level will be chosen. For the site-specific implementation component the following tasks will be required:

- Selection of demonstration sites and deployment appropriate field interventions
- Alternative income generation and financing
- Outreach

Task A. Selection of demonstration sites and deployment of appropriate field interventions

The contractor will support the adoption of the IPAC strategy through demonstration sites across the country in two ways. Firstly, the contractor will support the continued sustainability of existing USAID pilot co-management sites of MACH and NSP and secondly, will establish at least three new project sites in ecologically critical areas to scale-up the areas under co-management and prove co-management's wider viability and applicability.

MACH demonstrated co-management success in three representative freshwater ecosystems, but the total core area coverage was only 20,000 hectares, impacting 500,000 people. The core area coverage under the five NSP sites is about 25,000 hectares, although the total landscape coverage is approximately 125,000 hectares, having a population of about 350,000. Through IPAC, the contractor will provide limited, targeted assistance to institutionalize and ensure the sustainability of gains achieved to date in the 3 freshwater ecosystems under the MACH project and the 5 forest protected areas under NSP.

This Task of IPAC will not only build upon MACH and NSP, but will also provide targeted assistance to the institutions and habitat improvement processes established by these two pioneering initiatives to make sure that the objectives of the previous interventions are fulfilled. USAID, however, does not anticipate that IPAC will have to deploy a full-scope technical assistance to the existing institutions and sites. The MACH operation will continue almost at a full-scale until June 2008 using PL 416(b) funds. Moreover, MACH has taken some practical steps to maximize the sustainability of its local partner institutions. First, the local partner NGOs will receive some funds to periodically monitor for an additional year beyond June 2008, the operation of local institutions such as the Resource Management Organizations, Federation of Resource User Groups and Upazila Fisheries Committees. Secondly, endowment funds have been placed with all of these institutions to maintain their administrative costs. USAID believes that at least 90% of the MACH institutions will be self-sustaining. The remaining 10%, most of which have been formed fairly recently, may require some focused assistance from the IPAC contractor to graduate to the “self-sustaining” level. Most of the NSP co-management committees will need relatively more assistance from the IPAC contractor to establish themselves as “park managers” and also to manage the complex stakeholder dynamics as well as the revenue system. One of the priority tasks of the IPAC contractor will be to conduct a “need analysis” of the MACH and NSP stakeholders in order to develop an astute intervention package.

Given that the basic governance structure for co-management has been developed and tested, and that the needed economic and ecological interventions have been broadly identified through MACH and NSP, the IPAC contractor will use these lessons learned and the methodology developed to increase the number of hectares under co-management. Increasing the number of hectares under co-management will serve various purposes. Firstly, it will target areas of ecologically significant ecosystems of international standing such as the Sundarbans⁸ and the Tanguar Haor. The IPAC contractor will also attempt to work on PAs located within remote areas such as the Chittagong Hill Tracts, which, besides the Sundarbans, still possesses invaluable biodiversity conservation potential. By focusing on such areas, the contractor will also expand the visibility of this approach. Furthermore, during the expansion of the physical area under co-management, the contractor will demonstrate to the GOB how an increase in physical area can be carried out in a cost-effective manner. In this regard, the contractor will develop implementation manuals based on site-based lessons learned that provide guidelines on how to cost-effectively scale-up the co-management approach under the IPAC strategy developed under component one.

In addition to considering the further support that may be needed to the MACH and Nishorgo pilot sites, the IPAC contractor will work in at least 3 new protected areas. These new sites will demonstrate the applicability and viability of the co-management

⁸ For example, including the Sundarbans alone, which has three PAs, will give a significant boost to the area coverage. Out of the total area of 228,698 hectares under the forest PA coverage, the Sundarbans alone has 144,698 hectares. The Sundarbans East Wildlife Sanctuary is 31,226 hectares, the Sundarbans South Wildlife Sanctuary is 36,970 hectares and the Sundarbans West Wildlife Sanctuary is 71,502 hectares.

approach beyond MACH and Nishorgo and within the context of the overall IPAC strategy. Sites will be chosen based on three criteria:

- (1) sites under different departmental jurisdictions;
- (2) sites identified through a biodiversity priority setting exercise and
- (3) sites vulnerable to climate change.

The reason for choosing sites under different departmental jurisdictions that are also a high priority for biodiversity conservation is to develop capacity in these departments in PA co-management in addition to demonstrating the applicability and viability of the co-management approach. Site selection may also occur near existing MACH and NSP sites in order to improve overall landscape management of natural resources. IPAC may also consider the restoration of degraded critical ecosystems and seek the active collaboration with other donors' initiatives for the scaling up of the co-management approach.

Task B. Alternative income generation and financing

Conservation often holds an opportunity cost for local communities; therefore the IPAC contractor will establish alternative income generation opportunities for local communities at the new sites selected along with the overall sustainable conservation financing of these sites. Interventions will be tailored to the specific needs of women and men and will ensure the full participation of women. (Please see Gender section below for additional information).

The IPAC contractor will include the development of public-private sector partnerships as a means of conservation financing. MACH operated a revolving microfinance operation among target beneficiaries and provided them with skill development training. NSP moved away from this concept and provided target beneficiaries incentive grants in tandem with skill development training. Both MACH and NSP linked the beneficiaries with other donors' initiatives. The IPAC contractor will build upon these past efforts while looking for more innovative AIG approaches, including tourism-based enterprises and high-value nature products value chain development, aiming to reach a larger target group as well as a diverse range of enterprises. Furthermore the IPAC contractor must consider how sustainable finance will help the ultra-poor communities to combat climate change related vulnerabilities.

Task C. Outreach

While the IPAC contractor will be building conservation constituencies at the national level for the IPAC strategy, the contractor will also be responsible for outreach at the local level. The goal of the contractor's efforts at the local level will be to increase community interest in conservation and in becoming environmental stewards. While outreach under this sub-component will follow the overall IPAC communication strategy, specific methods will be identified and developed that are suited to specific locations and situations throughout the course of field mobilization.

E. Cross-Cutting Approaches

Gender Perspective

Women and men have different gender-based knowledge of, access to, and control over natural resources, and different opportunities to participate in decisions regarding natural resource use. Understanding women's and men's relationship to natural resources, therefore, plays an important role in developing solutions that are more effective, equitable and efficient in advancing the sustainable use of natural resources. A gendered approach of natural resource management, therefore, takes the activities of both men and women into account, incorporating them into project planning in order to reap the benefits from both. Ignoring gender distorts the full understanding of human impacts on the environment.

In Bangladesh, like in most regions of the world, men play a greater and more direct role than women in the exploitation of natural resources for commercial purposes – logging, grazing livestock, fishing, mining, and extracting various natural resources. While both women and men are involved in economic activities such as farming, women have additional domestic responsibilities such as food preparation, water and fuel wood collection, child care, and maintaining family health. Participation of women in decision making is low in Bangladesh. Men enjoy full decision-making authority. USAID's environment program works in remote rural areas where women face tremendous social, cultural and religious barriers.

Gender mainstreaming has been a goal since the inception of the USAID environment program. Through the MACH and NSP projects USAID has tried a variety of approaches to ensure that women are not only present in activities, but are empowered to participate meaningfully. For example, recognizing that women in rural Bangladesh had no public voice and few rights, the MACH project started forming women-only Resource User Groups (RUG) as a beginning. Currently, one-third of the RUGs (over 250) are women-only. These offered poor women a chance to participate and prosper, which many have grabbed with both hands. Overcoming social norms has been a delicate task, but small group meetings and "women's wetland days" are changing attitudes. By now, about 25% of the Resource Management Organizations (RMO) members are women, with several active office bearers. A similarly situation exists in the Federation of Resource Users Groups (FRUG). The most recent development is remarkable; each Upazila Fisheries Committee must have two women representatives from the RMOs, truly ensuring women's participation in decision-making. NSP followed adopted similar approaches to ensure that women's participation is ensured in the Forest User's Groups (FUG) and enterprise development activities. The Co-management Council and Committee structures guarantee women's participation in park management. Nonetheless, we realize that the results achieved could be further strengthened to ensure that throughout the IPAC project, approaches and activities enable women not only to be represented, but empower them to meaningfully and actively participate.

IPAC will demonstrate a commitment towards enhancing gender mainstreaming process that MACH and NSP have initiated by specifically integrating gender into each of its

three key components. In order to do so, at the outset of the project the IPAC implementer will develop a gender strategy and action plan, specific to IPAC, as one of the initial deliverables. Furthermore, the key IPAC staff must have training and experience in and demonstrate an understanding of gender considerations in natural resources management. The Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) will have gender-specific indicators.

Tasks under IPAC will be designed in such a way that the differing needs of both men and women are addressed in such areas as, but not limited to, access to credit, skills training, access to information, marketing of products and services, business management training, and legal procedures, etc. Appropriate interventions will focus on increased women's participation in meetings and events organized by IPAC and by those entities with which it is capacity building such as resource management committees. Whenever possible, the IPAC project shall promote the concept of expanded roles and responsibilities for women in seminars, workshops and conferences envisioned under this initiative.

Youth Perspective

In 2005 Bangladesh ranked seventh in the world for the largest youth population. There are approximately 45.7 million youth between the ages of 10 to 24 years representing around 32% of the total population. These youths provide an opportunity for economic growth, biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation; however, the reality of their situation presents numerous obstacles. Half of Bangladesh' youths are illiterate and there is a high rate of drop out from schools. For the age group between 16-20 years, 40% of boys remain in school while only 27% of girls do. The contractor will look towards involving youth to improve their livelihoods while providing a solid future constituency for conservation. The contractor will work to include youth within co-management activities and others as appropriate to conserve the natural resource base. IPAC interventions may include opportunities for learning about conservation and related issues, specific skill development training, awareness raising and direct involvement in co-management. The contractor will also consider youth within capacity building activities as today's youth are the drivers of change and hold the key to future sustainability.

The Proposed Team, Key Counterparts and Project Partners

The concept of co-management of natural resources is now somewhat clear to two of the targeted three GOB actors and the practice of co-management has taken a solid root in wetland and natural forest area management. The challenge in Bangladesh is to find practical ways to take the pressure off of the remaining biodiversity assets. The program design therefore focuses on biodiversity conservation and protected area management at a landscape level, contributing to the economic growth of the general area. While alternative livelihood options for the poor resource users act as a good start, the ultimate tools to fight poverty must be something beyond small-scale alternative income generating activities. The IPAC team must commit to a broad alliance building process by resolving conflicts over natural resources in and around PAs, bringing in the

participation of the private sector and the civil society towards conservation financing and finding a market-based solution to promote the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources in PAs and reduce surrounding poverty. Based on the overall spirit of the design, this RFTOP is seeking a prime contractor experienced in working on biodiversity and poverty issues to work in collaboration with international NGOs dedicated to biodiversity conservation and one or more local NGOs.

The Contractor's key personnel will represent the following skill sets: (1) public policy; (2) institutional capacity building; (3) protected area management specialist; (4) social sciences for co-management; and (5) communications and outreach. Other personnel will include an appropriate mix of long-term and short-term expatriate, third country nationals (TCNs) and cooperating country nationals (CCNs) and home office management staff to assist in carrying out the tasks required under IPAC.

Collaboration with the local NGO service providers will serve as primary interface with the local communities, particularly as concerns promoting community level resource management organizations and a program of alternative income generation activities. The ideal local NGO(s) to participate in this program would be one with both natural resources management and community organization/alternative income generation skills and experience. The Contractor shall also hire a local architectural and engineering (A&E) firm to plan and monitor the conservation infrastructure development.

IPAC, like MACH and NSP, will put a significant emphasis on alternative income generating activities for the dependent community members – both poor men and women. While MACH used a revolving micro-credit mechanism for financing AIG activities, NSP used a small grant mechanism itself and leveraged, to some extent, the existing microfinance institutions to finance micro-enterprise development activities. Through IPAC, USAID intends to go beyond these approaches and would expect the implementers to formally link up with local financing institutions to advance the AIG efforts. IPAC will work in conjunction with USAID's private-sector activities (PRICE and PAMA) to establish a natural product value chain, as well as build market partnerships.

Estimated Level of Effort

It is expected that the level of effort will be split evenly among the Components. All key personnel will be full-time. Other personnel will provide support as required to complete the required tasks.

Windows of Opportunities

The Contractor may, within the scope of this assignment, be required from time to time to undertake, in the greater interest of the environment sector, tasks or sub-tasks to be defined at a later date during the course of the implementation of the Contract. The Contractor shall respond to written directions from the task order contracting officer (TO CO) at USAID to address such specialized interventions.

C.IV REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Under this assignment, the Contractor will be required to submit a variety of reports and deliverables, including annual work plans, quarterly progress and financial reports, technical reports (based on specific tasks in Section C.III), training plans, trip reports and a final report. Details can be found in Section F herein.

A. Performance Monitoring Plan

The Contractor shall develop a performance monitoring plan (PMP) for USAID's review and approval to assess and track impacts that occur as a result of IPAC activities. This monitoring plan will lay out indicators that the Contractor will identify and measure throughout the IPAC implementation, along with targets and trendlines showing progress over time. Some of the indicators that may be included are: key indicator species for biodiversity conservation; measures of income generation for men and women, the number of hectares under effective management, and the amount of leveraged financing for conservation. The indicators will include a list of both output-level and outcome-level impacts as well as common indicators from the Foreign Assistance Framework (see below).

The Contractor shall report on the performance indicators in coordination with USAID's reporting schedules and feed into USAID's own PMP. In addition, the plan will include methods for collecting and analyzing the data and include a methodology to assess where changes to the project may be required to help better ensure the desired impacts will be achieved. Primary data for some measures will be collected from a variety of sources including from the local and national governments. As necessary, the Contractor will provide assistance to selected sub-national government counterparts to develop systems to track and report measures. The plan will also lay out additional actions the Contractor would carry out to ensure satisfactory monitoring of IPAC, including mid-term evaluations to ensure overall program effectiveness. Whenever applicable, data must be gender disaggregated.

B. Foreign Assistance Indicators

As part of the recent U.S. Foreign Assistance Framework, a set of common indicators was developed for the purpose of standardizing results across countries and programs in order to provide more uniform reporting to the U.S. Congress and other key stakeholders. (Foreign Assistance indicators for Economic Growth can be accessed at: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/78563.pdf>.) This Program addresses Program Elements 4.8.1 (Natural Resources and Biodiversity) and 4.8.2 (Clean Productive Environment) under the Foreign Assistance Framework. Based on the attached preliminary indicator framework, likely common indicators to be reported, although subject to change or modification under the IPAC Project would include:

Indicator 1: Number of hectares under improved natural resources management as a result of USG assistance.

Indicator 2: Number of hectares in area of biological significance under improved management as a result of USG assistance

Indicator 3: Number of hectares of natural resources showing improved biophysical conditions as a result of USG assistance

Indicator 4: Number of hectares in areas of biological significance showing improved biophysical conditions as a result of USG assistance

Indicator 5: Number of policies, laws, agreements or regulations promoting sustainable natural resources management and conservation that are implemented as a result of USG assistance

Indicator 6: Number of people with increased economic benefit derived from sustainable natural resource management as a result of USG assistance

Indicator 7: Number of people receiving USG supported training in natural resource management and/or biodiversity conservation

Indicator 8: Number of people with increased adaptive capacity to cope with impacts of climate variability and change as a result of USG assistance

Indicator 9: Quantity of greenhouse gas emissions, measured in metric tons CO₂ equivalent, reduced or sequestered as a result of USG assistance

END OF SECTION C