



Statement by
Mr. Titon Mitra, UNDP Resident Representative for Myanmar
on the Integrated Protected Area Land and Seascape Management in Tanintharyi
(Ridge to Reef) Project
11 July 2025

The United Nations Development Programme in Myanmar acknowledges the findings and recommendations of UNDP's Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SECU) regarding the project, *Integrated Protected Area Land and Seascape Management in Tanintharyi (Ridge to Reef)*. The SECU investigation follows legitimate concerns raised by the Conservation Alliance of Tanawthari (CAT) on behalf of indigenous communities regarding the lack of adequate Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) during the development and inception phases of this project.

In line with UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards (SES) Policy and broader commitment to transparency and accountability, UNDP acknowledges that the project did not fully meet our safeguard requirements. UNDP sincerely regrets any harm or distress caused and are grateful to CAT and the affected communities for bringing these issues to our attention.

While the project had been suspended since 2018 following the receipt of the initial grievance and consistent with SECU's Investigation Guidelines (paragraph 55) that recommend temporary suspension of a project due to potential imminent, significant and irreversible harm to communities, its formal cancellation in October 2024 was ultimately the result of the GEF Board deciding to terminate all projects in Myanmar following the military takeover. Consequently, it is no longer feasible to pursue redesign efforts of the project – despite initial dialogue that had been initiated between UNDP and CAT.

UNDP, however, remains fully committed to learning from this unfortunate experience and commits to strengthening our processes to prevent similar challenges in the future. We further commit to continue to work closely with affected communities, local partners and stakeholders to ensure full, effective and meaningful participation of indigenous communities in future development processes.