

Incorporating EBM/DSS activities into MPA Training of Trainers follow-up sub-grants

Background

This project note briefly describes the proposal to award sub-grants to alumni of the 13th Training of Trainers (ToT) Regional Course on Marine Protected Areas Management, held from 16-26 April, 2018, to conduct follow-up training activities in-country as is custom. Activities in support of Ecosystem-Based Management Decision Support System (EBM/DSS) approaches to any aspect of protected area management (planning, decision-making etc.) in the Caribbean will be given priority.

The Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados received a grant in 2017 through a Small Scale Funding Agreement (SSFA) with the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) to contribute towards the establishment of CERMES as a regional node for Ecosystem Based Management (EBM) for enabling regionally, the adoption of more holistic approaches to the conservation and use of marine resources and ecosystems, and developing regional capacity in relevant EBM priority areas through provision of training in English-speaking Caribbean countries. The SSFA objectives contribute to project and programme objectives of the *CLME+ Project* and the *EBM Biodiversity for Sustainable Development Project* developed by the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Sub-Programme (SPAW) in partnership with the Italian Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD).

Activities for CERMES under this SSFA include:

1. Convening the 13th edition of the Training of Trainers Regional Course on MPA Management in collaboration with the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Management (CaMPAM) Network and the BIOPAMA II Programme of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). ToT focus will be on the conservation of biodiversity through the introduction of EBM concepts and tools, including the DSS methodology, providing another platform for capacity building for protected area managers and practitioners in English-speaking, SPAW countries.
2. Serving as a regional node for EBM/DSS dissemination and future application providing relevant guidance in the application of the EBM/DSS approach to managing protected areas in eastern Caribbean (and Wider Caribbean) English-speaking countries.
3. Developing a concept for further implementation of EBM/DSS based on lessons learned from the implementation of the *EBM Biodiversity for Sustainable Development Project* in the Caribbean.

Activity 1 of the project has been partially completed. However, the customary follow-up activities in ToT participating countries are still to be implemented. Filling this gap provides an opportunity for CERMES to play its role in Activity 2 as the regional node through practical guidance as well as to inform

Activity 3 by creating a situation conducive to learning lessons about the potential for further implementation of EBM/DSS as explained in the following sections. This adaptation of the agreed workplan, within the SFFA objectives and funding, will deliver additional value to the donor and also benefit the Caribbean partners.

Details

The 13th ToT was successfully convened from 16-26 April 2018, at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados. Twenty-one participants from the region representing MPA staff (managers and technical personnel) at the site level, to planning and management personnel at the national level, participated in the course which offered introductory training sessions on the EBM approach to managing protected areas. Every edition of the ToT has offered, via an application process, follow-up training small grants to ToT participants for implementation of a follow-up activity that:

- Applies competencies developed by ToT course graduates,
- Disseminates new knowledge, skills and abilities to local MPA managers, wardens, government environmental officers and/or stakeholders,
- Builds institutional capacity of a local MPA(s), and
- Links to and supports, directly or indirectly, the Caribbean Challenge mid-size grants for each respective country.

Activities 2 and 3 of the project are underway but have been constrained in meeting certain objectives. CERMES is in the trial stage of serving as a regional node for EBM/DSS dissemination and future application. A multi-disciplinary EBM/DSS CERMES team was established in December 2017. An electronic directory of regional EBM experts for the English-speaking Caribbean was established in April 2018 but its development is ongoing since EBM consultants in the region are scarce. The directory has been expanded to include academics, NGOs and others with relevant EBM training and experience. The identification of countries with greater potential to conduct EBM/DSS in the English-speaking Caribbean has had limited progress. Suitable sites have been identified based on expressions of interest and associated guidance notes have been finalized and disseminated widely. The provision of follow-up training small grants to ToT 2018 course graduates for implementation of in-country training activities provides an opportunity to achieve the sub-objectives of Activity 2 related to pilot sites for implementation of the EBM/DSS approach and expanding the EBM expert directory through site/country self-assessments of potential to conduct EBM/DSS.

Self-assessment results and key learning will inform the Activity 3 sub-objective of a proposal for follow-up subsequent to this project as well as the publication of a manuscript on EBM/DSS application. The grants will allow practical learning-by-doing in ways that the training workshops and communication have not provided. The results of small grant activities can contribute to the manuscript that is currently deficient in real data and cases of EBM/DSS implementation in the Caribbean.

Project countries

Small grants may be awarded to ToT alumni representative organisations/agencies from Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, The Dutch Caribbean, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad.

Objectives

The overall objective of the ToT follow-up small grant facility is to promote the application of knowledge and skills developed during the training. Objectives for including EBM/DSS in the ToT small grants awards as a priority area for follow-up post training include but are not limited to:

- Demonstration of familiarity with, and understanding of, the EBM/DSS approach.
- At least one participating country or group of countries (joint project) applies for a small grant to undertake an EBM/DSS site and/or country level activity.
- At least one case study developed demonstrating the potential application of the EBM/DSS approach to protected area management.
- Expansion of the EBM/DSS expert directory based on outcomes of the activity.
- Determination of site and/or country level needs for capacity-building in applying the EBM approach to resource management for at least one site.
- Identification of the participating site/country as a pilot case for full implementation of the EBM/DSS process to resource management subsequent to the project.

Process

All ToT 2018 course graduates will be invited to submit applications for follow-up training sub-grants of between USD 3,000 – 5,000. Applicants will be given two weeks to submit their project proposals for consideration and review. A standard project proposal template will be provided in the application call to guide proposal development. As the regional node, CERMES will assist applicants in need of additional guidance in order to achieve a greater chance of success. Applications will be reviewed within one week of their receipt. Upon acceptance, applicants will be required to complete a Letter of Agreement (LOA) between their organization and CERMES. On receipt of the LOA the University of the West Indies will disburse the agreed small grants.

Within the small grant application form, criteria for the inclusion of EBM/DSS in follow-up activities will be provided. It is thought that given the challenge of practical application of EBM common in the region, that self or country level assessments of EBM/DSS potential (Scoping for EBM) should be a condition for funding. It is recommended therefore that this activity should focus primarily on Step 1 of Integrated Spatial Planning 5.0 (as outlined in the EBM/DSS Guidance notes) – Preliminary phase: Thematic Scoping and Stakeholder Analysis – but could include (time permitting) Step 2: Ecosystem Context Analysis: Recognising Connections Within and Across Ecological and Human Systems Spanning Over the Focused Area. Although ToT follow-up training activities are up to five months in duration, any EBM/DSS activity will be limited to three months (from the receipt of funds) given that completion will occur beyond the duration of the SSFA.

The self/country-level assessment or scoping exercise should evaluate, where possible, the current versus ideal EBM/DSS approach to managing protected areas and include recommendations for improvement. Scoping will result in descriptions of the targeted area/s with matrices and diagrams, linking the components to indexes and indicators. This kind of approach can be useful e.g. for identifying research priorities for building stakeholder's awareness, consensus and common view on EBM (Technical and Budget Template for an EBM Project).

Applications for the EBM/DSS scoping will benefit from a one to two-day demonstration workshop on the EBM/DSS tool (PROGESS tool), and remote technical guidance from the EBM/DSS regional node at CERMES throughout the duration of the activity.

It is recommended that within the activity, a stakeholder sensitization meeting be held to raise awareness about EBM and communicate the results of the ToT follow-up activity.

Timeline

Activity	Month				
	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>Small grant application process</i>					
• Call for applications (first week Aug)	x				
• Submission of applications (by 17 Aug)	x				
• Review of applications (by 24 Aug)	x				
• Notice of acceptance and requirement for LOAs (by 27 Aug)	x				
• Submission of LOAs (by 3 Sept)		x			
• Disbursement of funds (unlikely to be before mid-September)		x			
<i>EBM/DSS Scoping (Self-assessment)</i>					
• Demonstration workshop			x		
• Preparations for thematic scoping, self-assessment and stakeholder analysis			x		
• Initiation of scoping/self-assessment			x	x	
• Analysis and reporting					x
• Sensitization meeting					x

Costs and financing

ToT applicant organizations will be awarded a small grant of between USD 3,000 – 5,000 for an approved ToT follow-up training activity. Small grant proposals including multiple sites per country, especially if incorporating the EBM/DSS activity, could be awarded the upper limit of the grant. The project final financial and narrative reports will detail the disbursements and initiation of small grant activities. The final outputs can be evaluated in a desk-top post-evaluation exercise in due course.

Next steps

The proposal can be activated immediately upon the concurrence of the grantor to this course of action. This should be as soon as possible but not later than 31 July 2018.