



COBSEA Secretariat

United Nations Environment Programme

**Report of the Nineteenth Meeting of the
Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA)
on the East Asian Seas Action Plan**



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The Nineteenth Meeting of the Coordinating
Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA)
on the East Asian Seas Action Plan

Siem Reap, Cambodia
22 - 23 January 2008

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AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE MEETING

1.1 Welcome address on behalf of UNEP

1. The Officer in Charge of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA), Dr. Anjan Datta, delivered a welcome address on behalf of the Executive Director of UNEP, Mr. Achim Steiner, and the Director of the UNEP Division of Environment Policy Implementation (DEPI), Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw. In his welcome address, he thanked the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia for hosting this important event. He emphasized the importance of the 19th Meeting of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) that will discuss and adopt the New Strategic Direction for COBSEA and mentioned that UNEP looks upon the outcomes of the 19th Meeting of COBSEA with great interest, being one of the UNEP administered Regional Seas Programmes. He expressed the hope that member countries will continue to increase their commitment and active engagement in COBSEA noting the many challenges facing the coastal and marine environment today.

1.2 Welcome address on behalf of Siem Reap Province

2. Mr. Chan Sophal, Representative of the Governor of Siem Reap Province, delivered a welcome address on behalf of the Siem Reap Province. In the welcome address, he shared the experiences from rapid development experienced in Siem Reap Province and emphasized the need for ensuring the sustainability of environmental resources in dialogue with all stakeholders.

1.3 Opening remarks on behalf of the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia

3. His Excellency Dr. Mok Mareth, Senior Minister, Minister of Environment, opened the 19th Meeting of COBSEA on behalf of the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia on 22 January 2008. In the opening remarks, he welcomed all participants to the 19th Meeting of COBSEA, the first COBSEA Meeting hosted by Cambodia. He noted the significance of this meeting, deciding on COBSEA's New Strategic Direction. He noted that the New Strategic Direction had been discussed in detail during the Special Intergovernmental Session of COBSEA and wished the meeting success in concluding this matter without further detailed discussions. He also noted the many other important matters to be covered by the meeting, including COBSEA's work plan and budget and the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and wished the meeting participants a good meeting and a pleasant stay in Cambodia.

1.4 Remarks by the Chair of the Eighteenth Meeting of COBSEA on the East Asian Seas Action Plan

4. Mr. Yue Ruisheng, Deputy Director General of the Department of International Cooperation, State Environment Protection Administration of the People's Republic of China delivered a remark regarding the implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan during 2006 and 2007. In his remarks, Mr. Yue thanked the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia for the hospitality in hosting the 19th Meeting of COBSEA. He noted the significant amount of work that had been carried out during 2006-2007. He summarized some of the main achievements during this period and expressed his appreciation to the COBSEA member countries and to the EAS/RCU for their hard work and efforts in implementing the decisions from the 18th Meeting of COBSEA and thanked the donors for their financial support.

1.5 Introduction of participants

5. The participants were invited to briefly introduce themselves to the meeting. The participants included representatives from all the COBSEA member countries, i.e. Australia, Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. In addition, representatives from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat, ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment (AWGCME), the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes

in East and Southeast Asia (CCOP), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Secretariat, the National University of Singapore (NUS), Partnerships for Environmental Management in the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA), the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC), the Southeast Asia Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), the Southeast Asia START Regional Center (SEA START RC), the Swedish Board of Fisheries (SBF), UNEP East Asian Seas Regional Coordinating Unit (EAS/RCU), UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends of the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand" (UNEP/GEF SCS Project), UNEP GPA, and the UNEP Northwest Pacific Action Plan Regional Coordinating Office (NOWPAP RCU) attended the meetings as observers.

6. The list of participants is attached as **Annex 1** to this report.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING

2.1 Designation of officers

7. In accordance with the UNEP Rules of Procedures of the Governing Council, the participants were invited to elect a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and a Rapporteur.

8. The delegate from Malaysia proposed His Excellency Mr. Khong Sam Nuon from Cambodia as the Chairperson of the meeting. The proposal was seconded by the delegate from the Philippines. His Excellency Mr. Khong Sam Nuon was duly elected as Chairperson by acclamation.

9. The delegate from Thailand proposed Mr. Yue Ruisheng from the People's Republic of China as Vice-Chairperson of the meeting. The proposal was seconded by the delegates from Indonesia and Viet Nam. Mr. Yue Ruisheng was duly elected as Vice-Chairperson by acclamation.

10. The delegate from Indonesia proposed Mr. Robert Jara from the Philippines as Rapporteur of the meeting. The proposal was seconded by the delegate from Singapore and Malaysia. Mr. Robert Jara was duly elected as Rapporteur by acclamation.

2.2 Organisation of work

11. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to introduce the working and information documents and to brief the meeting participants regarding the administrative arrangements for conducting the meeting. The Secretariat informed the participants that the meeting would be conducted in plenary, but that *ad hoc* working groups may be formed by the meeting. The meeting would be conducted in English.

AGENDA ITEM 3: ADOPTION OF THE MEETING AGENDA

12. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present the meeting agenda.

13. The delegate from Australia proposed that the agenda item on the "Draft Proposal: SIDA's Support to the East Asian Seas Action Plan for the Implementation of COBSEA's New Strategic Direction" be discussed before the agenda item on the Work Plan and Budget.

14. The delegate from Thailand expressed Thailand's willingness to host the COBSEA Secretariat. She requested that this matter be discussed by the meeting. She clarified that the Government of Thailand would need an expression of support from COBSEA in order to be able to provide in more detail its offer regarding possible in-kind and/or financial support to assist such an arrangement. The Chairperson suggested that the matter on Thailand's offer to host the COBSEA Secretariat would be raised under the agenda item on Other Matters for detailed discussion. The proposal was seconded by the delegate from China.

15. The delegate from China requested that agenda item 8.1 on COBSEA and the Strategic Action Programme developed by the UNEP/GEF Project “Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand” be merged with agenda item 6: Report of the UNEP/GEF Project “Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand” or be included as a separate agenda item. The meeting agreed that the matter on COBSEA and the Strategic Action Programme be discussed as a separate agenda item after the discussion on the New Strategic Direction for COBSEA.

16. The meeting agreed to revise the agenda accordingly. The revised agenda was duly adopted and is attached as **Annex 2** to this report.

AGENDA ITEM 4: PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS

17. The majority of the delegations presented their credentials to the Secretariat. The credentials were reviewed and accepted.

18. The delegate from China emphasized the importance of credentials and requested the Secretariat to consult a legal official within UNEP to clarify the legal arrangements regarding this matter, including identifying the competent national authorities to issue letters of credentials.

19. The meeting agreed that all delegates would be able to fully participate in the 19th Meeting of COBSEA, but requested all countries to present their credentials at future intergovernmental meetings of COBSEA.

AGENDA ITEM 5: PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EAST ASIAN SEAS ACTION PLAN 2006 – 2007

20. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present a summary of the Progress Report on the Implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan 2006-2007. The Secretariat presented an overview of the activities that had been undertaken since the 18th Meeting of COBSEA, including information on funding from external sources, the status of country contributions to the East Asian Seas Trust Fund, and the expenditure report for the 2006-2007 biennium.

21. The delegate from Viet Nam announced Viet Nam’s decision to increase its contribution to the Trust Fund from the current USD 7,000 per year to USD 10,000 per year.

22. The Chairperson thanked Viet Nam for this positive announcement and encouraged all countries to consider increasing their Trust Fund contributions.

23. The delegate from China noted that there are still substantial arrears to the Trust Fund and emphasized the need for all countries to provide their timely contributions to the Trust Fund and to pay all arrears.

5.1 *The development of an East Asian Seas Knowledgebase*

24. The Chairperson invited Dr. Durairaju Raju, the Tropical Marine Science Institute (TMSI), NUS, to present the progress on activities with regard to the development of an East Asian Seas (EAS) Knowledgebase. In his presentation, Dr. Raju introduced the main contents of the pilot regional database, the technical specifications and showed some samples of the current EAS Knowledgebase website.

25. The representative from the GEF Secretariat asked how the EAS Knowledgebase would incorporate information from existing online data sources such as the GIS data derived from the UNEP/GEF SCS Project. He also requested clarifications on how the quality of the collected data and information would be assured. Dr. Raju explained that the EAS Knowledgebase aims to link the information from existing resources and that

there are tools available for this. With regards to quality assurance, the mechanism that is being explored involves providing national and regional counterparts with the responsibility of approving the data and information posted on the knowledgebase.

26. The delegate from Singapore expressed Singapore's support for the collaboration between COBSEA and NUS and welcomed COBSEA's role with regard to information management that is in line with its New Strategic Direction.

27. The representative from SEA START RC explained that the majority of GIS data from the UNEP/GEF SCS Project and some of the data from the COBSEA activities are hosted by SEA START RC. He explained that SEA START RC is looking into possibilities for how to link this data more closely through the EAS Knowledgebase and the tools developed by the Southeast Asia Regional Learning Center.

5.2 National capacity building activities

28. The Chairperson invited Mr. Huang Zhengguang, the South China Institute of Environmental Sciences (SCIES), to present the progress on activities with regard to national capacity building. In his presentation, Mr. Huang presented the background on the activities and the expected outcomes of the activity.

29. The delegate from China expressed his appreciation to SCIES for taking the responsibility for reviewing the MEA implementation at national level. He noted that under UNEP's leadership there is an *ad hoc* working group on synergies regarding the Basel Convention, the Stockholm Convention and the Rotterdam Convention. He informed the meeting that these working group meetings have produced recommendations that would be useful for SCIES to consider as input to the review. He also appealed to the COBSEA member countries to articulate their needs with regards to the strengthened implementation of MEAs to protect the coastal and marine resources of the region.

30. The representative from UNEP GPA noted that the GPA was mentioned as one of the priority MEAs. He informed the meeting that the Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the GPA (IGR-2) recommended the UNEP GPA to provide support to national governments to ensure closer linkages with related MEAs and mainstreaming coastal and marine issues into national development planning and budgeting. As a result, UNEP GPA has initiated activities to address this matter and is willing to offer its support to the COBSEA activities.

31. The representative from PEMSEA noted that the issue of liability and compensation for economic damages occurring as a consequence of oil spills and other disasters of human origin was an important aspect of MEAs. He suggested the inclusion of international conventions that address this issue (e.g., IMO's FUND conventions) in the list of MEAs being reviewed by SCIES. He also informed the meeting that PEMSEA has developed a training manual on oil spill contingency planning and the recovery of costs associated with oil spill response and economic damages from oil spills, which can be shared with COBSEA member countries.

5.3 The Green Fins project

32. The Chairperson invited Ms. Kanyarat Kosavisutte, PMBC, to present the progress on activities with regard to the Green Fins project. In her presentation, Ms. Kosavisutte summarized some of the main threats posed on the coastal and marine ecosystems by tourism activities and explained the Green Fins efforts to ensure environmentally sustainable diving and snorkelling activities.

33. The delegate from Thailand thanked COBSEA for initiating the Green Fins project and noted the success of the project with regard to encouraging volunteers and private sector to get engaged in coral reef conservation. In addition, she noted that the clean-up activities are useful for the government in order to identify the magnitude and the source of garbage.

5.4 Determination on pollution loading from land based sources using modelling and GIS

34. The Chairperson invited Dr. Anond Snidvongs, SEA START RC, to present the progress on the project "Determination on pollution loading from land based sources using modelling and GIS". In his presentation, Dr. Snidvongs clarified that the developed model was focusing on non-point sources of nutrient pollution and was primarily developed in order to be able to compare catchments at the regional level. He explained that the reason for developing a modelling tool for the regional level had been that the level of detailed data required for existing catchment modelling is not suitable for regional level modelling. He mentioned that there are still a number of limitations of the model, primarily due to data availability. He welcomed countries to provide additional data in order to further improve the model.

35. The representative from the Republic of Korea expressed her support for the recommendation to support COBSEA with further data and information in order to further approve this model since the Republic of Korea has many positive experiences from the use of modelling as a management tool.

36. The delegate from China requested for clarification regarding the reliability of the model in terms of predicting nutrient loading from catchments. Dr. Snidvongs explained that the order of magnitude of the nutrient loading from the catchments is correct, but that this model is primarily developed in order to be able to compare between catchments at the regional level. It is not developed in order to be able to model nutrient loading at the local level in detail.

37. The delegate from Australia requested the Secretariat that it, in the future, would report its progress reports according to the structure of the previous work plan in order to allow the member countries to more easily monitor the progress of all of the activities.

38. The meeting adopted the Progress Report on the Implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan 2006-2007.

AGENDA ITEM 6: REPORT OF THE UNEP/GEF PROJECT "REVERSING ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION TRENDS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AND GULF OF THAILAND"

39. The Chairperson invited the Project Director to present the report on the UNEP/GEF SCS Project. The Project Director summarised the structure and management framework and presented a comprehensive account of the achievements and outcomes of the project over the period 2002-2007. Furthermore, he explained that the anticipated outcomes of the project include an approved Strategic Action Programme (SAP) with a framework for regional co-operation and a series of national action plans for specific habitats and issues. He emphasized the need to sustain the positive outcomes of the project at both national and regional level after the completion of the project.

40. The representative from the ASEAN Secretariat requested for clarification regarding the proposed "Memorandum of Understanding among the Countries Bordering the South China Sea Concerning Coordination of Actions Undertaken to Implement the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea" to be signed by Environment Ministers in the participating countries and whether this had already been discussed with countries. Secondly, he wondered how the sustainability could be ensured without a follow-up project.

41. The Project Director clarified that the Memorandum of Understanding was presented to the countries in April 2007 and that the signing of such a Memorandum of Understanding was considered a non-contentious way of demonstrating political commitment of implementing the SAP. The countries are currently reviewing the draft text. With regard to sustainability, the Project Director clarified that it is important to sustain the outcomes of the project, not the project itself. He explained that there are a number of indications that the national

activities and demonstration sites will be sustained after the project is finalised. However, the challenge was to agree on a way to sustain the regional coordination.

42. The delegate from China expressed his appreciation to the Project Director for the achievements made by the UNEP/GEF SCS Project. Furthermore, he noted that the project is currently slightly behind schedule, but was hopeful that the project would come to a successful conclusion by the end of 2008.

AGENDA ITEM 7: THE NEW STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR COBSEA

7.1 *The report of the Special Intergovernmental Session of COBSEA on the East Asian Seas Action Plan*

43. The Chairperson invited Mr. Hashim bin Daud from Malaysia, to present the report and resolution of the Special Intergovernmental Session of COBSEA on the East Asian Seas Action Plan held on 5-6 September 2007 in Putrajaya, Malaysia. In his presentation, Mr. Daud summarized the discussion at the Special Intergovernmental Session of COBSEA, the main changes made to the document at that meeting, the content of the final draft of the New Strategic Direction for COBSEA (2008-2012): A White Paper and the resolution adopted at that meeting.

7.2 *The New Strategic Direction for COBSEA (2008-2012): A White Paper*

44. The Chairperson invited the participants to consider the adoption of the New Strategic Direction for COBSEA (2008-2012).

45. The delegate from Viet Nam requested the view of the representative of the Philippines, since the Philippines was not represented at the Special Intergovernmental Session of COBSEA.

46. The delegate from the Philippines clarified that the Government of the Philippines has been in close consultation with the Secretariat since the Special Intergovernmental Session of COBSEA. He mentioned that all Philippines concerns have already been addressed in the current version of the White Paper and stated that the Philippines is ready to adopt COBSEA's New Strategic Direction.

47. The delegate from China noted that COBSEA's New Strategic Direction has been discussed since 2005, and that the current document is responding to all the concerns expressed by the member countries. He stated that China is ready to adopt COBSEA's New Strategic Direction.

48. The delegate from Australia informed the meeting because the newly elected Australian Government was only sworn in December 2007, there has been insufficient time to address the very large range of COBSEA related issues with relevant ministers. Consequently, it has not yet been possible for Australia to obtain ministerial consideration of the White Paper and Australia is not able to join any consensus to formally adopt the White Paper. Australia undertook to communicate its decision to the Secretariat as soon as possible after the meeting.

49. The meeting adopted the Resolution on the Adoption of the New Strategic Direction for COBSEA attached as **Annex 3** to this report. The New Strategic Direction for COBSEA (2008-2012) is attached as **Annex 4** to this report.

AGENDA ITEM 8: REGIONAL COOPERATION

8.1 COBSEA and the ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment (AWGCME)

50. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present the Concept Paper on AWGCME/COBSEA Collaboration. The Secretariat explained that this concept paper was tabled to the 8th Meeting of AWGCME held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 29 July - 3 August 2007 for their initial input. The concept paper outlines a formalised partnership between COBSEA and AWGCME in which COBSEA would be able to, through AWGCME, table guidelines, criteria and other outcomes of COBSEA activities to the ASEAN Senior Officials on Environment (ASOEN) for consideration.

51. The Chairperson invited Dr. Chu Hoi, Chairperson of the AWGCME, to comment on the concept paper as presented by the Secretariat. In his presentation, Dr. Chu Hoi thanked EAS/RCU for the initiative taken at the 8th Meeting of AWGCME and introduced a number of areas for potential collaboration. He expressed his agreement with the presented concept paper.

52. The representative from the ASEAN Secretariat informed the meeting that ASEAN welcomes COBSEA's initiative to collaborate on the EAS Knowledgebase and the development of guidelines and criteria. Regarding the possible operational mechanism for this, he expressed his willingness to explore the possibilities of signing a Memorandum of Understanding between ASEAN and COBSEA.

53. The representative from Australia requested clarification regarding the impact that closer collaboration between ASEAN and COBSEA would have on COBSEA's budget and workload and how COBSEA would avoid overlap with the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Marine Resources Conservation Working Group.

54. The Secretariat explained that there has been close collaboration between COBSEA and ASEAN in the past without negative implications on work load and budget. She also clarified that the proposal to COBSEA regarding the strengthened collaboration with ASEAN concerns a formalisation of this already existing partnership. With regards to the APEC Marine Resources Conservation Working Group, she informed the meeting that the Secretariat has had close communication with its lead shepherd while this role has been assumed by an Indonesian representative. Since the APEC region is covering a substantively larger area than COBSEA, COBSEA is more of a sub-region to APEC. During the past two years, the APEC lead shepherd has participated in several COBSEA events where information has been shared on ongoing activities.

55. The delegate from China expressed his support for COBSEA seeking collaboration with other regional partners, but emphasized that COBSEA needs to prioritise COBSEA activities before partner activities, considering the limited resources of COBSEA.

56. The representative from the ASEAN Secretariat clarified that COBSEA was initiated by the ASEAN member countries, that closer collaboration has evolved over the years based on the issues of common interest, and that the three areas proposed by the COBSEA Secretariat for collaboration with ASEAN are the priority areas of the New Strategic Direction for COBSEA.

57. The representative from SEAFDEC mentioned that SEAFDEC is closely tied to ASEAN and that this has not had any negative financial implications on SEAFDEC, but that it has provided SEAFDEC with a stronger policy framework than would have been possible without the ASEAN partnership.

58. The meeting agreed that the Secretariat should continue its effort to seek to formalise its relationship with ASEAN.

8.2 COBSEA and PEMSEA's Partnership Operating Arrangements

59. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to report on the invitation to EAS/RCU to sign the Partnership Operating Arrangements for the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA) on behalf of COBSEA. The Secretariat explained that this invitation was put forward to EAS/RCU prior to the East Asian Seas Congress, Haikou, China, 11-16 December 2006. The 12th Programme Steering Committee Meeting of PEMSEA, 1-3 August 2006 had been informed that EAS/RCU would not be able to sign an agreement without COBSEA's approval. This matter is now tabled to the 19th Meeting of COBSEA for consideration.

60. The Chairperson invited Mr. Stephen Adrian Ross, PEMSEA, to provide further background explanation on COBSEA's invitation to sign PEMSEA's Partnership Operating Arrangements. In his presentation, Mr. Ross provided a summary of PEMSEA's background, the development of the SDS-SEA and the subsequent Putrajaya Declaration, Haikou Partnership Agreement and the Partnership Operating Arrangements.

61. The Chairperson invited the meeting to discuss COBSEA's participation in the Partnership Operating Arrangements of PEMSEA and to advise the Secretariat on the next steps to be undertaken.

62. The delegate from Australia requested clarification regarding possible overlaps between COBSEA and PEMSEA and what the expected outcomes would be for COBSEA after signing the PEMSEA's Partnership Operating Arrangements. The Secretariat explained that COBSEA is communicating with PEMSEA to avoid overlaps and that COBSEA and PEMSEA also have experience from past collaboration without formal agreement.

63. The delegate from Malaysia expressed his concern regarding the signing of the Partnership Operating Arrangements between COBSEA, which is an intergovernmental body, and PEMSEA, which is a project based entity, and this collaboration seems not to be on a par.

64. The delegate from China expressed his support for the continued cooperation between COBSEA and PEMSEA.

65. The delegate from Malaysia proposed that COBSEA continue to collaborate with PEMSEA on an informal basis without signing PEMSEA's Partnership Operating Arrangements. The meeting agreed with Malaysia's proposal and agreed that the Secretariat should continue to seek collaboration with PEMSEA on an informal basis.

66. The delegate from the Philippines requested the Secretariat to continue to explore the possibility of further strengthening the collaboration between COBSEA and PEMSEA in the future.

67. The delegate from Indonesia agreed with the request by the delegate from the Philippines and added that the Secretariat should continue intensified discussions with regional partners on specific areas of collaboration.

68. The delegate from Viet Nam stated his support in principle for the cooperation between COBSEA, ASEAN, PEMSEA and other programmes. However, he noted that it is important that the Secretariat explore the specific areas and issues that would benefit from such strengthened collaboration.

69. The delegate from Thailand also expressed her support for collaboration between COBSEA and PEMSEA but requested the Secretariat to elaborate in more detail the longer-term implications of a formalised partnership at future meetings.

AGENDA ITEM 9: COBSEA AND THE STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME DEVELOPED BY THE UNEP/GEF PROJECT: “REVERSING ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION TRENDS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AND GULF OF THAILAND”

70. The Chairperson invited the Project Director of the UNEP/GEF SCS Project to brief the meeting on the outcomes from the 7th Meeting of the Project Steering Committee of the UNEP/GEF SCS Project regarding the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP). In his presentation, the Project Director summarized the background and main contents of the SAP. Furthermore, the Project Director informed the meeting on the outcomes from the 8th Regional Scientific and Technical Committee regarding this matter that were presented to the subsequent 7th Meeting of the Project Steering Committee. The 7th Meeting of the Project Steering Committee had decided to await the views and decisions from the 19th Meeting of COBSEA.

71. The Chairperson invited the meeting to discuss the recommendations put forward by the 7th Meeting of the Project Steering Committee and to advise the Secretariat on the next steps to be undertaken.

72. The delegate from Cambodia made a statement on behalf of the Government of Cambodia in which he expressed its deep gratitude for the financial support provided by the UNEP/GEF SCS Project and its satisfaction with the benefits that it has derived from participating in the planning of the project between 1996 and 2001 and subsequently from the work of the project over the last seven years. He stated that the support to capacity building in terms of operational activities on the ground has been particularly beneficial, enabling both the Central and Provincial Governments, and local communities, to benefit from the sharing of experiences and expertise from other countries in the region in strengthening Cambodia's management framework for coastal habitats and resources. He continued by stating that Cambodia would welcome the continued support of the GEF to the implementation of the SAP through a SAP implementation project and therefore strengthening the framework for regional cooperation through closer and more formal links with its neighbours sharing the resources and environment of the South China Sea. He also mentioned that, following guidance provided through the UNEP/GEF SCS Project, Cambodia has been able to strengthen the internal operational mechanisms of government responsible for the development of the coast and its marine resources, but that the Government has not had sufficient resources to date to develop an appropriate policy framework for coastal development and resource use. He noted that the suggestion from the representative of the GEF Secretariat that Cambodia develop a medium sized project for GEF support to such policy development is therefore, both most welcome, and timely. He mentioned that this would enable to Cambodia not only to respond to the demands within the country for development of its coastal resources, but also it would enhance the country's capacity to respond to the new policy directions contained in the COBSEA White Paper.

73. The delegate from China noted the successful implementation of the UNEP/GEF SCS Project and that it has contributed to the political awareness regarding marine environmental protection of the countries bordering the South China Sea. For this reason, the delegate from China expressed his conviction that the benefits from the UNEP/GEF SCS Project will be sustained and that the SAP will be successfully implemented after its adoption. He suggested that, since the UNEP/GEF SCS Project was initiated by COBSEA, COBSEA should coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the SAP.

74. The delegate from China continued by emphasizing the importance of COBSEA considering how the outcomes of the UNEP/GEF SCS Project should be sustained. He suggested that the 19th Meeting of COBSEA adopt a resolution that include a request to the UNEP/GEF SCS Project to conclude on time and that COBSEA assume responsibility of the SAP implementation upon its conclusion. Such a resolution should also propose that the Secretariat draft a proposal regarding how it would implement the SAP, the required staffing arrangements and how to identify financial support and present this to the next COBSEA Meeting for consideration.

75. The delegate from Australia noted that participating countries valued the UNEP/GEF SCS Project, but emphasized the need to consider any budgetary and other resource implications before committing to the implementation of the SAP by COBSEA.
76. The delegate from Indonesia supported the proposal from the Chinese delegation and mentioned the various areas where the UNEP/GEF SCS Project has greatly benefited the participating countries.
77. The Project Director indicated that all national activities would be completed by June 2008, all regional activities by October 2008, and financial closure was scheduled for January 2009. He noted that plans were in hand to complete the required independent evaluation by October 2008. With regard to the financial implications of implementing the SAP, he informed the meeting that the implementation would require a cost of USD 20 million as well as five professional staff and two support staff for a five-year period.
78. The Chairman requested the input from the GEF Secretariat on the matter of potential future financial support for SAP implementation.
79. The representative from the GEF Secretariat clarified that GEF's role is to serve as a financial mechanism for implementing global legal environmental instruments and regional agreements in its international waters focal area. The GEF operational strategy also allows a first project with countries without a regional formal mechanism so that they can understand the importance of regional collaboration for securing the transboundary benefits from their shared water body. In response to the question from the Chairman, he mentioned that for the implementation of the SAP, GEF looks to a more formal regional cooperation framework for the SAP. In the case of the SAP implementation, this would require a commitment to engage in discussions on a more formal regional institutional framework for GEF to be able to provide financial support.
80. With regard to the Chairman's question on further GEF support, the representative from the GEF Secretariat mentioned the transboundary implications of the fisheries refugia and asked whether COBSEA had the appropriate jurisdiction. Additionally, he raised the question of having an operational mandate because the UNEP/GEF SCS Project showed the importance of having an operational entity for future SAP implementation.
81. The Secretariat mentioned that the fisheries component of the SAP is focusing on the environmental implications of the linkage between fisheries and habitat rather than fisheries per se.
82. The Project Director explained that the fisheries component of the SAP is indeed focused on the linkage between fisheries and habitats and not fisheries per se. For that reason, COBSEA would have a mandate to work on these issues, but it would also be logical to involve a more specialized body, such as SEAFDEC, to work on this particular component.
83. The delegate from China noted that the New Strategic Direction that was adopted under the previous agenda item include the thematic area of "coastal and marine habitat conservation". He noted that this would provide COBSEA with the suitable jurisdictional mandate considering that this area would logically also include the impacts from fisheries on these habitats.
84. The delegate from Australia stated that, as it had not yet been possible to consult relevant ministers, Australia was not in a position to join any consensus to adopt this resolution. Australia undertook to communicate its decision to the Secretariat as soon as possible after the meeting.
85. The delegate from China emphasized that it is the responsibility of the 19th Meeting of COBSEA to provide a response to the request from the 7th Meeting of the Project Steering Committee of the UNEP/GEF SCS Project.
86. The meeting adopted the Resolution on COBSEA's role in the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme developed by the UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand" attached as **Annex 5** to this report.

AGENDA ITEM 10: THE EAST ASIAN SEAS ENVIRONMENT OUTLOOK

87. The Chairperson invited Professor Chou Loke Ming, NUS, to present the draft outline of the East Asian Seas Environment Outlook (EASEO). In his presentation, Professor Chou introduced the proposed contents and partner arrangements in developing the EASEO.
88. The Chairperson invited the meeting to provide its input to the draft EASEO outline.
89. The delegate from Australia requested clarification as to why an East Asian Seas Environment Outlook was being prepared before the development of a state of marine environment report which had been programmed in the 2006-2007 work plan.
90. The Secretariat clarified that the East Asian Seas Environment Outlook is indeed a state of marine environment report with the addition of two additional chapters. She explained that the reason for the name of the "East Asian Seas Environment Outlook" is that it is proposed that the process applied by UNEP in developing the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) is to be followed.
91. The delegate from China requested clarification on the progress of the decision from 18th Meeting of COBSEA regarding the development of a state of marine environment report.
92. The Secretariat confirmed that the development of a state of marine environment report had been delayed and that the EASEO outline presented at this meeting constituted the progress in the development of such a report.
93. The delegate from China informed the meeting that China has no objection with the state of marine environment report being transformed into an East Asian Seas Environment Outlook. Furthermore, he expressed his support for applying the GEO process to the EASEO development. He suggested that national ownership of the report be emphasized and proposed that each COBSEA member country nominate, as soon as possible, a national designated expert to join the process of developing the EASEO. Finally, he suggested that the final version of the EASEO should be approved by the intergovernmental meeting of COBSEA.
94. The delegate from Malaysia mentioned the difficulties in identifying one single expert that would be able to support the Secretariat in preparing such a report.
95. The delegate from the Philippines supported China's proposal and emphasized the need for national ownership of the report through the participation of national experts.
96. The delegate from the Republic of Korea expressed her support for the development of and establishment of the CCC with the accumulated technology used in Korea Marine Environment Information System.
97. The delegate from China mentioned that it is up to countries to nominate national experts. If one country failed to nominate such an expert the COBSEA Secretariat would contact its national focal point for any input needed.
98. The Project Director of the UNEP/GEF SCS Project assured the meeting that the information used in the component on Environmental Valuation of the EASEO would be that provided by the nationally designated members of the UNEP/GEF SCS Project Regional Task Force on Economic Valuation.
99. The Secretariat informed the meeting that it is willing to incorporate the suggestions from China into the EASEO process.
100. The delegate from China requested that a simple resolution on the EASEO be prepared to reflect the discussions of the meeting.

101. The delegate from Viet Nam requested that the Secretariat send a formal letter to the COBSEA member countries regarding the nomination of national designated experts.

102. The delegate from Australia stated that, as it had not yet been possible to consult relevant ministers, Australia was not in a position to join any consensus to adopt this resolution. Australia to communicate its decision to the Secretariat as soon as possible after the meeting.

103. The meeting approved the Resolution on the East Asian Seas Environment Outlook attached as **Annex 6** to this report. The outline of the East Asian Seas Environment Outlook is attached as **Annex 7** to this report.

AGENDA ITEM 11: THE DRAFT COBSEA REGIONAL ACTION PLAN ON MARINE LITTER

104. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present the draft COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI). In her presentation, Dr. Jarayabhand summarised the marine litter activities undertaken during 2006-2007 and introduced the main contents of the draft COBSEA RAP-MALI.

105. The Chairperson invited the meeting to provide its input and comments on the draft COBSEA RAP-MALI as presented by the Secretariat.

106. The delegate from Cambodia referred to the limited financial resources of Cambodia and requested that the reference made to "national budget" in the work plan and budget of the draft COBSEA RAP-MALI be revised in order to allow for the possibility of donor funding for the implementation of such activities.

107. The meeting agreed with the proposal from Cambodia and requested the Secretariat to revise the draft COBSEA RAP-MALI accordingly.

108. The delegate from China strongly encouraged the Secretariat to endeavour to identify external financial support for the implementation of the COBSEA RAP-MALI. The delegate from China also requested that the actions of the COBSEA RAP-MALI be prioritised with a focus on Action 1: Preventing and reducing marine litter from land-based sources; Action 2: Preventing and reducing marine litter from sea-based sources; and Action 5: Raising awareness on marine litter.

109. The delegate from the Philippines noted the importance of recognizing existing instruments and agreements that are relevant to the COBSEA RAP-MALI, such as the GPA, and requested the Secretariat and the COBSEA member countries to ensure that such linkages are considered during its implementation.

110. The Secretariat thanked all delegates for their useful comments on the draft COBSEA RAP-MALI and proposed that the Secretariat prepare a resolution to reflect the discussions of the meeting.

111. The delegate from Australia stated that, as it had not yet been possible to consult relevant ministers, Australia was not in a position to join any consensus to adopt this resolution. Australia to communicate its decision to the Secretariat as soon as possible after the meeting.

112. The meeting adopted the Resolution on the Adoption of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter attached as **Annex 8** to this report. The COBSEA RAP-MALI is attached as **Annex 9** to this report.

AGENDA ITEM 12: DRAFT PROPOSAL: SIDA'S SUPPORT TO THE EAST ASIAN SEAS ACTION PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COBSEA'S NEW STRATEGIC DIRECTION

113. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present the draft proposal: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency's (SIDA's) support to the East Asian Seas Action Plan for the implementation of COBSEA's New Strategic Direction (2008-2012). During her presentation, Dr. Jarayabhand explained that this proposal has been developed in order to be able to secure the implementation of the New Strategic Direction (2008-2012) with a focus on the strategies of information management and national capacity building.

114. The Chairperson invited the meeting to consider, amend as appropriate and approve the proposal to be submitted to SIDA for its consideration and approval for funding.

115. The representative from SBF informed the meeting on the tentative possibilities of a continued Swedish support to COBSEA, and suggested that the Secretariat request the meeting to allow some flexibility for the Secretariat during their discussions with SIDA regarding the continued support.

116. The delegate from Thailand raised the importance of considering the matter of erosion and sediment transport as one important strategic and emerging issue in the East Asian Seas region.

117. The delegate from China expressed his appreciation to the representative from SBF and to SIDA for its generous and substantial support to protect the seas of the East Asian Seas region. With regard to the draft proposal, the delegate from China noted that the development of a 2nd EASEO report was planned for 2012 and requested for clarification whether the development of EASEO would replace the planned development of state of marine environment reports.

118. The delegate from Viet Nam requested for clarification whether it would be necessary to produce a 2nd EASEO in 2012. He requested that the development of a 2nd EASEO could be postponed. He suggested that the funds for this activity could be redirected towards activities on climate change. The Secretariat responded that the preparation of an EASEO report requires a significant amount of time. The intention is to develop an EASEO every five years. This would require the initiation of the report as early as 2012.

119. The meeting approved the proposal as presented by the Secretariat.

AGENDA ITEM 13: WORK PLAN AND BUDGET 2008–2009

120. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present the draft work plan and budget for 2008–2009. In her presentation, Dr. Jarayabhand presented the various activities and budget requirements for the activities and expected outcomes described in the work plan and budget 2008-2009.

121. The Chairperson invited the meeting to consider, amend as appropriate and approve the work plan and budget for 2008-2009.

122. The delegate from Australia encouraged greater prioritisation of projects to reflect existing and possible future resource constraints.

123. The Secretariat explained that the current work plan was in fact the result of such a prioritisation according to the recommendations from the 18th Meeting of COBSEA and that it reflects the activities outlined in the adopted New Strategic Direction for COBSEA (2008-2012).

124. The delegate from China requested the Secretariat to revise the work plan with regard to the adopted resolution on the East Asian Seas Environment Outlook. Furthermore, she requested that the reference made to the UNEP/GEF SCS Project under section 3.4: Regional Cooperation to be removed to a special section

considering that the UNEP/GEF SCS Project already is closely linked to COBSEA. She also requested clarification regarding the note on expanding the Green Fins project to two additional COBSEA member countries under section 3.3.2 and asked whether this was referring countries not currently members of COBSEA or two additional countries within COBSEA.

125. The Secretariat responded that the Secretariat would revise the work plan according to the suggestions from China. Furthermore, she clarified that the expansion of the Green Fins project refers to the intended expansion to existing COBSEA member countries currently not participating in the project such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Republic of Korea.

126. With regard to the proposed activity on the support for the development and mainstreaming of national marine environment policies into national development planning, the representative from the UNEP GPA highlighted the fact that UNEP GPA is looking into activities on supporting countries in integrating the GPA into national development planning. He noted that UNEP GPA is willing to provide its support to countries on this matter.

127. The representative from SBF wondered if COBSEA had any message to SIDA regarding the efforts to approach other donors apart from SIDA to fund the activities in the work plan.

128. The Secretariat explained that the Secretariat will endeavour to identify further funding, especially for the implementation of the COBSEA RAP-MALI during 2008-2009 and that it has already been in contact with some donor countries in this regard.

129. The delegate from Australia stated that, as it had not yet been possible to consult relevant ministers, Australia was not in a position to join any consensus to formally adopt the work plan and budget. Australia to communicate its decision to the Secretariat as soon as possible after the meeting.

130. The meeting approved the Work Plan for 2008-2009 as amended.

131. The meeting approved a total budget of USD 919,000 from the East Asian Seas Trust Fund for 2008-2009. The final budget for 2008-2009 is attached as **Annex 10** to this report.

AGENDA ITEM 14: OTHER MATTERS

132. The Chairperson invited the meeting to discuss the matter raised by the delegate from Thailand regarding Thailand's willingness to host the COBSEA Secretariat. Furthermore, the Chairperson requested the meeting to provide recommendations that would provide the Government of Thailand and the Secretariat with the necessary guidance from COBSEA before proceeding towards any detailed negotiations.

133. The Secretariat introduced a letter from the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment regarding this matter.

134. The delegate from Thailand requested for an indication of support for the Government of Thailand's offer from the 19th Meeting of COBSEA before pursuing more detailed negotiations in Thailand.

135. The delegate from Malaysia expressed his support to the offer made by Thailand regarding the hosting of the COBSEA Secretariat.

136. The delegate from the Philippines requested the Secretariat to discuss the detailed arrangements with the Government of Thailand and report these to the 20th Meeting of COBSEA.

137. The delegate from Cambodia expressed his appreciation to the generous offer made by Thailand.

138. The representative from the UNEP GPA informed the meeting that a host country agreement between a UNEP administered programme and a host country needs to be negotiated by UNEP. The meeting could take note of Thailand's offer but the conclusion of a host country agreement has to be decided by UNEP based on its rules of business.

139. The delegate from China welcomed the generous offer from the Government of Thailand providing the free office space for the COBSEA Secretariat. However, the delegate from China recognized the complicated nature of hosting arrangements of this kind.

140. The meeting expressed its appreciation to the Government of Thailand for its generosity to offer free office space to the COBSEA Secretariat and took note of the letter from the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Thailand.

AGENDA ITEM 15: DATE AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING

141. The Chairperson invited proposals and offers from the participating countries on the date and venue for the 20th Meeting of COBSEA.

142. The delegate from Viet Nam informed the meeting that Viet Nam would be willing to host the 20th Meeting of COBSEA.

143. The meeting expressed its appreciation to Viet Nam for this generous offer and agreed with the proposed location for the 20th Meeting of COBSEA.

144. The Secretariat proposed to hold the 20th Meeting of COBSEA in November 2009.

145. The meeting requested the Secretariat to consider other important meetings that may take place during the same period, including the EAS Congress on 23-27 November 2009.

146. The delegate from China requested that invitations to the 20th Meeting of COBSEA be sent out at least six weeks in advance of the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 16: ADOPTION OF THE MEETING REPORT

147. The meeting adopted the Report of the 19th Meeting of COBSEA on the East Asian Seas Action Plan.

AGENDA ITEM 17: CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

148. The meeting expressed its appreciation to the Government of Cambodia for its warm hospitality, to Mr. Khong Sam Nuon for his able chairmanship and to the Secretariat for its hard work in preparing the meeting.

149. The Chairperson closed the 19th Meeting of COBSEA on the East Asian Seas Action plan at 18.30 hours on Wednesday 23 January 2008.

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ANNEX 2:**AGENDA****1. OPENING OF THE MEETING**

- 1.1 Welcome address on behalf of UNEP
- 1.2 Welcome address on behalf of Siem Reap Province
- 1.3 Opening remarks on behalf of the Government of the Royal Kingdom of Cambodia
- 1.4 Remarks by the Chair of the Eighteenth Meeting of COBSEA on the East Asian Seas Action Plan
- 1.5 Introduction of participants

2. ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING

- 2.1 Designation of officers
- 2.2 Organisation of work

3. ADOPTION OF THE MEETING AGENDA**4. PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS****5. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EAST ASIAN SEAS ACTION PLAN 2006 - 2007****6. REPORT OF THE UNEP/GEF PROJECT: "REVERSING ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION TRENDS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AND GULF OF THAILAND"****7. THE NEW STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR COBSEA**

- 7.1 The report of the Special Intergovernmental Session of COBSEA on the East Asian Seas Action Plan
- 7.2 The New Strategic Direction for COBSEA (2008-2012): A White Paper

8. REGIONAL COOPERATION

- 8.1 COBSEA and the ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment
- 8.2 COBSEA and PEMSEA's Partnership Operating Arrangements

9. COBSEA AND THE STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME DEVELOPED BY THE UNEP/GEF PROJECT: "REVERSING ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION TRENDS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AND GULF OF THAILAND"**10. THE EAST ASIAN SEAS ENVIRONMENT OUTLOOK****11. THE DRAFT COBSEA REGIONAL ACTION PLAN ON MARINE LITTER****12. DRAFT PROPOSAL: SIDA'S SUPPORT TO THE EAST ASIAN SEAS ACTION PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COBSEA'S NEW STRATEGIC DIRECTION****13. WORK PLAN AND BUDGET FOR 2008 - 2009****14. OTHER MATTERS****15. DATE AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING****16. ADOPTION OF THE MEETING REPORT****17. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

ANNEX 3:**RESOLUTION:****THE NEW STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR COBSEA (2008-2012)**

Recalling the decisions of the 17th Meeting of COBSEA;

Recalling the resolution from the 18th Meeting of COBSEA on the New Strategic Direction for COBSEA;

Recalling the resolution from the Special Intergovernmental Session of COBSEA on Recommendations to the 19th Meeting of COBSEA on the New Strategic Direction for COBSEA;

Desiring to strengthen the implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan through an enhanced engagement of COBSEA in the three thematic areas of marine and land-based pollution, coastal and marine habitat conservation and management and response to coastal disasters;

Recognising that the four inter-linked strategies of information management, national capacity building, identifying and addressing strategic and emerging issues and facilitating regional cooperation would contribute to the sustainable development of the East Asian Seas region; and

Reaffirming that the new strategic direction for COBSEA for the period 2008-2012 would revitalise and re-orientate COBSEA as an intergovernmental organisation that can assist and support the member countries in the management of the coastal and marine environment.

The 19th Meeting of COBSEA:

Adopts the New Strategic Direction for COBSEA (2008-2012);

Agrees to review the pledges to the East Asian Seas Trust Fund at the 20th Meeting of COBSEA;

Requests the COBSEA Secretariat to:

- I. Continue to approach member countries, donor countries and relevant international organizations regarding possible in kind and other contribution to support the implementation of activities in line with the New Strategic Direction for COBSEA (2008-2012); and
- II. Consult with member countries regarding possible increased and differentiated voluntary contributions to the East Asian Seas Trust Fund and to present different options for the level of contributions to the 20th Meeting of COBSEA for its consideration.

Urges member countries to support the New Strategic Direction for COBSEA (2008-2012) through national implementation of activities and to report their achievements to the 20th Meeting of COBSEA.

ANNEX 4:

THE NEW STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR COBSEA (2008-2012)

23 January 2008

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASOEN	ASEAN Senior Officials on Environment
AWGCME	ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment
AWGF	APEC Working Group on Fisheries
AWGMRC	APEC Working Group on Marine Resources and Conservation
CCC	COBSEA Coordinating Centre
COBSEA	Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia
EAS/RCU	East Asian Seas Regional Coordinating Unit
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GPA	Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities
IOC/WESTPAC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific
LMEs	Large Marine Ecosystems
MEAs	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
NFP	National Focal Point
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NOWPAP	Northwest Pacific Action Plan
PEMSEA	Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia
SCS Project	UNEP/GEF Project on Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand
SDS-SEA	Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia
SEAFDEC	Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP/ROAP	United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

BACKGROUND

1 The UNEP Regional Seas Programme was launched in 1974 in the wake of the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm. It aims to address the accelerating degradation of the world's oceans and coastal areas through the sustainable management and use of the marine and coastal environments and by engaging neighbouring countries in comprehensive and specific actions to protect their shared marine environment.

2 In East Asia, five states (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) recognised that: "steps are urgently needed to formulate and establish a scientific programme involving research, prevention and control of marine pollution and monitoring". In response, the UNEP Governing Council supported the establishment of a regional seas programme for East Asia in 1977.

3 An Action Plan for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment and Coastal Areas of the East Asian Region (the East Asian Seas Action Plan) was adopted in 1981. The East Asian Seas Trust Fund was established to finance activities and the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) was formed to provide overall policy coordination of the East Asian Seas Action Plan.

4 In 1993 the East Asian Seas Regional Coordinating Unit (EAS/RCU) was established to manage fewer, larger and regional projects. By 1994, COBSEA's membership expanded with the addition of Australia, Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, and Viet Nam to its present number of ten member countries.

5 The Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) was adopted in 1995 and in 2000 COBSEA endorsed the Regional Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the East Asian Seas from the Effects of Land-based Activities.

6 In 1996 the EAS/RCU started the development of the UNEP/GEF Project entitled "Reversing Environmental Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand". The project was initiated to address environmental problems of the marine environment in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand and includes seven of the ten COBSEA member countries, i.e. Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. The project brief was endorsed at the 15th Meeting of COBSEA in 2000 and the project became operational in 2002. The overall goals of this project are to create an environment, at the regional level, in which collaboration and partnership (between all stakeholders and at all levels) in addressing the environmental problems of the South China Sea is fostered and encouraged and to enhance the capacity of the participating governments to integrate environmental considerations into national development planning.

7 At the 16th Meeting of COBSEA in 2001 and consequently at the 17th Meeting in 2004, COBSEA member countries were informed that financial support from the UNEP Environment Fund would be reduced. In all the Regional Seas Programmes, support for the secretariat comes from member countries. UNEP, according to its mandate, is not a funding organisation and the Environment Fund has been established to provide seed funds to address various global, regional and national environmental issues.

8 An independent review of the East Asian Seas Action Plan was conducted in 2003 and recommended a refocus of COBSEA. Work on a White Paper commenced in November 2004. The proposed new strategic direction for COBSEA was discussed at two regional meetings in Bangkok in early 2005; the First Regional Partners Workshop on Regional Coordination Mechanisms in the East Asian Seas Region on 9-10 May and the Brainstorming Meeting of National Focal Points on the New Strategic Direction for COBSEA on 11 May. Representatives from partner programmes and bodies such as AWGCME, IOC/WESTPAC, NOWPAP, PEMSEA, SCS Project and SEAFDEC as well as from member countries endorsed in principle the rationale

for a revitalised COBSEA. A draft White Paper was circulated in June 2005 and comments sought from member countries. This resulted in a revised draft that was discussed at the 18th Meeting of COBSEA held in Sanya, the People's Republic of China, on 24-25 January 2006. The present document takes into account the discussions and recommendations from these events as well as subsequent written comments from countries.

9 After the COBSEA member countries' formal endorsement of the White Paper, it will represent the new direction of COBSEA and guide the secretariat when implementing activities to support the East Asian Seas Action Plan during the coming five years (2008-2012). After five years the contents of the White Paper will be reviewed and revised by the COBSEA member countries in order to reflect the developments in the East Asian Seas region and any new priorities of the COBSEA member countries.

CHALLENGES

10 When COBSEA was formed in 1981, there was a need to assess the state of the coastal and marine environment and to initiate actions to address some of the main problems. For this reason, COBSEA's activities were primarily project-oriented with a focus on gathering scientific information on certain issues such as marine pollution, the state of coastal resources and oceanography. However, there is still a need to translate the gathered information into policy recommendations and in many cases, into adequate management policies and strategies to address the identified coastal and marine environmental problems at national and regional levels.

11 Since the inception of COBSEA, other regional programmes and projects dealing with the marine and coastal environment have been developing in the East Asian Seas region. This expansion of activities was, however, not matched by appropriate regional coordination and has resulted in a sometimes overlapping and inefficient use of human and financial resources. Results of projects have often not been effectively used beyond project conclusion and outcomes could be made available to a broader range of agencies across the East Asian Seas region than is currently the case. The analyses and syntheses of "project clusters" that pursue similar issues are sometimes sub-optimal and lessons learned from individual projects are not always made available to new projects.

12 East Asia's economic growth is accelerating together with coastal industrialisation and increasing exploitation of the region's coastal and marine resources. If not managed collectively and in an ecologically sustainable manner, environmental degradation in the East Asian Seas region could well undermine the economic gains made, and threaten the region's rich and unique biodiversity. If the sustainable development of the region is to be achieved, appropriately targeted actions to increase the capacities among the COBSEA member countries to respond to marine and coastal environmental issues are essential.

13 Emerging environmental threats are posing new challenges to the COBSEA member countries. In many cases there is limited research and understanding of the impact of such strategic and emerging issues on the coastal and marine environment in the East Asian Seas region.

14 While many of the programmes and projects that have developed in the East Asian Seas region started as technical/scientific responses to specific environmental problems, some have been evolving into policy-level intergovernmental structures that must be taken into account when developing a new strategic direction for COBSEA.

15 Decreasing support from UNEP for the operation of the EAS/RCU has not been matched by a commensurate increase in member contribution to the East Asian Seas Trust Fund and some countries have been less than forthcoming with their pledged annual contributions. As a result, the funding situation for operating the secretariat is critical. However, funding for the implementation of COBSEA's activities has in the past been derived mainly from external funding and from the UNEP Environment Fund.

OBJECTIVES

16 The new strategic direction is intended to enhance COBSEA as a regional intergovernmental body that can strengthen the national capacities of member countries and assist in identifying and addressing relevant strategic and emerging issues. As such, it suggests four strategies to address the identified challenges during the next five years. The new strategic direction will encompass the elements of science and policy coordination and project implementation.

17 The new direction will be operationalised by the biennial work plans presented to the COBSEA intergovernmental meetings.

STRATEGIES

18 Four operative, inter-linked strategies have been identified in order to implement COBSEA's new strategic direction. The new strategic direction will transform COBSEA into a regional coastal and marine environmental coordinating centre that strengthens national capacities of member countries and identifies and addresses strategic and emerging issues relevant to the East Asian Seas region.

19 Through its strategy on *information management*, COBSEA will establish a "one-stop-shop" or knowledgebase to provide stakeholders with information on programmes and projects and the state of the coastal and marine environment in the East Asian Seas region. This knowledgebase will, together with information synthesis and reporting activities, constitute the COBSEA Coordinating Centre (CCC). The CCC is intended to improve the information flow on activities in the East Asian Seas region and will also be used for the identification of national capacity building needs and strategic and emerging coastal and marine environmental issues.

20 Through its strategy on *national capacity building*, COBSEA will strengthen its member countries capacities in responding to the growing pressures exerted on the coastal and marine environment and the increasing need for sustainable management of their natural resources.

21 Through its strategy on *strategic and emerging issues*, COBSEA will assist its member countries in identifying and addressing upcoming issues of priority to the East Asian Seas region.

22 Through its strategy on regional cooperation, COBSEA will implement its new strategic direction in collaboration with its member countries and its regional partners and work to prevent duplication of efforts. Suitable formal or informal collaborative arrangements between COBSEA and its partners will be identified and pursued by the COBSEA Secretariat.

23 The thematic areas to be addressed through COBSEA's new direction and its four strategies are based on existing relevant global agreements and obligations as well as previous COBSEA decisions and resolutions. These thematic areas include the following:

- Marine and land-based pollution;
- Coastal and marine habitat conservation; and
- Management and response to coastal disasters.

24 The four strategies and their key elements are described in Table 1.

Table 1 – COBSEA Strategies and Key Elements

<i>Strategy 1. Information Management</i>	<p>Key Elements of Strategy 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the COBSEA Coordinating Centre (CCC); and • State of Marine Environment reporting.
<i>Strategy 2. National Capacity Building</i>	<p>Key Elements of Strategy 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of country specific needs and priorities; • Assist countries in meeting with obligations under relevant MEAs and other international and regional agreements, resolutions and decisions; • Assist knowledge-transfer and sharing of lessons learned between COBSEA member countries; and • Assist in improving national capacities in managing the marine environment.
<i>Strategy 3. Strategic and Emerging Issues</i>	<p>Key elements of Strategy 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiation of studies to determine the status and potential response measures regarding strategic and emerging issues of priority in the East Asian Seas region; • Alert member countries and raise awareness among governments and the public regarding the problems being encountered; and • Propose capacity building measures and seek donor funding to assist their implementation among the COBSEA member countries.
<i>Strategy 4. Regional Cooperation</i>	<p>Key elements of Strategy 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance cooperation with regional partner organisations during the implementation of COBSEA's new strategic direction through identifying and pursuing suitable formal or informal arrangements for cooperation in specific thematic areas; • Identify mechanisms for collaborating with regional partner organisations in establishing the CCC as a provider of knowledge from past and ongoing activities in the East Asian Seas region.

25 These strategies are consistent with other relevant UNEP-related strategies such as the UNEP Global Regional Seas Strategic Directions for 2004-2007, the UNEP/ROAP Strategic Vision and the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity building.

26 Through these strategies COBSEA will continue to implement projects as long as they are consistent with its coordination focus, meet prior commitments, and/or respond to strategic and emerging issues of regional importance. Obtaining project funding and project implementation require much time and effort. For this reason, efforts will be made to secure the attachment of project-funded staff at the secretariat.

27 Financial resources for the implementation of these four strategies are envisioned to be derived primarily from donor agencies. Costs can be reduced through potential cost sharing with partner agencies. In addition, there will be room for in-kind and/or earmarked financial contributions from the COBSEA member countries to support the activities.

Strategy 1. Information Management

28 The overall objective of this strategy is to develop a COBSEA Coordinating Centre (CCC) in order to allow for increased information exchange on coastal and marine environmental management measures and identify lessons learned and best practices.

29 At present, there is a wide range of global databases including data and information on the extent and status of marine and coastal resources. However, the regional database for COBSEA has a limited set of data and information. It is therefore very difficult to get a comprehensive overview of which data and information is readily available from public sources. There is also limited information available of past or ongoing project activities in the East Asian Seas region and the lessons learned from such activities.

30 The development of a CCC will ensure reliable and up-to-date information flows regarding projects and programmes concerned with coastal and marine environmental issues in the East Asian Seas region. It can allow countries to have such information available at a single point of contact. The CCC can facilitate the provision of scientific information to member countries that may be needed in order to make policy recommendations and in identifying strategic and emerging issues of relevance to the region. Furthermore, a database on regional projects and programmes will provide member countries, donors and recipients, information of the funding that can in turn avoid overlaps and duplications.

31 The CCC will use the gathered information to develop overviews of the state of the marine and coastal environment for the identified thematic priority areas. In addition, information on best practices and lessons learned will be derived from follow-up of projects and the analysis of their outcomes. Such information can be the basis for the formulation of policy guidelines and also identify gaps that may have an influence on the direction of new initiatives.

32 The tangible benefits of the CCC to the member countries would include: (a) the compilation of knowledge and information from numerous ongoing projects and programmes in the East Asian Seas region; (b) the use of this information to help build capacities at different levels in the member countries; (c) the use of this information to facilitate coordination among project and programme activities at national and regional levels; (d) the raising of donors' confidence to "invest" in a region that can demonstrate a successful mechanism to avoid duplication of efforts and that can achieve the efficient use of efforts and the widespread application of results; and (e) the efficiency gains reaped from greater integration of activities and synthesis of knowledge and outcomes across a number of national economic sectors.

33 The CCC will be developed in close collaboration with national institutions among the COBSEA member countries. One of these institutions could be identified for long-term maintenance and updating of a regional knowledgebase and other online information resources. Resources for the development and maintenance of the CCC will be derived from donor funds and in kind contributions. An efficient and cost-effective design of the CCC is important in order to ensure its sustainability.

34 The CCC will be operationalised by the secretariat through various project activities including:

- The establishment of a "one-stop-shop" or regional knowledgebase for collecting and synthesising information from coastal and marine related activities in the East Asian Seas region;
- The maintenance of a hardcopy library of textbooks, project documents, annual reports and project outputs;
- The harmonisation and, upon subject to funding, an expansion of existing expert and manager networks;

- The COBSEA Secretariat will facilitate the use of networks of experts and managers to analyse and synthesise project/programme-based knowledge, state of marine environment data, lessons learned and best practices. Significant outcomes of this process will be the availability of regular state of marine environment and “lessons learned” reports on priority areas by the COBSEA Secretariat. These can then be translated into guidelines and criteria as and when appropriate; and
- In addition, the CCC will provide, upon request, assistance in developing project proposals. Donors will also be provided information on programmes and projects in the East Asian Seas region when required.

35 Through the information management strategy, COBSEA will support member countries in replicating the CCC at the national level, if appropriate.

36 These national CCCs would be closely linked to the regional CCC initiative. Ultimately, and, if member countries so desire, these national CCCs may evolve into a national clearing-house for coastal and marine environment activities and state of marine environment data and information.

37 Establishment and maintenance of an up-to-date and reliable information systems is an essential prerequisite for COBSEA to be able to harmonise and coordinate marine and coastal environment projects/programmes in the East Asian Seas region. UNEP/ROAP has recognised this need and initiated the “Regional Environmental Knowledge Hub”, a regional strategy to widen access by individuals, institutions and government agencies to the large repository of data, information and knowledge that is available in the East Asian Seas region on environmental issues. COBSEA information management activities aim to complement and further enhance the UNEP/ROAP initiative for marine and coastal resources.

38 The work plan for operationalising the strategy on information management may include the following activities. These activities will consider differences in capacities of the member countries of COBSEA.

Activities: Strategy 1. Information Management

Timelines

<i>Initiate the CCC through establishing a regional knowledgebase and a pilot national database in one COBSEA member country.</i>	<i>6 months</i>
<i>The regional knowledgebase will initially describe the activities of at least 20 projects or programmes from each of the following: mangrove and/or wetlands, coral reef and seagrass habitats and marine- and land-based sources of pollution.</i>	
<i>Develop a regional state of marine environment report making use of existing networks of experts and managers.</i>	<i>2 years</i>
<i>Expand the regional CCC to include a comprehensive overview of ongoing projects and programmes in the East Asian Seas region.</i>	
<i>Provide regular state of marine environment reports and lessons learned reports integrating the information on coastal and marine environment activities identified through the CCC on selected thematic areas.</i>	<i>5 years</i>

Strategy 2. National Capacity Building

39 The overall objective for this strategy is for COBSEA to engage in capacity building activities among its member countries to assist in developing and strengthening the institutional foundations and systems that are necessary pre-requisites for enhancing member countries' capacities in coastal and marine environmental management, considering the differences in capacities among the COBSEA member countries.

40 The national capacity building strategy will be aimed at improving the implementation of relevant MEAs to which countries are parties and assist non-parties in the ratification process. This strategy will also cover other international agreements and obligations, which are of priority to the region. Activities can be in the form of exchange of experiences and lessons learned between countries and organisations, preparation of policy guidelines on prioritised thematic areas, provision of support for national implementation plans (e.g. trainings of enforcement officers), technology transfer, support for the development of national databases and for developing common regional objectives. This is in line with the Regional Seas Strategic Directions that aim to increase the use of Regional Seas as a platform for developing common regional objectives, promoting synergies and coordinated regional implementation of relevant MEAs, global and regional agreements and obligations.

41 In addition, COBSEA will enhance the member countries' capacities in addressing identified strategic and emerging issues through activities targeting management, protection, policy development and public education. COBSEA will assist member countries in identifying needs and formulating programmes on national capacity building and in identifying potential donors for capacity building initiatives and for providing technical support.

42 One measure to strengthen the management of coastal and marine resources and enhance the implementation of important MEAs is through the development or improvement of national marine environment policies. As part of its national capacity building strategy, COBSEA will provide assistance to its member countries, when required, to develop such policies.

43 Through the CCC, COBSEA will provide for a mechanism by which there can be a quick identification of opportunities for knowledge transfer between the COBSEA member countries and opportunities for collaboration with other regional programmes and projects. National ownership and intra-regional knowledge and resource transfer, e.g. through use of expertise from within the East Asian Seas region, will be encouraged whenever it is practical and feasible. National lead agencies, nominated by member countries will manage capacity building activities with support from the secretariat whose primary responsibility would be to collect and provide relevant information from the CCC and adapt it to the individual needs of the countries. In this way, COBSEA will provide a forum for sharing experiences and lessons learned between countries in the East Asian Seas region on specific priority issues.

44 The Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity building provides a coherent platform for internal coordination and exchange of information among UNEP, other UN agencies and relevant partner agencies. It responds to the urgent need for environment-related technology support and capacity building measures in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. It provides for an expansion of national-level UNEP activities through collaboration with partners. Through the Bali Strategic Plan, COBSEA could mobilise financial resources to implement its capacity building activities. Technology transfer between countries can be used as an effective mechanism to enhance capacities among the COBSEA member countries. One of the primary mechanisms for implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan is South-South Cooperation, which includes knowledge and technology transfer between developing countries. Through its capacity building strategy, COBSEA can act as a mechanism to enhance both North-South and South-South Cooperation within the East Asian Seas region.

45 The work plan for operationalising the strategy on national capacity building may include the following activities:

Activities: Strategy 2. National Capacity Building Timelines

Timelines

Review the status of implementation of coastal and marine pollution-related MEAs among the COBSEA member countries.

Organize a regional MEA-forum to exchange experiences, identify obstacles to implementation, key areas of synergies between MEAs and specific national capacity building programmes. 2 years

Identify and establish national lead agencies for capacity building measures in the identified priority areas. Mobilize financial support and provide technical assistance to the COBSEA member countries as per the developed national capacity building programmes.

Develop a framework for national marine environment policy development, building on relevant UNEP and UN experience, for application in other COBSEA member countries. 2 years

Provide financial and technical support to one pilot country in developing national marine environment policies.

Continue to develop/implement measures such as trainings, exchange of experiences and lessons learned between countries and organisations and preparation of policy guidelines to assist member countries meet their commitments under MEAs and other regional and international agreements and obligations, with a focus on strategic and emerging issues and regional priority areas such as transboundary issues (international waters), habitat protection, pollution management, policy development and public education. 5 years

Strategy 3. Strategic and Emerging Issues

46 The overall objective of this strategy is for COBSEA to provide assistance to its member countries in identifying and addressing strategic and emerging issues of priority to the East Asian Seas region, within the thematic areas of the new strategic direction, through increasing awareness and strengthening the capacities among COBSEA member countries in managing such priority issues.

47 Information from various sources, including those from international and regional sources and the CCC, would be used to identify strategic and emerging issues. Such issues could include globally recognised coastal and marine problems not yet adequately addressed in the East Asian Seas region or priority issues specific to the region where little research has so far been undertaken and/or limited management measures have been put in place.

48 COBSEA will organise fora where international experts and representatives from the COBSEA member countries will be given an opportunity to analyse strategic and emerging issues of priority and identify suitable mitigation measures that require action at the regional level. COBSEA will utilise the information that is made available through the CCC to assist member countries in identifying funding opportunities for capacity building measures. Such measures could include research initiatives, identification and implementation of suitable mitigation measures in identified priority areas. When required, COBSEA will also provide technical support to its member countries through the development of guidelines, criteria or standards to address strategic and emerging issues of priority.

49 Under the thematic area of marine- and land-based pollution the strategic and emerging issues include the global issue of marine litter that causes a wide spectrum of environmental, economic, safety and health impacts, and that will be addressed through COBSEA's strategy. Currently, limited information is available among many of the COBSEA member countries regarding the extent of the problem and few management measures have been taken. At present, the secretariat is assured of financial resources to assist COBSEA member countries in addressing this issue.

50 Another emerging issue, under the thematic area of management and response of coastal disasters, highlighted by the series of natural disasters in the region over the past years, concerns the need for improved spatial planning in the coastal zone to address disaster prevention and carry out environmentally sustainable development.

51 There are other examples that could be addressed in the future, depending on the needs and priorities of the COBSEA member countries. These include those related to the potential impact of climate change on coastal and marine habitats in the East Asian Seas region, the mitigation of invasive species and/or other strategic and emerging issues of priority to the COBSEA member countries associated to the thematic areas of management and response of coastal disasters and coastal and marine habitat conservation.

52 The workplan for operationalising the strategy on strategic and emerging issues may include the following activities:

Activities: Strategy 3. Strategic and Emerging Issues

Timelines

Identify the status and potential response measures of identified current strategic and emerging issues (under the thematic areas of marine – and land-based pollution and management and response to coastal disasters) in the East Asian Seas region.

Development of policy guidelines and capacity building programmes to assist member countries to better address these issues through improved management at national and regional levels. 2 years

Implement activities to raise awareness on current strategic and emerging issues of priority to the East Asian Seas region.

Ongoing identification of the status of strategic and emerging issues and potential response measures in connection to new or recent MEAs.

Development and implementation of national capacity building measures addressing these issues. 5 years

Strategy 4: Regional Cooperation

53 The main purpose of the new strategic direction is to further promote close regional cooperation between the member countries of COBSEA. The overall objective of this strategy is to strengthen COBSEA's collaboration with its regional partners in implementing the new strategic direction and work to prevent any duplication of efforts.

54 In the East Asian Seas region there are a number of intergovernmental and operational programmes that deal with the management of coastal and marine environment. Major regional organisations include APEC,

ASEAN, NOWPAP, PEMSEA and the SCS Project. Both COBSEA and ASEAN are intergovernmental groupings that share several member countries. The geographical focus (seas of Southeast Asia and southern part of the People's Republic of China) for the activities is similar. APEC is another intergovernmental grouping with a more extensive geographical coverage, which includes the East Asian Seas region. NOWPAP is a neighbouring regional seas programme similar to COBSEA that shares two member countries with COBSEA, i.e. the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Korea.

55 In order to further enhance the benefits from these regional initiatives for the countries in the East Asian Seas region, COBSEA will continue to work closely with these regional groupings and programmes. At the initial stage the COBSEA Secretariat will seek to establish a Memorandum of Understanding or similar, with the intergovernmental marine programmes of ASEAN, building on the long relationship and the previous successful collaboration. At this stage, informal collaboration should also be further strengthened between COBSEA and APEC, NOWPAP, PEMSEA and the SCS Project on priority areas of common interest.

56 In addition, the exact modalities for developing the CCC are dependent on the outcome of negotiations and agreements among all parties in the East Asian Seas region. The secretariat will continue consulting, within the thematic areas, with the respective secretariats of ASEAN, APEC, IOC/WESTPAC, NOWPAP, PEMSEA and the SCS Project and other relevant organisations such as FAO, SEAFDEC and World Fish Centre, on their agreement that COBSEA will provide information from past and ongoing activities in the East Asian Seas region and vice-versa.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

57 ASEAN was initiated as an environmental cooperation programme in 1977 through the formation of the ASEAN Expert Group on Environment under the ASEAN Committee on Science and Technology. In 1989, the expert group was elevated to become the ASEAN Senior Officials on Environment (ASOEN) at the same level as the Committee on Science and Technology. The ASEAN Senior Officials of Environment (ASOEN) meet once a year to consider the reports of its Working Groups and to provide operational policy guidance on the various environmental programmes that are being pursued. As a matter of procedure, ASOEN then submit their recommendations to the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Environment. The ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment (AWGCME) is implementing the Vientiane Action Programme (2004-2010), where the continued work in implementing the ASEAN Marine Water Quality Criteria and the ASEAN Criteria for Regional and National Marine Protected Areas have been identified as the priority areas for AWGCME.

58 ASEAN and COBSEA's long-term relationship started in 1981, when the five original ASEAN member countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) established COBSEA. ASEAN has achieved a strong political support in implementing the outcomes of regional cooperation while COBSEA, being under the framework of UNEP's Regional Seas Programme, can provide strong technical support. These advantages have previously been optimised through close collaboration between AWGCME and COBSEA through the development of the ASEAN Marine Water Quality Criteria and the ASEAN Criteria for Regional and National Marine Protected Areas. The collaboration resulted in their adoption by the 13th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Yangon, Myanmar in 2003. Furthermore, the outcomes of this collaboration have provided the opportunity for AWGCME to attract funding in order to further enhance the implementation of these criteria.

59 The successful collaborative approach that resulted in the adoption of ASEAN Marine Water Quality Criteria and the ASEAN Criteria for Regional and National Marine Protected Areas should be further explored as a means to strengthen the collaboration between ASEAN and COBSEA and to maximise the strengths and benefits of these two regional bodies in the future. Through the CCC, COBSEA will be able to support AWGCME with information and knowledge management. In addition, COBSEA could provide technical support by

developing guidelines, criteria and standards in thematic areas identified under its strategy on strategic and emerging issues that are not currently addressed by the AWGCME. These could then be submitted to the ASOEN and subsequently, to the ASEAN Ministers for adoption. In addition, a formalised means of information exchange between ASEAN and COBSEA would be identified to support the development of the CCC.

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

60 APEC was established in 1989 to enhance economic growth in the Asia Pacific region and to strengthen the Asia Pacific community. APEC currently includes 21 member economies on both sides of the Pacific and all COBSEA member countries except for Cambodia are also member economies of APEC. Similar to ASEAN, APEC implements its work programme through the meetings of ministers, senior officials and working groups. Currently, the marine-related working groups of APEC (the working groups on marine resources conservation and fisheries) are guided by the Bali Plan of Action, which was adopted during the 2nd APEC Ocean Related Ministerial Meeting in 2005. The Bali Plan of Action outlines the priority areas of sustainable management of the marine environment and its resources; sustainable economic benefits from the oceans; and the sustainable development of coastal communities. APEC provides funding to its member economies according to project proposals submitted by its members.

61 Future collaboration between COBSEA and APEC could include the potential of COBSEA acting as a sub-regional partner to APEC. The benefits of such an arrangement are manifold. Through the identification of capacity building needs and strategic and emerging issues from the CCC, COBSEA could assist in identifying measures more suitable to be implemented under the APEC framework. APEC would benefit from COBSEA's limited geographical scope and technical expertise in the field of coastal and marine environmental management in the East Asian Seas region, while COBSEA would benefit from the exchange of lessons learned and best practices among the APEC economies. At present, thematic areas where close collaboration between COBSEA and APEC would be of benefit include economic aspects of emerging issues such as the management of marine litter and invasive species and information and knowledge management through the CCC.

Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission / Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (IOC/WESTPAC)

62 IOC/WESTPAC is a regional subsidiary body of the IOC responsible for the promotion, development and coordination of marine scientific research programmes. Its activities are primarily aimed at strengthening national capacities in conducting marine scientific research and monitoring programme. All COBSEA member countries are also members of IOC/WESTPAC apart from Cambodia. Technical cooperation between IOC/WESTPAC and COBSEA could include the exchange of oceanographic data and information through the CCC. In addition, COBSEA could benefit from working with the existing expert network of IOC/WESTPAC when identifying and addressing strategic and emerging issues and during the development of state of marine environment reports.

Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP)

63 NOWPAP is a neighbouring Regional Seas Programme, which is also administered by UNEP. NOWPAP has four member countries, two of which are also members of COBSEA (the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Korea). Considering the similarities between the two action plans, cooperation and information sharing between COBSEA and NOWPAP on common priority areas, such as marine litter and information management, is easily feasible. NOWPAP has established four Regional Activity Centres in the areas of coastal environmental monitoring and assessment, data and information networking, environmental emergency

preparedness and response and pollution monitoring. COBSEA will seek closer technical collaboration with NOWPAP also through these Regional Activity Centres.

Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA)

64 PEMSEA was initiated in 1994 as the Regional Programme for Marine Pollution Prevention and Management in the East Asian Seas region. The project was funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and had twelve participating countries, most of which are also members of COBSEA. The first phase of the project was implemented until 1999. During the follow-up phase (1999-2006), PEMSEA increased its focus on addressing environmental management problems in the region through strengthening partnerships with national and local governments as well as international and regional organisations. Through the signing of the “Haikou Partnership Agreement on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA)” at the East Asian Seas Congress in December 2006, PEMSEA is now pursuing a move towards institutionalisation.

65 During the implementation of the first two phases of the project, PEMSEA established a strong relationship to local governments in the region. The availability of project funding through GEF has enabled the project to enhance the local-level implementation of integrated coastal management projects across the region. With the advantage of COBSEA's position as a permanent intergovernmental body and its close relationship with its member countries and PEMSEA's expertise in local implementation, COBSEA and PEMSEA have experienced successful collaboration on common priority areas in the past. One such example is the co-organisation of the East Asian Seas IGR-2 Preparatory Workshop that resulted in the development of the “Policy Brief: Partnership Opportunities for Enhancing GPA Implementation in the East Asian Seas Region (2007-2011) and the East Asian Seas Forum held at the Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the GPA.

66 The “Partnership Operating Arrangements for the Implementation of the Sustainable Strategy for the Seas of East Asia” outlines the participation of different actors in the region under the framework of PEMSEA's “Haikou Partnership Agreement”. The East Asian Seas Partnership Council consists of an Executive Committee, an Intergovernmental Session composed of the representatives from the partner countries and a Technical Session composed of representatives of the partner organisations. The technical session will provide recommendations to the Intergovernmental Session that in turn will provide policy guidance, coordination and evaluation of the progress of the implementation of the SDS-SEA. According to the Partnership Operating Arrangements, a Regional Partnership Fund will be set up by the East Asian Seas Partnership Council to collect voluntary financial contributions from countries, international agencies, donors, institutions, individuals and any other entity for the implementation of the SDS-SEA. Similar to COBSEA's East Asian Seas Trust Fund, the depositary of the Regional Partnership Fund will be a sponsoring UN Agency for PEMSEA.

67 Any potential participation of COBSEA in the implementation of the SDS-SEA would, according to PEMSEA's Partnership Operating Arrangements, be limited to the Technical Session of the Partnership Council. Such an arrangement might have implications on COBSEA as an intergovernmental body. As an alternative, the collaboration between COBSEA and PEMSEA could be continued on an ad hoc basis in areas of common interest to the two entities. This can be done effectively without any formal arrangement.

UNEP/GEF Project: “Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand” (SCS Project)

68 The SCS Project was initiated by COBSEA in 1996. Its implementation started in 2002 in the seven COBSEA member countries Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. The SCS Project's main emphasis is on habitat management and rehabilitation. The

SCS Project has established an effective institutional mechanism comprising of a project steering committee, task forces and regional and national working groups for the development and implementation of its strategic action programme.

69 The SCS Project will be completed in 2008. In order to sustain the outcomes of the project after completion, a mechanism is being developed for marine environmental cooperation in the South China Sea. A close relationship between COBSEA and any mechanism resulting from the SCS Project would be beneficial in order to maximise the benefits of the SCS Project and to enhance the regional collaboration on the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand. These possibilities will have to be closely evaluated by the SCS Project and COBSEA member countries. COBSEA could assist in the long-term implementation of the outcomes of the SCS Project and provide a coordinating role for the various working groups and committees established by the SCS Project for the implementation of its strategic action programme. Specific activities could also include the further development of the South China Sea meta-database and GIS database.

70 Like in many other Regional Seas Programmes, COBSEA provides the appropriate environmental policy umbrella for the implementation of Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) projects in the East Asian Seas region. A partnership was recently developed in order to link the coastal and oceans activities of UNEP to the LME assessment and management approach of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Under this partnership, 64 LMEs have been identified around the world's coastal margins located within the boundaries of 18 Regional Seas. These LMEs provide operational management units for translating the Regional Seas conventions and action plans into concrete actions. In addition to the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand LMEs that are covered under the SCS Project, other LMEs in the East Asian Seas region include: Indonesian Sea, North Australia, North-Western Australia, Sulu-Celebes Sea and West-Central Australia.

71 The work plan for operationalising the strategy on regional cooperation may include the following activities:

Activities: Strategy 4. Regional cooperation

Timelines

Identify and agree on suitable formal or informal arrangements for the collaboration between COBSEA and its regional partner organisations in specific areas while implementing the new strategic direction.

Identify mechanisms for collaborating with regional partner organisations in establishing the CCC as a provider of knowledge from past and ongoing activities in the East Asian Seas region.

2 years

Development of joint activities on common priority areas between COBSEA and its regional partner organisations, as appropriate.

Further development and implementation of joint activities on common priority areas between COBSEA and its regional partner organisations.

2 years

GOVERNANCE

72 The 2003 independent review of the East Asian Seas Action Plan, the recommendation of the 17th Meeting of COBSEA in March 2004, the May 2005 Brainstorming Meeting in Bangkok, and the 18th Meeting of COBSEA in January 2006 all agreed in principle that COBSEA's governance structure be fine-tuned to better reflect the proposed new strategic direction for COBSEA. Even though the main features of COBSEA's governance structure will remain the same, some adjustments have been outlined in the following sections, which will be reviewed at appropriate times.

Membership

73 The members of COBSEA currently include the ten countries Australia, Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. Membership to COBSEA should be open, in principle, to any country that borders the East Asian Seas region. The secretariat will be empowered to solicit expressions of interest from bordering countries that are currently not members and to take individual cases to COBSEA intergovernmental meetings for its consideration.

Policy Guidance and Coordination

74 The East Asian Seas Action Plan identifies the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) and its biennial intergovernmental meetings as its sole decision-making body with the overall authority to determine its content and review its programme of implementation. In accordance with the East Asian Seas Action Plan, COBSEA will continue to make policy decisions concerning all substantive and financial matters related to it.

National Representatives

75 As mandated during the original formation of COBSEA, high-level officials will represent their countries at COBSEA meetings. These high-level officials may well come from environment ministries or agencies, as is the current practice for the National Focal Points (NFPs), but this is an issue for jurisdictions to decide. It is noteworthy in this context that the 1994 "Action Plan for the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Marine Environment and Coastal Areas of the East Asian Region" mentions that national representatives for COBSEA should ideally be the ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment.

76 At every COBSEA meeting, these high-level officials will be invited to report on national activities. The aim is to firmly embed the East Asian Seas Action Plan into national governance and to increase the national ownership of COBSEA and its new strategic direction.

77 Each member country will also endorse, or newly appoint, an organisation as well as an appointed individual within that organisation, as the designated NFP. The main tasks for the NFPs will continue to include:

- To act as the official channel of communication between the national institutions of their respective governments, COBSEA, the secretariat and UNEP;
- To coordinate, as appropriate, the participation of national institutions in the implementation of COBSEA approved programmes;
- To consult with and provide guidance to the relevant national institutions in connection with the implementation of the COBSEA-approved activities; and
- To collate and represent the results of the COBSEA-approved projects and activities for presentation at the regular meetings of COBSEA.

78 In order to increase the active involvement of member countries in COBSEA meetings and COBSEA activities and to strengthen the national ownership of COBSEA, a COBSEA Chair should be identified at each COBSEA meeting. The Chair would be a high-level official of one of the COBSEA member countries and the chairmanship would last for a period of two years. The COBSEA Secretariat would provide all necessary support to the Chair, who's main responsibilities would include:

- Chairing COBSEA Meetings;
- Guiding the preparation of COBSEA Meetings in close collaboration with the COBSEA Secretariat;
- Promoting COBSEA activities at regional and international levels; and
- Providing any other guidance to COBSEA and its secretariat as appropriate.

79 The secretariat is responsible for the general and technical coordination and financial management in implementing the new strategic direction and the East Asian Seas Action Plan. The current EAS/RCU is to be renamed the COBSEA Secretariat. This is a change that links the secretariat clearly to COBSEA and underlines its function to serve the COBSEA. It will also make its role more transparent for outsiders.

80 Pending upon its resources, the secretariat will provide assistance to member countries as required. The permanent staffing at the secretariat currently consists of one coordinator, one programme officer, one administrative assistant and one senior secretary. At its current size, the secretariat will be able to serve COBSEA by:

- Organising biennial COBSEA Intergovernmental Meetings;
- Managing the East Asian Seas Trust Fund;
- Building and maintaining partner and sponsor networks through the implementation of Memorandums of Understandings (MoUs) with partner and sponsor organisations;
- Liaison and networking with national governments, partners and regional bodies;
- Mobilising external funding for COBSEA approved activities;
- Initiating and managing activities to support the implementation of the new direction for COBSEA;
- Building and maintaining the proposed CCC and the COBSEA website; and
- Maintaining overall quality control over all COBSEA-initiated activities including monitoring and evaluation of all activities, establishment of lessons learned reporting and feedback into programmes/projects.

81 The new strategic direction for COBSEA will necessitate a different and more innovative approach to deliver the work programme and the secretariat may have to outsource some of its tasks. Attachment of officers from member countries for a specific time/task to the secretariat may provide a convenient way to build regional skills, enhance national ownership and deliver programme outcomes efficiently. The secretariat will seek dedicated staff allocations from any donor-funded activities. These "project staff" could be located in the secretariat or work off-site, but with a reporting duty to the secretariat.

82 The possibility of establishing Regional Activity Centres similar to the model followed by NOWPAP will be investigated. These Centres would be national institutions with technical expertise in an area of priority to COBSEA that are willing to expand their areas of work into regional scale. These Centres would also be responsible for any related staffing costs. The cost of COBSEA-related activities would however be mobilised by the secretariat, but could be complemented by voluntary contributions from the participating institutions.

Financial Arrangements

83 Upon the establishment of the East Asian Seas Trust Fund in 1982, the participating countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) decided on voluntary levels of contribution amounting to a total of USD 86,000 per year. In 1994, when the Action Plan was reviewed and five new member countries (Australia, Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea and Viet Nam) joined COBSEA, the total level of contribution increased with USD 42,000. Since 1994, some member countries have increased their contributions while others have decreased, making the total current pledges to the East Asian Seas Trust Fund USD 171,600.

84 The East Asian Seas Trust Fund will continue to be administered by UNEP according to the financial rules of the United Nations and the terms of reference agreed by the participating governments as outlined in the 1994 "Action Plan for the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Marine and Coastal Areas of the East Asian Seas region". According to the East Asian Seas Action Plan, these arrangements will be subject to review at ad hoc intervals by the participating governments.

85 Since the initiation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan, funding from the UNEP Environment Fund and various donors have been major contributors to the implementation of COBSEA approved projects and activities.

86 However, although major projects are funded by donors, such funding cannot cover secretariat costs. Therefore, there is a need for a minimum amount of member country contributions for the smooth running of the secretariat and for its core activities such as coordination and implementation of COBSEA-approved activities, resource mobilisation, liaison, networking and quality control.

87 The independent review of the East Asian Seas Action Plan that was conducted in 2003 and tabled at the 17th Meeting of COBSEA recommended a minimum staff structure for the secretariat comprising a P5 level Programme Officer, a P3 level Programme Officer, and two support staff. The subsequent down sizing of the level of staff from D1 and P5 level Programme Officers to P5 and P3 level Programme Officers saved an estimated USD 70,000 per year according to the 2007 salary figures.

88 The need for further increase in contributions from member countries to the East Asian Seas Trust Fund continues to be highlighted regularly.

89 Considering the member countries' difficulties in increasing their contributions at present, COBSEA will continue operation at the current size of the secretariat (see [Appendix 1](#)) with the present level of member country contributions (see [Appendix 2](#)), noting that in 2012 the current balance of the Trust Fund would be depleted according to the calculations made in [Appendix 3](#). The pledges to the East Asian Seas Trust Fund will be reviewed at the 20th Meeting of COBSEA.

90 The secretariat will continue discussions with: 1) member countries regarding increasing and differentiated voluntary contributions, including in-kind; and 2) donor countries and international organisations on continued support to COBSEA; and provide detailed proposals to the 20th and future COBSEA intergovernmental meetings.

Stakeholder Community

91 The private sector and the NGO community in particular have much to offer to regional policy guidelines and coordination processes. The organisation of stakeholder fora in connection to COBSEA Meetings and the participation of stakeholders as observers during COBSEA meetings could be used, as appropriate and if approved by COBSEA, as a means to increase the stakeholder involvement in COBSEA activities.

APPENDIX 1

Operating Costs for the COBSEA Secretariat

The following are the estimated costs, expressed in US dollars, of the COBSEA Secretariat at current levels of staffing:

(a) Personnel	
- Coordinator (P 5)*	160,300
- Programme Officer (P 3)*	114,600
- Administrative Assistant*	45,000
- Senior Secretary*	45,000
- Travel	10,000
(b) Rental	12,000
(c) COBSEA activities	5,000
(d) Expendable	2,100
(e) Reporting	3,000
(f) Communication	3,000
Total	400,000

* Salary scales according to the Standard Salary Costs – Version 10, Applicable to cost station: 4202, Bangkok ESCAP, Thailand, Year 2007.

APPENDIX 2

Current Level of Country Contribution to the East Asian Seas Trust Fund

The following are the current level of contribution of the COBSEA member countries to the East Asian Seas Trust Fund:

Country	US dollars
Australia	20,000
Cambodia	5,000
The People's Republic of China	30,000
Indonesia	20,000
The Republic of Korea	15,000
Malaysia	18,700
Philippines	25,000
Singapore	10,000
Thailand	20,900
Viet Nam	7,000
Total	171,600

APPENDIX 3

Estimated balance of the East Asian Seas Trust Fund (2007-2013)

The following is the estimated balance of the East Asian Seas Trust Fund during the period 2007 – 2013 with a maintained level of member country contributions to the East Asian Seas Trust Fund at the current size of the secretariat:

Period	Opening Balance (USD)	Pledges (USD)	Interest* plus income (USD)	Expenditure (USD)	Balance (USD)
2007	1,433,000	171,600	14,330	400,000	1,218,930
2008	1,218,930	171,600	12,189	400,000	1,002,719
2009	1,002,719	171,600	10,027	400,000	784,346
2010	784,346	171,600	7,843	400,000	563,790
2011	563,790	171,600	5,638	400,000	341,028
2012	341,028	171,600	3,410	400,000	116,038
2013	116,038	171,600	1,160	400,000	-111,201

* Level of interest estimated to 1 per cent per year.

ANNEX 5:**RESOLUTION:****COBSEA'S ROLE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME
DEVELOPED BY THE UNEP/GEF PROJECT "REVERSING ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION
TRENDS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AND GULF OF THAILAND"**

Recalling the discussions held at the Special Intergovernmental Session of COBSEA;

Noting the proposals made at the 7th Project Steering Committee Meeting of the UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand";

Considering that the UNEP/GEF Project: "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand" is envisaged to be completed in 2008;

Noting that the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) is an important outcome of the UNEP/GEF Project: "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand";

Recognizing that the successful implementation of the SAP will require additional financial and human resources;

Recognizing the need for countries to take responsibility for the implementation of the SAP at national and regional levels;

Recognizing further that the UNEP/GEF Project: "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand" was initiated by COBSEA; and

Mindful that member countries support a role for COBSEA in implementing the SAP.

The 19th Meeting of COBSEA:

Agrees that COBSEA would be a suitable body to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the SAP and carry out relevant activities;

Requests the COBSEA Secretariat to liaise with UNEP or other GEF Implementing or Executing Agencies to approach the GEF Secretariat and liaise with other relevant organizations in order to identify funding for SAP implementation; and

Further requests the COBSEA Secretariat to prepare a proposal to implement the SAP.

ANNEX 6:**RESOLUTION:****THE EAST ASIAN SEAS ENVIRONMENT OUTLOOK**

Recalling the decisions of the 18th Meeting of COBSEA;

Recalling the New Strategic Direction for COBSEA (2008-2012) and its strategy on information management;

Desiring that the East Asian Seas Environment Outlook (EASEO) will provide scientifically credible information regarding the state and trend of the coastal and marine environment in the East Asian Seas region; and

Recognising the already established UNEP methodology for state of environment reporting in the form of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO).

The 19th Meeting of COBSEA:

Approves the outline of the

East Asian Seas Environment Outlook;

Agrees to apply the Terms of Reference and procedure of the GEO for the development of the East Asian Seas Environment Outlook;

Agrees that the East Asian Seas Environment Outlook will take the place of the East Asian Seas State of Marine Environment Reporting;

Requests the COBSEA member countries to nominate government designated experts who may serve as a participant or as a national coordinator within one month from the conclusion of the 19th Meeting of COBSEA to participate in the development of the East Asian Seas Environment Outlook;

Requests the Secretariat to convene a meeting with the participation from government designated experts, partner organisations and other needed experts to draft the East Asian Seas Environment Outlook; and

Requests the Secretariat to submit the final draft report to the COBSEA Meeting for approval.

ANNEX 7:

OUTLINE – THE EAST ASIAN SEAS ENVIRONMENT OUTLOOK

1. INTRODUCTION

The EASEO is intended to provide the latest scientifically credible information to raise awareness among policymakers and general public regarding the state and trend of the environment in East Asian Seas region, The EASEO is intended to focus on identifying emerging trends, outlook and options for action and to portray relevant examples from regional, national and local levels through:

- Presenting the current status and trend of the coastal and marine environment in the East Asian Seas region;
- Analysing ongoing management initiatives at the national and regional levels;
- Identifying emerging coastal and marine environmental issues; and
- Analysing case studies, lessons learned and effective management measures to address current and emerging coastal and marine environmental concerns.

2. GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS

The EASEO will be focusing on the coastal and marine areas of the member countries of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) namely Australia, Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. This would include the following Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs): the East China Sea, the South China Sea, the Gulf of Thailand, the Sulu-Celebes Sea, the Indonesian Seas, North Australian Shelf and Northwest Australian Shelf. In addition, information on the Andaman Sea would be included.

The EASEO will be written from a regional perspective while providing specific examples from the national and local levels. It is not intended to list information country by country, but to report on priority issues in the East Asian Seas region under each of the chapters/sub-chapters.

3. SIZE AND GENERAL FORMAT

The EASEO is estimated to be a total of 70-90 pages (excluding annexes). The overall text will be illustrated by fact boxes providing specific examples on lessons learned or successful approaches of the different areas of coastal and marine environmental management and by relevant photos, illustrations, maps, graphs and statistics/tables.

4. EASEO PARTNERS

The EASEO will be developed by the COBSEA Secretariat in close collaboration with partner organisations in the East Asian Seas region. UNEP's Division on Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA) will provide technical support during the process. The methodology used by the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) process will be applied for the EASEO development and a harmonised baseline with basic indicators will be identified during the EASEO development.

An EASEO Drafting Group will be consisting of representatives from the COBSEA Secretariat, UNEP DEWA and the main partner organisations. The COBSEA Secretariat and UNEP DEWA will function as the coordinators for the EASEO development. A partner will be selected for the overall draft development while all partner organisations will be invited to contribute with specific chapters. The EASEO Drafting Group will oversee the EASEO development and provide technical input during the data identification/collection and drafting process. In addition, the EASEO Drafting Group will convene at two EASEO meetings to review the EASEO development process. One of these meetings will also include the participation of national representatives from COBSEA member countries and regional experts.

5. TENTATIVE CHAPTERS

1. Introduction
2. Socio-Economic Development: 1981-2006

(GDP, population growth/urbanisation, coastal residential/infrastructure development, coastal industrial development, fisheries and (coastal) aquaculture, ports and shipping, coastal tourism etc)
3. State and past trends of the Coastal and Marine Environment: 1981-2006
 - a. "Geographical/Geological/Geo-morphological or General features"
 - b. Water quality
 - i. State of pollution: Eutrophication and red tides, heavy metals, POPs, micro-organisms, sedimentation, oil prevalence, river input and solid waste/marine litter
 - ii. Legislative and technical management initiatives (legislation/policies, wastewater treatment systems, oil spill preparedness and response plans, integrated coastal zone management etc)
 - c. Coastal ecosystems (state, coverage, biodiversity, main threats, legislative and technical management initiatives, MPA management)
 - d. Fisheries resources (state, biodiversity, main threats, legislative and technical management initiatives)
 - e. Vulnerability to coastal and marine disasters (types, frequency, environmental impacts, socio-economic impacts, disaster preventive management measures)
4. Economic valuation of the coastal and marine environment
5. Outlook 2007-2017
 - a. Socioeconomic development trends (industrial development in coastal areas, increase in port and shipping, expansion of residential areas, coastal tourism, fisheries and aquaculture etc.)
 - b. Emerging environmental trends (examples: climate change, environmental impacts from natural disasters, eutrophication and red tides, coastal erosion, sedimentation, destruction of mangrove and coral reefs, marine litter, invasive species etc.)
6. Options for Action (including analyses of best practices and successful examples of improved management of emerging environmental trends)

ANNEX 8:**RESOLUTION:****THE COBSEA REGIONAL ACTION PLAN ON MARINE LITTER**

Recognizing the negative ecological, environmental and socioeconomic impacts of marine litter globally and the severity of the marine litter problem in the East Asian Seas region specifically;

Considering the United Nations General Assembly Resolution on Marine Litter (UN GA Resolution A/60/L-22), which inter alia “Urges States to integrate the issue of marine litter within national strategies dealing with waste management in the coastal zone, ports and maritime industries”,... and also “encourages States to cooperate regionally and sub-regionally to develop and implement joint prevention and recovery programmes for marine litter”;

Considering the Washington Declaration on Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA), which recognizes litter as one of the land-based impacts upon the marine environment;

Welcoming the United Nations Environment Programme - Regional Seas Programme’s Global Marine Litter Partnership and its support for Regional Seas Conventions, Action Plans and Organizations, including COBSEA, to develop and implement regional action plans on marine litter; and

Recognizing further that marine litter is a transboundary problem requiring a cooperative response involving regional cooperation and partnerships between governments, international organizations, the private sector and civil society.

The 19th Meeting of COBSEA:

Adopts the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter;

Agrees to prioritize the actions outlined in the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter with a focus on the activities related to:

- I. Action 1: Preventing and reducing marine litter from land-based sources;
- II. Action 2: Preventing and reducing marine litter from sea-based sources; and
- III. Action 5: Raising awareness on marine litter.

Requests the Secretariat to approach COBSEA member countries, donor countries and relevant international organizations regarding possible financial and in-kind contributions to support the implementation of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter.

ANNEX 9:

THE COBSEA REGIONAL ACTION PLAN ON MARINE LITTER

23 January 2008

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DEFINITIONS

East Asian Seas: For the purposes of this RAP-MALI, the term *East Asian Seas* refers to the coasts, Territorial Seas, Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) and adjoining waters of the COBSEA member countries, as follows:

Australia
Cambodia
People's Republic of China
Indonesia
Malaysia
Philippines
Singapore
Republic of Korea
Thailand
Vietnam

In the case of Australia the term only applies to its northern coasts, Territorial Sea and EEZ.

This definition does not preclude other countries and/or political entities in the general East Asian Seas region, that are not currently members of COBSEA, from joining or becoming partners in the COBSEA RAP-MALI including Brunei Darusalaam, and Japan.

This definition also does not preclude other countries and/or political entities that are adjacent to the general East Asian Seas region, such as Papua New Guinea, from becoming partners in the COBSEA RAP-MALI.

Marine litter: For the purposes of this RAP-MALI, the term *marine litter* means any and all solid waste matter that is of anthropogenic origin that is found on the coast, on the sea-surface, in the water column and/or on the seabed, including but not limited to all forms of plastics, general garbage and debris and lost and abandoned fishing gear, from all sources including land-based and sea-based sources.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AMSA	Australian Maritime Safety Authority
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
APFIC	Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
COBSEA	Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia
CUW	Clean Up the World
DINRAC	Data and Information Network Regional Activity Centre (of NOWPAP)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (of the United Nations)
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPA	Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based activities (of UNEP)
IAPH	International Association of Ports and Harbours
ICC	Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Clean-up
ICS	International Chamber of Shipping
INTERTANKO	International Association of Tanker Owners
IMO	International Maritime Organization (of the United Nations)
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (of UNESCO))
IUU	Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (fishing)
LAFG	Lost and Abandoned Fishing Gear
MARPOL	International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
NOWPAP	North West Pacific Action Plan
NPAs	National Plans of Action (of GPA)
PADI	Professional Association of Diving Instructors
RAP-MALI	Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter
RSP	Regional Seas Programme (of UNEP)
SQID	Stormwater Quality Improvement Device
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
3R	Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 *The global problem of marine litter*

Marine litter, also known as marine debris and marine garbage, is one of the major threats to the world's coasts and oceans. Marine litter enters the seas from both land-based sources and from ships and other vessels at sea, and comprises a wide range of materials, including persistent plastics and a variety of other problematic pollutants.

Marine litter causes a wide range of ecological, environmental and socio-economic impacts, including ingestion by and entanglement of marine life, fouling of coastlines and interference with navigation. There have been cases of major shipping accidents, resulting in loss of human life, from the entanglement of vessel propellers and rudders in marine debris. Serious public health issues are also associated with hazardous materials, medical wastes, syringes, glass and other sharp and/or dangerous debris washed-up on beaches.

Global data on marine litter continues to show increasing levels of garbage washing up on coastlines and accumulating at sea. In 1997, the U.S. Academy of Sciences estimated the total input of marine litter into the oceans, worldwide, at approximately 6.4 million tonnes per year, nearly 5.6 million tonnes of which was estimated to come from merchant shipping. It is estimated that there is over 46,000 pieces of plastic floating on every square mile of ocean today. It has been suggested by some researchers that an estimated three times more garbage (much of it plastic), is being thrown into the ocean each year than the amount of fish taken out (GPA, 2007).

Of particular concern are mass concentrations of marine debris in high seas 'sink' areas, such as the equatorial convergence zone. In some such areas, 'rafts' of assorted debris, including various plastics, ropes, fishing nets, cargo-associated wastes such as dunnage, pallets, wires and plastic covers; drums and shipping containers along with accumulated slicks of various oils, often extend for many kilometres. Marine litter is also a compounding factor in the dispersal of invasive alien species across the oceans.

Marine litter is also found on the seabed. It could be that as much as 70 per cent of the entire input of marine litter sinks to the bottom and is found on the seabed, both in shallow coastal areas and in much deeper parts of the oceans (GPA, 2007).

A serious element in the broader issue of marine litter is the problem of Lost and Abandoned Fishing Gear (LAFG). S. Raaymakers (in preparation) reports that LAFG, including nets, lines, traps and floats, that are either accidentally lost or intentionally abandoned by fishing vessels at sea (or by fishers working from the shore), is increasingly becoming a major world-wide marine pollution concern. The impacts of LAFG are similar to those of marine litter in general and include:

- Navigational hazards and threats to human life and property when vessels entangle LAFG;
- 'Ghost-fishing' when LAFG continues to function as designed, catching target commercial species without economic benefit but with economic (and ecological) loss;
- The entanglement of non-target species, including sea-turtles, marine mammals and sea-birds, many of which may be of conservation concern and/or legally protected species;
- The accumulation of communities of fouling organisms on LAFG that then acts as an agent for the introduction of foreign species to new areas;
- Beaching of LAFG which can cause amenity impacts, preventing or hampering use of beaches and foreshores for tourism, recreation and other uses; and

- Economic impacts - including from the four other impact types listed above, and from the response to these impacts – which can be costly (e.g. emergency response to entangled vessels, LAFG recovery and clean-up campaigns, scientific research and monitoring).

1.2 Marine litter in the East Asian Seas region

The East Asian Seas region (Figure 1) embraces the most populous region in the world. It is home to almost 1.8 billion people, 60 per cent of whom are concentrated in coastal areas. In the past decade, the region has been the centre of considerable economic growth, bringing about increasing urbanization and industrialization, especially in the coastal zone. Around 300 million people in the region are now living in coastal urban areas (PEMSEA, 2002).



Figure 1: East Asian Seas region showing the COBSEA member countries (non-COBSEA members Brunei Darussalam, Japan, Papua New Guinea and Democratic People's Republic of Korea are not labelled)
(source: COBSEA —www.cobsea.org)

According to the Regional Review of Marine Litter in the East Asian Seas region, there is currently very little systematically collected quantitative data on the extent and impacts of marine litter in East Asia. Relatively good data is available for only two countries in the region, Republic of Korea (a COBSEA member) and Japan (a non-COBSEA member). In Australia, some data is available from various uncoordinated survey and monitoring efforts, undertaken at various geographical scales by different parties. In Indonesia, systematic marine litter surveys have been undertaken in the Thousand Islands off Jakarta since the early 1980s. Additionally, some semi-quantitative data on marine litter is available from the Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) and similar programmes that are conducted annually at restricted sites in all COBSEA member countries except Cambodia in recent years.

These data combined with papers from the scientific literature, anecdotal reports, media articles and personal observations indicate that the marine litter situation in the East Asian Seas is as severe as, if not worse than any other part of the world, and is increasing significantly over time. The massive industrial and urban development under-way in the coastal zones of the region, combined with an exponential and sustained growth in shipping activity serving the region's rapidly expanding economies (Figure 2), plus the current lack of effective marine litter prevention and control measures in most East Asian countries, make marine litter a major marine pollution problem in the region.

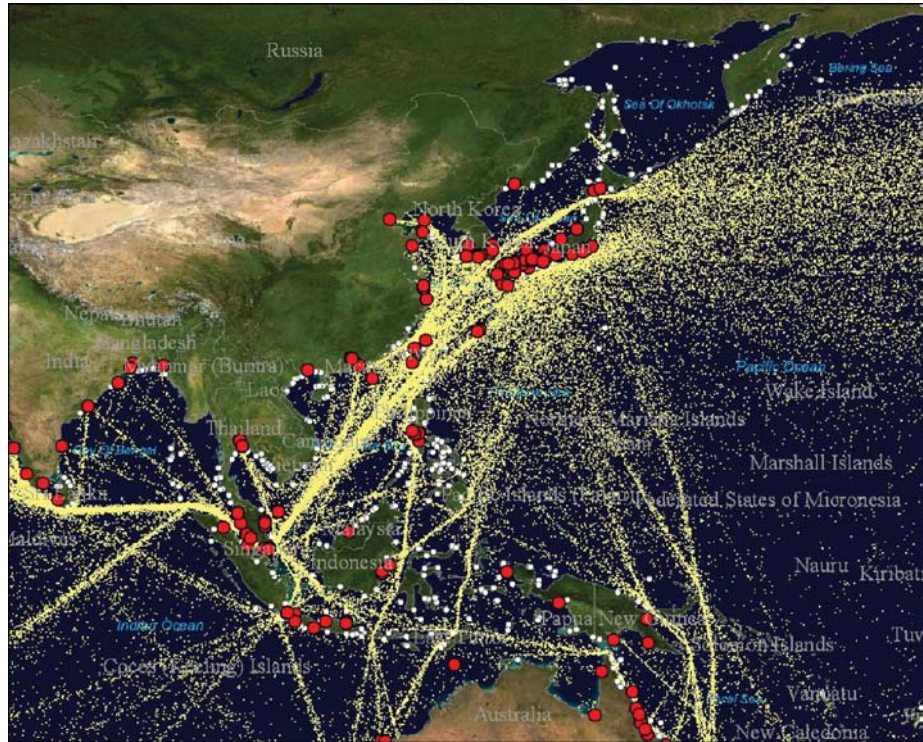


Figure 2: Shipping densities as represented by real ship position reports and major ports (red dots) in East Asia (source: GloBallast Programme, IMO)

As a component of the broader marine litter problem, LAFG is a major concern in the East Asian Seas, due to the extremely large size of the fishing industry (41 per cent of global fish catch comes from the East Asian Seas), combined with a lack of effective regulation of the fishing industry, including an extremely high level of Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing in the region.

The Regional Review of Marine Litter in the East Asian Seas region also found that there is an extremely low level of awareness about the marine litter issue in the region, that there are major cultural and capacity barriers to effectively addressing marine litter in the region, and that apart from Australia and Republic of Korea, none of the COBSEA member countries currently have concerted plans or actions to address the issue.

Of all the COBSEA member countries, only Republic of Korea has an advanced National Integrated Management Strategy for Marine Litter, which has been in place since 1999, providing a possible model for the rest of the region and indeed the world.

1.3 Development of the COBSEA RAP-MALI

Taking into account the global concern about the issue of marine litter and the United Nations General Assembly Resolution on Marine Litter (UN GA Resolution A/60/L.22), the UNEP Regional Seas Programme (RSP) has initiated a global programme on marine litter, including addressing the problem at the regional level, through assistance to several Regional Seas organizations, including COBSEA.

With financial support from the UNEP RSP, COBSEA commenced its marine litter activity in late 2006 and in general accordance with the UNEP Guidelines, the COBSEA approach is being undertaken as follows:

Phase I: Assessment of the regional situation

National consultants were nominated by the COBSEA member countries and a regional consultant was identified to complete national surveys on marine litter and prepare a regional review on marine

litter respectively. The resulting *Regional Review on Marine Litter in the East Asian Seas region* provides valuable background information supporting the COBSEA RAP-MALI.

Phase II: Preparation of the COBSEA RAP-MALI

A draft framework document of a regional action plan on marine litter, was developed and presented to the First COBSEA Marine Litter Workshop held in Jakarta, Indonesia 8-9 May 2007. The workshop reviewed and further developed the draft framework document. The outputs of the workshop were consolidated into the draft COBSEA RAP-MALI - which constitutes **this document**.

Phase III: Integration of the COBSEA RAP-MALI into the Programme of Work of COBSEA and implementation at the regional and national level.

In order to achieve implementation the COBSEA RAP-MALI will need to be approved and adopted by COBSEA and resources secured for its implementation, as part of the broader COBSEA Programme of Work.

2. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the COBSEA RAP-MALI is to:

- Improve the quality of marine and coastal environments of the East Asian Seas by addressing the issue of marine litter through regional cooperation and partnerships.

The objectives of the COBSEA RAP-MALI are to:

- Prevent and reduce litter in marine and coastal environments of the East Asian Seas.
- Mitigate the environmental and socioeconomic impacts of litter in marine and coastal environments of the East Asian Seas.
- Raise awareness about marine litter and its impacts, amongst all relevant stakeholders in the East Asian Seas region, including but not limited to government decision makers, the private sector such as fisheries, shipping, ports and the plastics and packaging industries, and the general public.
- Monitor and assess the types, sources, distribution, quantities and trends of litter in marine and coastal environments of the East Asian Seas, in order to provide science-based information for policy making and management planning.

3. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The institutional arrangements for the coordination and management of the implementation of the COBSEA RAP-MALI will include:

- The establishment of a regional working group of marine litter consisting of national focal points and experts, to provide advice to the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting and guide the implementation of the COBSEA RAP-MALI. The group will discuss and advise COBSEA on its modality of work.
- Within the framework of COBSEA, cooperation with other global and regional organizations and programmes including civil society, the private sector such as fisheries, shipping, ports, the plastics and packaging industries and other relevant stakeholders.

4. ACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

In order to achieve the aims and objectives of the COBSEA RAP-MALI as outlined in section 2, it is necessary for COBSEA and its members to carry out clearly defined and structured actions and activities. In line with the objectives, six major actions are proposed, as outlined below.

It should be noted that in developing and proposing these actions, the participants in the First COBSEA Marine Litter Workshop held in Jakarta, Indonesia, 8-9 May 2007 agreed that, given that the region is only just beginning to address the problem of marine litter, it is necessary to initially focus only on high-priority, foundational actions and activities, that will lay the basis for further development of more sophisticated marine litter prevention and response actions in the future.

In line with the objectives of the COBSEA RAP-MALI, the six major actions that are proposed are as follows:

Action 1: Preventing and reducing marine litter from land-based sources

Action 2: Preventing and reducing marine litter from sea-based sources

Action 3: Preventing and reducing Lost and Abandoned Fishing Gear (LAFG)

Action 4: Mitigating the impacts of marine litter

Action 5: Raising awareness of marine litter

Action 6: Monitoring and assessing marine litter

Actions 1 to 3 relate to objective 1 of the COBSEA RAP-MALI, and have been divided into these three sub-categories in recognition of the fact that quite different approaches are required to address the different sources (land-based and sea-based).

While it could be argued that LAFG is implicitly included in sea-based sources, because this type of marine litter is such a major concern, and because addressing it requires sector-specific measures, involving close cooperation with the fisheries sector, including international organisations that deal with fisheries as well as the fishing industry itself.

Within these actions, specific technical activities are proposed. Each action and its set of activities are described in more detail below, and these are summarised in a workplan in section 5.

Action 1: Preventing and reducing marine litter from land-based sources

In working to prevent and reduce marine litter from land-based sources, COBSEA will seek to work closely with the UNEP Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) including joint funding and/or implementation of projects where appropriate.

The following activities are proposed under Action 1:

Activity 1.1: **Legal and economic instruments:** Encourage and assist countries to develop and adopt legal and economic instruments to assist the management and prevention of marine litter from land-based sources.

Activity 1.2: **GPA National Plans of Action (NPAs):** Encourage and assist countries to develop and to achieve greater on-ground implementation of GPA NPAs.

Activity 1.3: **Integrated waste management:** Encourage and assist countries to promote integrated waste management systems for major municipal areas and coastal towns and villages, including the waste management principles of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle (3R).

- Activity 1.4: **Urban catchments:** Encourage and assist municipal councils in each country to implement litter prevention and interception systems in urban catchments, by sharing information on the use of engineering and non-engineering approaches, including but not limited to litter booms, physical traps/interceptors, Stormwater Quality Improvement Devices (SQIDs) and similar measures.
- Activity 1.5: **Training & capacity building:** Seek to provide technical training and capacity building to staff from national and municipal governments on the prevention and reduction of marine litter from land-based sources, through regional workshops and training courses.
- Activity 1.6: **Award-based incentives:** Encourage and assist countries to develop and implement award-based incentive schemes for coastal villages, towns and cities that have IWM systems, using models such as the Australian “Tidy Towns” programme.

Action 2: Preventing and reducing marine litter from sea-based sources

In working to prevent and reduce marine litter from sea-based sources, COBSEA will seek to work closely with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and both the Transport and Marine Resources Conservation Working Groups of Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), as well as the international and regional shipping and ports industries, as represented by bodies such as the International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH), the International Association of Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO) and the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS); including joint funding and/or implementation of projects where appropriate.

The following activities are proposed under action 2:

- Activity 2.1: **Legal and economic instruments:** Encourage and assist countries to develop and adopt legal and economic instruments to assist the management and prevention of marine litter from sea-based sources.
- Activity 2.2: **MARPOL Annex V:** Encourage and assist countries in the region that are not party to MARPOL Annex V to become party, and assist countries with on-ground implementation of Annex V.
- Activity 2.3: **Port Waste Reception Review:** Consider undertaking a regional review of the adequacy of port waste reception facilities and publish a Regional Directory of such, similar to that published jointly by Australia and New Zealand.
- Activity 2.4: **Port Waste Reception Fees:** Seek to encourage countries in the region to adopt a coordinated regional approach to port waste reception facilities, based on a “General Fee” cost recovery basis.*
- Activity 2.5: **Training & Capacity Building:** Seek to provide technical training and capacity building to staff from national governments, port authorities and the shipping industry on the prevention and reduction of marine litter from sea-based sources, through regional workshops and training courses.

* Note re. Port Reception Fees: In the Regional Review of Marine Litter in the East Asian Seas region most COBSEA members reported that where port waste reception facilities are provided, it is on a fee-for-service (user pays) basis. Such an approach can be a barrier to the use of such facilities - as vessel operators may not wish to pay such fees, and instead may opt to dispose of their garbage at sea - at no cost (assuming they are not caught and fined).

An alternative model that has been shown to be effective in some instances is a “General Fee” approach. This requires that all vessels using a port pay a standard environmental fee, which is used to fund the provision and operation of waste reception facilities, regardless of whether or not the vessels use the reception facilities. The result is that vessels are more likely to use the facilities - as they are paying for them anyway, and make no cost savings by dumping illegally at sea.

Action 3: Preventing and reducing Lost and Abandoned Fishing Gear (LAFG)

The activities proposed under action 3 are in addition to those under action 2, which in themselves will help to address the issue of LAFG.

In working to prevent and reduce LAFG, COBSEA will seek to work closely with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, the Asia-Pacific Fisheries Commission (APFIC), the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and both the Fisheries and Marine Resources Conservation Working Groups of APEC, as well as the fishing industry itself, including joint funding and/or implementation of projects where appropriate.

The following activities are proposed under Action 3:

- Activity 3.1: **FAO Code of Conduct:** Encourage and assist the regional fishing industry to better implement / comply with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries as it relates to LAFG.
- Activity 3.2: **Gear marking:** Encourage and assist countries to develop national legislation that requires all fishing gear to be identified/marked.
- Activity 3.3: **Gear registers:** Encourage and assist countries to establish national registers of fishing gear types (especially net types) used by their domestic fishing fleets.
- Activity 3.4: **Waste gear buy-back:** Encourage and assist countries to establish waste fishing gear buy-back schemes such as that implemented successfully in Republic of Korea.

Action 4: Mitigating the impacts of marine litter

Recognizing that efforts to prevent and reduce marine litter from all sources as proposed under Actions 1 to 3 will not be entirely effective, and given the current severe state and increasing severity of marine litter in the Seas of East Asia, actions and activities are also required in order to mitigate litter that does and will continue to enter the marine and coastal environments of the region. As a starting point, under the COBSEA RAP-MALI the main mitigation measure that is proposed is marine litter removal and clean-up.

In working to mitigate the impacts of marine litter, COBSEA will seek to work closely with the ICC, PADI Project AWARE, Clean Up the World (CUW) and similar programmes, as well as the plastics and packaging industries which may be interested to support clean-up activities, including joint funding and/or implementation of projects where appropriate.

The following activities are proposed under action 4:

- Activity 4.1: **International cleanup campaigns:** Encourage and assist all COBSEA member countries to join the ICC, PADI Project AWARE, CUW, Green Fins and similar campaigns and programmes and to spread these activities to additional sites in each country.
- Activity 4.2: **Targeted cleanup campaigns:** Encourage and assist entities with particular interest in or responsibility for certain coastal areas, such as tourist resorts and port authorities, to undertake regular clean-ups of their areas.

Action 5: Raising awareness of marine litter

The Regional Review of Marine Litter in East Asian Seas region identified a severe lack of awareness about the marine litter issue amongst all levels and sectors of society in East Asia, as being perhaps the single

biggest barrier to addressing the issue in the region. It is therefore deemed logical and prudent that the development and implementation of a concerted communication and awareness campaign should form one of the high-priority, initial, foundational Actions of the COBSEA RAP-MALI.

In working to raise awareness about marine litter in East Asia, COBSEA will seek to work closely with the ICC, PADI Project Aware, CUTW, Green Fins and similar programmes that have major awareness as well as clean-up objectives. COBSEA will also seek to work with the plastics and packaging industries, which may be interested to support awareness activities, including joint funding and/or implementation of projects where appropriate.

The following activities are proposed under action 5:

- Activity 5.1: **Regional communication strategy:** Seek to develop and implement a regional communication strategy on marine litter to promote awareness of the issue amongst all relevant audiences (government, industry, community), with consideration being given to the use of mass media (TV, radio and newspaper) as the most effective communication method.
- Activity 5.2: **Targeted awareness campaigns:** Seek to develop and undertake awareness campaigns targeting high priority marine litter sources (e.g. fishing, shipping, municipal councils, port authorities).

Action 6: Monitoring and assessing marine litter

The Regional Review identified that there is a major lack of data on the sources, types, extent, distribution, impacts and trends over time of marine litter in the Seas of East Asia, and that this lack of understanding is a barrier to effective marine litter prevention and management in the region.

Monitoring and assessment programmes are required so as to determine the true regional extent of the problem, including identification of high priority sources and regional hot spots that require targeted management action, as well as trends over time and the effectiveness or otherwise of management and control responses.

In working to develop and implement marine litter monitoring and assessment programmes in East Asia, COBSEA will seek to work closely with UNEP and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), which are jointly developing global standards for marine litter surveys and monitoring. COBSEA will also seek to work with the ICC, which generates some limited monitoring data from its annual clean-up activities, as well as marine and coastal scientific institutions which may be interested to support marine litter monitoring and assessment activities, including joint funding and/or implementation of projects where appropriate.

The following activities are proposed under action 6:

- Activity 6.1: **Data from ICC:** Seek to develop procedures in collaboration with ICC to improve the reporting of data to national governments and COBSEA that is collected from annual ICC events in the region.
- Activity 6.2: **National Surveys and Monitoring:** Encourage and assist each COBSEA member to develop and implement formal, systematic, nationally coordinated marine litter survey and monitoring programmes, using standardised methods being developed by UNEP and IOC (standardisation is vital for data quality control and inter-comparability).

Consider encouraging COBSEA members to annually report the results of any such programmes to EAS/RCU for inclusion in a possible Regional Marine Litter Information System, as proposed under activity 6.3, and for consideration by COBSEA Intergovernmental Meetings.

Activity 6.3: **Regional Marine Litter Information System:** Consider the merits of establishing a central regional information system on marine litter at the COBSEA Secretariat and the role that the East Asian Seas Knowledgebase and other existing databases, such as the marine litter database managed by the NOWPAP Data and Information Network Regional Activity Centre (DINRAC), could play.

If developed, such an information system could be used for the storage, management, analysis and interpretation of the results of the national marine litter survey and monitoring programmes, as well as data returns from ICC events in the region and any other relevant sources of marine litter information in the region.

Such an information system could present outputs graphically on map-based Geographic Information System (GIS) - providing visual representation of the geographical spread of the problem. This would provide a powerful monitoring tool for assessing the true regional extent of the problem, including regional hot spots, as well as trends over time and the effectiveness or otherwise of management and control responses.

Activity 6.4: **Trajectory modelling:** Consider to undertake marine litter trajectory modelling in the COBSEA region, to identify sources and accumulation zones for marine litter, and enable better targeted management actions.

5. WORKPLAN

Table 1: The COBSEA RAP-MALI workplan

Action	Activity	Timeline	Responsibility	Estimated regional budget
1. Land-based sources:	1.1 Legal and economic instruments:	Year 1	COBSEA Secretariat	USD 15,000
	a. Review and recommend effective legal and economic instruments with regards to the management of marine litter from land-based sources	Year 1-5	Participating countries	National budget / Other sources
	b. Develop national legal instruments to address marine litter from land-based sources and/or strengthen existing national legislation	Year 1-5	Participating countries in collaboration with UNEP GPA	National budget / Other sources
	1.2 GPA NPAs:	Year 1-3	COBSEA Secretariat in collaboration with UNEP GPA	USD 80,000
	a. Develop, or update existing, GPA NPAs to strengthen the management and mitigation of land-based pollution including marine litter	Year 1-5	Participating countries	National budget / Other sources
	b. Provide support to participating countries for the integration of actions addressing marine litter in GPA NPA development	Year 3	COBSEA Secretariat	USD 20,000
	1.3 Integrated waste management:	Year 3-5	Participating countries in collaboration with COBSEA Secretariat	USD 50,000
	a. Promote the use of integrated waste management among coastal municipalities;	Year 1-5	Participating countries, the COBSEA Secretariat and the Green Fins network	USD 20,000
	b. Develop guidelines for the application of 3R programmes in coastal communities	Year 1-5	Participating countries	National budget / Other sources
	c. Assist local municipalities in developing and applying income generating 3R programmes in coastal communities	Year 2	COBSEA Secretariat	USD 20,000
	d. Promote the use of 3R programmes in marine parks and coastal tourism areas;	Year 4	COBSEA Secretariat	USD 30,000
	1.4 Urban catchments:			
	Encourage municipal councils to implement litter prevention and interception systems in urban catchments			
	1.5 Training and capacity building:			
	a. Organise a training workshop to share review outcomes and experiences on effective legal and economic instruments to manage marine litter from land-based sources between COBSEA member countries			
b. Organise a technical training workshop to share knowledge and experiences on the use of engineering and non-engineering approaches to litter prevention				

Action	Activity	Timeline	Responsibility	Estimated regional budget
	<p>1.6 Award based incentives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Initiate or strengthen existing award-based incentives schemes for coastal towns and cities that have IWM systems at national level b. Encourage the establishment of award-based incentives schemes through regional campaign activities, such as COBSEA Clean Beach awards or similar 	<p>Year 1-5 Year 1-5</p>	<p>Participating countries COBSEA Secretariat</p>	<p>National budget / Other sources USD 50,000</p>
<p>2. Sea-based sources:</p>	<p>2.1 Legal and economic instruments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Review and recommend effective legal and economic instruments with regards to the management of marine litter from sea-based sources b. Develop national legal instruments to address marine litter from land-based sources and/or strengthen existing national legislation <p>2.2 MARPOL Annex V:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ratify MARPOL Annex V, or strengthen the implementation of MARPOL Annex V, specifically regarding the prevention and mitigation of marine litter from sea-based sources b. Provide support to participating countries to identify and implement concrete actions to address marine litter through on-the-ground implementation of MARPOL Annex V. <p>2.3 Port waste reception review:</p> <p>Undertake a regional review of the adequacy of port waste reception facilities and publish a regional directory.</p> <p>2.4 Port waste reception fees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Encourage the adoption of a "General Fee" cost recovery basis for port waste reception facilities at national/local ports b. Develop a coordinated regional approach/recommendation to port waste reception facilities, based on a "General Fee" cost recovery basis <p>2.5 Training and capacity building:</p> <p>Organise a training workshop to share review outcomes and experiences on effective legal and economic instruments to manage marine litter from sea-based sources between COBSEA member countries, specifically focusing on strengthened implementation of MARPOL Annex V</p>	<p>Year 1 Year 1-2 Year 1-5 Year 3-5 Year 2 Year 1-5 Year 3 Year 2</p>	<p>COBSEA Secretariat Participating countries Participating countries in collaboration with IMO COBSEA Secretariat in collaboration with IMO COBSEA Secretariat and participating countries in collaboration with IMO Participating countries COBSEA Secretariat and participating countries in collaboration with IMO COBSEA Secretariat in collaboration with IMO</p>	<p>To be combined with activity 1.1a National budget National budget / Other sources 80,000 50,000 National budget / Other sources 15,000 To be combined with activity 1.5a</p>

Action	Activity	Timeline	Responsibility	Estimated regional budget
3. LAFG:	<p>3.1 FAO Code of Conduct:</p> <p>a. Strengthen the implementation and compliance with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries as it related to LAFG</p> <p>b. Provide support to participating countries to identify and implement concrete actions to address LAFG through the implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.</p> <p>3.2 Gear marking:</p> <p>Develop and/or strengthen existing legislation requiring all fishing gears to be identified/marked</p> <p>3.3 Gear registers:</p> <p>Establish national registers of fishing gear types (especially net types) used by domestic fishing fleets</p> <p>3.4 Waste gear buy-back:</p> <p>a. Assess the possibility of implementing waste gear buy-back schemes at national level</p> <p>b. Organise a technical training workshop to share experiences on successful management initiatives such as the waste gear buy-back scheme implemented in the Republic of Korea</p>	<p>Year 1-5</p> <p>Year 5</p> <p>Year 1-5</p> <p>Year 1-5</p> <p>Year 1-5</p> <p>Year 4</p>	<p>Participating countries in collaboration with FAO</p> <p>COBSEA Secretariat in collaboration with FAO</p> <p>Participating countries</p> <p>Participating countries</p> <p>Participating countries</p> <p>Participating countries</p> <p>COBSEA Secretariat</p>	<p>National budget / Other sources 80,000</p> <p>National budget / Other sources</p> <p>National budget / Other sources</p> <p>National budget / Other sources</p> <p>To be combined with activity 1.5b</p>
4. Mitigating impacts:	<p>4.1 International cleanup campaigns:</p> <p>a. Join Ocean Conservancy's ICC, CUW, PADI Project AWARE, Green Fins and similar campaigns and programmes and encourage active participation by NGOs, schools, private sector etc in local cleanup campaigns</p> <p>b. Encourage and assist participating countries to join Ocean Conservancy's ICC, CUW, PADI Project AWARE, Green Fins and similar campaigns and programmes through the organisation of regional cleanup campaigns</p> <p>4.2 Targeted cleanup campaigns:</p> <p>Encourage and assist entities with particular interest in or responsibility for certain coastal areas, such as tourist resorts and port authorities, to undertake regular clean-ups of their areas</p>	<p>Year 1-5</p> <p>Year 1-5</p> <p>Year 1-5</p>	<p>Participating countries</p> <p>COBSEA Secretariat in collaboration with ICC, CUW etc</p> <p>Participating countries</p>	<p>National budget / Other sources</p> <p>100,000</p> <p>National budget / Other sources</p>
5. Raising awareness:	<p>5.1 Regional communication strategy:</p> <p>Develop and implement a regional communication strategy on marine litter to promote awareness among all relevant audiences and identify potential funding for its implementation</p>	<p>Year 1-5</p>	<p>COBSEA Secretariat and participating countries</p>	<p>USD 50,000</p>

Action	Activity	Timeline	Responsibility	Estimated regional budget
	<p>5.2 Targeted awareness campaigns:</p> <p>a. Develop and undertake national/local awareness campaigns targeting high priority marine litter sources (e.g. fishing, shipping, municipal councils, port authorities)</p> <p>b. Ensure active involvement by representatives from private sectors representing high priority marine litter sources (e.g. fishing, shipping, municipal councils, port authorities) in the implementation of the COBSEA RAP-MALI through the participation in training workshops, clean-up campaigns, potential funding for activities etc.</p>	<p>Year 1-5</p> <p>Year 1-5</p>	<p>Participating countries</p> <p>COBSEA Secretariat</p>	<p>National budget / Other sources</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>6. Monitoring & assessing:</p>	<p>6.1 ICC data:</p> <p>Develop procedures in collaboration with ICC to improve the reporting of data to national governments and COBSEA that is collected from annual ICC events in the region</p> <p>6.2 National surveys and monitoring:</p> <p>a. Provide logistical and other (non-financial) support to the development of standardised marine litter monitoring methods that has been initiated by UNEP RSP and IOC</p> <p>a. Develop and implement formal, systematic and nationally coordinated marine litter survey and monitoring programmes, using the standardised methods developed by UNEP RSP and IOC.</p> <p>b. Report the results of national surveys and monitoring to the COBSEA Secretariat for inclusion in a possible Regional Marine Litter Information System and for consideration by COBSEA IGIMs</p> <p>6.3 Regional information system:</p> <p>Establish a central regional information system on marine litter as part of the developing East Asian Seas Knowledgebase</p> <p>6.4 Trajectory modelling:</p> <p>Undertake marine litter trajectory modelling in the COBSEA region, to identify sources and accumulation zones for marine litter, and enable better targeted management actions</p>	<p>Year 1</p> <p>Year 1</p> <p>Year 1-5</p> <p>Year 1-5</p> <p>Year 2</p> <p>Year 3</p>	<p>COBSEA Secretariat in collaboration with ICC</p> <p>UNEP RSP and IOC/ UNESCO in collaboration with the COBSEA Secretariat</p> <p>Participating countries</p> <p>Participating countries</p> <p>COBSEA Secretariat</p> <p>COBSEA Secretariat in collaboration with renowned research institution and participating countries</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>National budget / Other sources</p> <p>National budget / Other sources</p> <p>USD 20,000</p> <p>USD 120,000</p>
Total estimated regional budget:				USD 800,000

6. FUNDING AND SUSTAINABILITY

The funding and sustainability arrangements for the implementation of the COBSEA RAP-MALI are as follows:

- Budget for the implementation of the COBSEA RAP-MALI shall be allocated from the COBSEA Trust Fund and financial and in-kind support shall be sought from other sources such as:
 - COBSEA members
 - Other bilateral donors
 - Multi-lateral donors
 - Relevant private sector industries
 - NGOs
- The implementation of the COBSEA RAP-MALI at the national level will be carried out by individual member countries.
- With a view towards longer-term sustainability, COBSEA and its members will endeavor to include user-pays, polluter-pays and other economic instruments in all marine litter activities, as and where appropriate and possible.

7. REFERENCES

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**ANNEX 10:
BUDGET 2008 – 2009**

2008

	Trust Fund	Envi. Fund	XE/6030-96-12 Hotspots	XE/6030-00-06 CR monitoring	Sida Support	Sida Spatial Planning	Total
PROJECT PERSONNEL COMPONENT							
Project personnel							
Programme Officer (P5)	170,000	-	-	-	-	-	170,000
Programme Officer (P3)	150,000	-	-	-	-	-	150,000
Project Officer Spatial Planning (L2)	-	-	-	-	-	90,000	90,000
Total	320,000	-	-	-	-	90,000	410,000
Consultant							
Consultant (marine litter)	-	-	-	-	15,000	-	15,000
Consultant (national capacity building)	-	-	-	-	15,000	-	15,000
Total	-	-	-	-	30,000	-	30,000
Administrative support							
Administrative Assistant	65,000	-	-	-	-	-	65,000
Senior secretary	55,000	-	-	-	-	-	55,000
Total	120,000	-	-	-	-	-	120,000
Travel on official business							
Staff travel	-	-	-	3,000	25,000	7,000	35,000
Total	-	-	-	3,000	25,000	7,000	35,000
Component Total	440,000	-	-	3,000	55,000	97,000	595,000
SUB CONTRACT COMPONENT							
Sub-contracts (non-profit organs)							
Spatial Planning (Regional Criteria)	-	-	-	-	-	100,000	100,000
National Activities for IYOR 2008	-	-	-	10,000	-	-	10,000
Regional and national database development	-	-	-	-	60,000	-	60,000
Support for national MEA training workshops	-	-	-	-	22,000	-	22,000
Support for national EASEO consultations	-	20,000	-	-	-	-	20,000
Total	-	20,000	-	10,000	82,000	100,000	212,000
Component Total	-	20,000	-	10,000	82,000	100,000	212,000
TRAINING COMPONENT							
Meetings/conference							
Spatial Planning Regional SC Meeting	-	-	-	-	-	20,000	20,000
Spatial Planning Regional Workshop (Criteria I)	-	-	-	-	-	25,000	25,000

	Trust Fund	Envi. Fund	XE/6030-96-12 Hotspots	XE/6030-00-06 CR monitoring	Sida Support	Sida Spatial Planning	Total
Regional MEAs Forum	-	-	-	-	25,000	-	25,000
EASEO Meeting	-	-	-	-	30,000	-	30,000
Regional IYOR 2008 Campaign	-	-	-	15,000	-	-	15,000
Marine litter workshop & campaign	-	-	23,000	-	7,000	-	30,000
Total	-	-	23,000	15,000	62,000	45,000	145,000
Component Total	-	-	23,000	15,000	62,000	45,000	145,000
EQUIPMENT							
Expendable equipment							
Office supplies	500	-	-	-	1,000	-	1,500
Total	500	-	-	-	1,000	-	1,500
Non-expendable equipment							
Office equipment	-	-	-	-	1,500	-	1,500
Total	-	-	-	-	1,500	-	1,500
Premises							
Office space rental	12,000	-	-	-	-	-	12,000
Total	12,000	-	-	-	-	-	12,000
Component Total	12,500	-	-	-	2,500	-	15,000
MISCELLANEOUS COMPONENT							
Operation and maintenance of equipment	500	-	-	-	-	-	500
Total	500	-	-	-	-	-	500
Reporting costs							
Printing reports	-	5,000	1,581	2,500	8,000	-	17,081
Total	-	5,000	1,581	2,500	8,000	-	17,081
Sundry							
Communication	500	-	-	500	1,296	1,000	3,296
Postage and pouch	500	-	-	500	500	500	2,000
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	200	341	-	541
Total	1,000	-	-	1,200	2,137	1,500	5,837
Hospitality and entertainment							
Hospitality	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Component Total	1,500	5,000	1,581	3,700	10,137	1,500	23,418
BUDGET TOTAL	454,000	25,000	24,581	31,700	211,637	243,500	990,418

2009

	Trust Fund	Envi. Fund	Sida Spatial Planning	To be identified	Total
PROJECT PERSONNEL COMPONENT					
Project personnel					
Programme Officer (P5)	170,000	-	-	-	170,000
Programme Officer (P3)	150,000	-	-	-	150,000
Project Officer Spatial Planning (L2)	-	-	90,000	-	90,000
Total	320,000	-	90,000	-	410,000
Administrative support					
Administrative Assistant	65,000	-	-	-	65,000
Senior secretary	55,000	-	-	-	55,000
Total	120,000	-	-	-	120,000
Travel on official business					
Staff travel	-	-	15,000	10,000	25,000
Total	-	-	15,000	10,000	25,000
Component Total	440,000	-	105,000	10,000	555,000
SUB CONTRACT COMPONENT					
Sub-contracts (non-profit organs)					
Spatial Planning (Demonstration sites)	-	-	220,000	-	220,000
Regional and national database development	-	-	-	20,000	20,000
Support for national MEA training workshops	-	-	-	40,000	40,000
Support for development and mainstreaming national marine environment policy	-	-	-	25,000	25,000
Marine litter: Support integration into national GPA/NPA development	-	-	-	30,000	30,000
Total	-	-	220,000	115,000	335,000
Component Total	-	-	220,000	115,000	335,000
TRAINING COMPONENT					
Meetings/conference					
Spatial Planning Regional SC Meeting	-	-	20,000	-	20,000
Spatial Planning Regional Workshop (Criteria II)	-	-	25,000	-	25,000
Regional Expert Meeting (Database)	-	-	-	25,000	25,000
Regional MEA capacity building workshop	-	-	-	25,000	25,000
COBSEA Meetings	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
Marine litter training workshop	-	25,000	-	-	25,000
Total	10,000	25,000	45,000	50,000	130,000
Component Total	10,000	25,000	45,000	50,000	130,000

	Trust Fund	Envi. Fund	Sida Spatial Planning	To be identified	Total
EQUIPMENT					
Expendable Equipment					
Office supplies	500	-	-	1,000	1,500
Total	500	-	-	1,000	1,500
Non-expendable equipment					
Office equipment		-	-	1,000	1,000
Total	-	-	-	1,000	1,000
Premises (office rent, maintenance etc)					
Office space rental	12,000	-	-	-	12,000
Total	12,000	-	-	-	12,000
Component Total	12,500	-	-	2,000	14,500
MISCELLANEOUS COMPONENT					
Operation and maintenance of equipment					
Operation and maintenance of equipment	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	-
Reporting costs					
Printing reports	1,500	-	5,000	5,000	11,500
Total	1,500	-	5,000	5,000	11,500
Sundry					
Communication	500	-	1,000	1,000	2,500
Postage and pouch	500	-	500	500	1,500
Miscellaneous		-	-	-	-
Total	1,000	-	1,500	1,500	4,000
Hospitality and entertainment					
Hospitality		-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	-
Component Total	2,500	-	6,500	6,500	15,500
BUDGET TOTAL	465,000	25,000	376,500	183,500	1,050,000

