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Doctoral program in Khmer universities strengthening the
international development of environmental and maritime
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Quality Assurance Plan

Work Package 5 Quality Control and Monitoring



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Introduction

Quality Assurance Plan presents the management structure of DOCKSIDE project, namely the decision-making bodies and persons, their relations and responsibilities, the decision procedures and rules. It presents the quality procedures established including deliverables. **Finally, it focuses on the methodology to internally assess the project progress and quality of its achievements.**

The proposed management and quality scheme is well- continuous and flexible, thus allowing for vigorous project monitoring and handling of the problems that may arise.

Purpose

The Quality Assurance Plan is the document setting out the quality assurance procedures for the DOCKSIDE project. It aims to assure that the results and deliverables of the project are of high quality and meet the specifications set in the project and found in the Outputs description.

The Quality Assurance Plan becomes an official project document starting with its issue date and should govern all project actions. It shall serve as an instrument of monitoring process towards achieving the project goals, at the same time to ensure increased sustainability and impact of the activities and project results. It is designed for both accountability & ongoing improvement.

Scope of the Quality Assurance Plan

This Quality Assurance Plan is to be used by:

- The project management board, both internal and external, and all the Work package Leader responsible for preparing and amending deliverables,
- Any responsible person of a Consortium Partner for approving works to be done by third parties, in order to complete deliverables.



Type and frequency of measures envisaged

This section specifies the activities to be implemented in order to ensure that the project and its deliverables conform to the project requirements. Those responsible for ensuring that the required activities are carried out are identified in the following sections of this document.

The Quality Plan includes an explanation, necessary to show how quality requirements for activities are met. A list of such activities is given below:

Project reporting and monitoring

In the context of the continuous monitoring of the Erasmus+ programme the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) is developing a comprehensive field monitoring policy. It helps to a better overview of the funded projects, their objectives and results and to become better acquainted with the institutions and stakeholders involved. The Project Monitoring will be carried by a Project Adviser of EACEA and the Project will be given a feedback afterwards. The Feedback must be taken into account in the continuation of the project and to the EU intermediary and final reporting. There will be at least once monitoring per project.

Activity Quality Reports

The Activity Report is a brief document where each activity intended as an outcome, is going to be reported in terms of its description, audience, achieved contacts and also addressing an evaluation of costs. This report is intended to be a key support in the periodic reporting phases of the project. The quality report from the events shall be produced after the event end.

Quality Annual Report

The quality annual report is an expected deliverable of the work package 5 entitled “Quality control and monitoring” led by the MoEYS under the supervision of the SDU. The main objective of this work is to assess every aspect of the first year of project’s implementation. Thus, the



MoEYS has conducted an internal audit aiming to verify if activities and procedures implemented are conformed to the specifications stated in the project application. Moreover, feedbacks and feelings from project's stakeholders have been recorded. Regarding project's goals already achieved, the report is also assessing the impact of these achievements. Finally, outcomes of this report should lead to recommendations in order to improve project's implementation for the next years.

The measures and tools to be used are as follow:

- Deliverables and Indicator of Progress

Deliverables are agreed in advance between a project's consortium and the European Commission and are formally listed in a contractual Grant Agreement.

The Work Package Leader and Supporting Institution are responsible for the first level review of the project deliverable. The Project Management Board must review if the deliverables of the Work Packages has been acquired in a timely manner such as written in the project proposal.

If the Work Package Leader has serious concerns about the implementation of the deliverable, then they must notify the Project Management Board immediately. The Project Management Board then decide upon a contingency strategy to achieve the deliverables of the Work Packages.

- Document and data control

Document and Data Control covers the control of documents that are far more essential and long-term in the project's implementation. This includes documents that have a specific use and those that have been released with intention and have even gone through a solid approval process for relevancy and precision.

When documents of this nature need to be modified, all changes need to be identified, along with the person making the changes and the date of the changes. Modified versions also need to



be kept separate from earlier versions to prevent any confusion. The latest versions are published to all stakeholders concerned by the Project Manager and the out-dated versions are archived.

- Internal communication strategies

The Internal communication strategies are to be implemented by the Consortium during the lifetime of the project. The project manager must communicate effectively with all project partners to ensure the project coordination. To contribute to overall project activities, the Consortium shall have common knowledge of the productions of the template, the deadlines, and the progress of work or Minutes of Meetings. A good communication could help ensure a qualified procedure assurance in the project implementation.

Quality Management Structure and Procedure

This Quality Assurance Plan has been prepared by the Project Manager and shall be approved by the Project Management Board to assure that:

- a) the contract requirements and conditions have been reviewed,
- b) effective quality planning has taken place,
- c) the quality system is appropriate.

Task	Appointee
Project Implementation	Project Coordinator
Activities and Progress of the Project	Project Manager
Work Package Deliverables	WP Leader and Local Coordinator
Work Package Assessment	WP Leader and Local Coordinator
Internal Audit	MoEYS
External Audit	External Stakeholder

To ensure relevance of the quality plan, the Quality Staff should conduct quality reviews, throughout the duration of the contract, and when contractual changes occur.



<p>Tasks Of Quality Staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect expected outcomes and deliverables from other WP leaders • Check the timetable and resources for each milestone, leading to the outcomes • Create indicators of progress • Provide recommendations for the annual consortium meeting and the PMB meeting with specific respects to the indicators • Collect information for the final quality report • Produce a final quality report • Internal and External audits
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The Quality Assurance Staff will collect the rate of quality for each Work Packages. With these, the QA Staff, under the supervision of MoEYS, will produce an annual quality report with recommendations and suggestions for the implementation of the future activities.

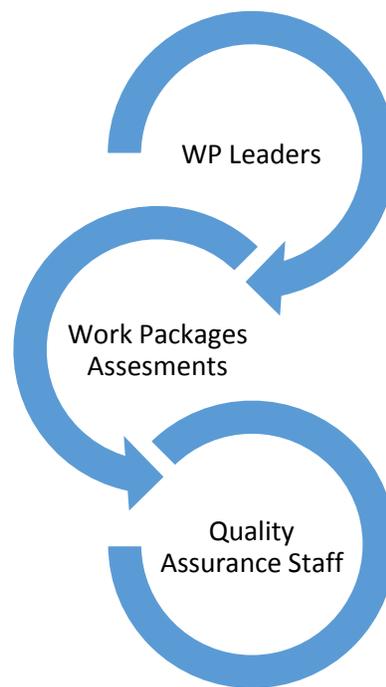
Composition of the team

Quality Staff is hired to work with the Project Management Board and Scientific Committee. The QA Staff, in collaboration with the Project Manager, shall ensure that the quality assurance plan is available to all concerned and that its requirements are met.

Work Package	Local Coordinator
WP1 – Preparation	University of Nantes
WP2 – Development	National University of Management
WP3 – Development	Royal University of Agriculture
WP4 – Development	Royal University of Law and Economics
WP5 – Quality Plan	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
WP6 – Dissemination & Exploitation	Royal University of Law and Economics
WP7 – Management	University of Nantes



For specific activities such as Training Session (WP2), Workshop (WP2), Course Catalogue (WP3) and Summer School (WP4), the Quality Staff will consult the Scientific Committee and the participants (through event survey) of the respective activities, whenever possible.



In addition to quantitative evaluation, where we will measure achievements of Work Packages alongside different dimensions representing efficiency and effectiveness of the completed tasks and activities, we shall devote a significant effort to a qualitative evaluation (through surveys, interviews, etc.) measuring the barriers and obstacles preventing the best implementation of the outputs and outcomes of DOCKSIDE Projects to all stakeholder.

This way, we could find a better strategy to disseminate the results of the project in order to give a long and wider impact.

Internal and External Quality Assurance

Internal Quality assurance



- Follow up and monitoring activities (tools: guideline manual, timeline, Gantt charts, analytical dashboards etc.)
- Assessing & measuring that the activities are in line with the project objectives (logical framework, SWOT analysis etc.)
- Internal peer review of the quality of the deliverables

External Evaluation

The external evaluator could take place in the form of:

- Peer-review by academic/administrative staff from non-partner project consortium
- Representatives from local authorities or private companies
- National Quality Assurance Agencies

They shall be in charge, simultaneously, on evaluating the project's progress and impacts and contribute to a high-quality analysis and recommendation to the overall implementation of the DOCKSIDE project.

The MoEYS is in charge to engage an external evaluator to assess the DOCKSIDE Project on, but not limited to:

- Impacts of project's activities
- Sustainability of the impacts

The MoEYS shall consult the PMB to define the Terms of Reference of the External Evaluator. Afterwards, the MoEYS may publish a call on the website. The identity of the external evaluator shall be proposed to the PMB to have a final selection.

Feedback Mechanism



During the preparation phase, the Consortium shall identify all potential risk link to the project implementation. All Partners shall determine how to overcome the risk and manage the impact if the event occurred.

The assumption and risk are presented at the logical framework matrix (LFM) of the project. All Partners are engaged to address and search the best solution when the warning signs are visible, it is very important that Partners take swift action immediately. A continuous assessment of potential risk throughout the project's lifetime is part of the preventive actions.

A strong system of checks and balances is essential in the internal control over financial reporting, led by the Project Manager and supported by the Representatives of each Partner. An Internal Controls helps monitor a reasonable assurance regarding the efficiency of budget operations, the reliability of financial reporting and the compliance to the applicable laws and regulations of Erasmus+ Programme and the European Union in general.

Hence, the Consortium led by the Project Manager, prepare, advice and overview the implementation of the project activities in a decentralised system. A preceding activity report will guide an organisation of the future ones, in order to tackle similar problems. The Partners use the same templates for each activity and it serves as a model that can be improved along the project's lifecycle.

Questionnaire-based Evaluation

The questionnaire-based evaluation aims to gather feedback and feelings regarding the implementation of the project from two kinds of stakeholder: on one hand the Project Management Board members and on the other hand, the staff members from each partner institutions. Questionnaire follows a double-objective: firstly identifying and underscoring strengths and weaknesses of the project according to several dimensions, secondly providing



recommendations based on questionnaire's outcomes to improve project's implementation for the next two years.

Methodology

The questionnaire is built around five key factors: driving and monitoring, resources allocation, relationship with contributors and environment, difficulties encountered and self-assessment. These key factors aim to cover the different dimensions involved in a project's implementation. We have decided to ask only closed questions with the same answer modalities. It will allow us to identify more easily some trends and to make simple statistics based on the same framework. Thus, we will be able to sort answers by key factors and underscore the main feeling and feedback.

Outcomes

Questionnaire as part of the qualitative assessment highlights the most common feeling regarding each dimension of the project's implementation. Thus, results either confirm the relevance of the project's construction and implementation or point out some weaknesses and improvements needed. Finally, a set of recommendations can emerge from the results treatment.



Annex

Survey

Each survey for different task and activity are customized to adapt the needs.

DOCKSIDE Project use an online survey form regularly. Please see an example below:

DOCKSIDE - Website and Online platform

Among the aims of DOCKSIDE is to create an Environmental and Maritime Research network. The network will connect researchers and students with different backgrounds and will enhance the multidisciplinary research. This network should not be restricted to the four Cambodian Partners only, but should also include any Stakeholder, such as private firms, in order to increase the overall scientific cooperation, knowledge transfer, and the ability to fund PhD theses.

All members of the EMR network have to be able to create an account in the DOCKSIDE website (www.dockside-kh.eu). There will be also an online platform for data sharing, which will facilitate the exchange and communication between the members of EMR network.

We imagine the DOCKSIDE website something like

- 1) <https://www.researchgate.net/> --> each member has an account and they are able to exchange, download and upload papers.
- 2) <http://www.sciencedirect.com/> --> users are able to download and search for papers/articles
- 3) <http://toobigtoignore.net/> --> we could have different topics (clusters) in the website, for example: Economics, Fisheries, Maritime Transport, Management.

Main questions:

- 1) How shall we promote the network and the platform?
- 2) How do we imagine the exchange between the users of the platform?
- 3) How many topics (clusters) shall we have in the website?
- 4) Other ideas... ?

Why it is important to have many people checking the website, uploading papers and sharing data?

Some of the criteria of the evaluation of DOCKSIDE are as follows:

- Number of communication tools
- Website design
- Number of users of the platform
- Number of uploaded documents on the platform

***Required**

1. **Your Name ***
2. **Name of the Institution ***
3. **Shall we use additional way to communicate such as Messenger, WhatsApp, Viber etc. If yes tell us which one do you prefer. ***

Peer review of uploaded papers by Cambodian Researchers

We have to create a movement in order to convince as many researchers as possible to open accounts in the website and to use the platform. EU universities could provide peer review "service" for Cambodian researchers. In the beginning we expect very few papers to be uploaded in the platform.



DOCKSIDE - Website and Online platform

4. Are you in favor of peer review of the papers updated in the platform by Cambodian researchers? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes Skip to question 5.
- No Skip to question 11.

You are IN FAVOR of peer review of the papers updated in the platform by Cambodian researchers.

In the beginning it is not expected many researchers to submit their papers for peer review.

5. How many people from your university are able to revise the uploaded papers? *

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6. In your opinion how long does - it take to review a paper? *

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7. What topics are you able to cover (Economics, management, biology, fisheries...) ? *

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8. Do you think that such peer review will improve the cooperation between Cambodian and EU universities? Explain why. *

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Annex

Template Meeting Minutes

To be filled for each meeting both internal and with external stakeholder of the project

	Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union	
Meeting Minutes		
Doctoral program in Khmer universities strengthening the international development of environmental and maritime research/DOCKSIDE		
Title of Meeting		
Date of Meeting		
Place and Country of Meeting		

Participants

Rapporteur

Start and End Time

Minutes and details

Actions to take