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**Coordinating Body on the  
Seas of East Asia (COBSEA)**

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**Twenty-fourth Intergovernmental Meeting of the  
Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA)**  
Bali, Indonesia, 19-20 June 2019

**Report of the 24th Intergovernmental Meeting of the  
Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia**

## **AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE MEETING**

### ***1.1 Welcome address and opening remarks***

1. Mr. Jerker Tamelander, Coordinator of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), welcomed delegates to the meeting and expressed appreciation for the active engagement with countries through COBSEA over the years and in the lead up to the 24th Intergovernmental Meeting. Mr. Tamelander welcomed further collaboration with countries in his newly appointed capacity as Coordinator of COBSEA and thanked the Government of Indonesia for hosting the meeting.
2. Mr. Habib El-Habr, Coordinator of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA), delivered opening remarks on behalf of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme. He highlighted the close link between prosperity and the coastal and marine environment and the importance of COBSEA, its Strategic Directions 2018-2022 and the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI), for concerted action in the region. He commended leadership demonstrated by COBSEA countries at the 4th Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-4) to address priority areas of common concern including marine litter. He concluded by reemphasizing UN Environment's commitment to regional collaboration, with Regional Seas programmes as key implementation platforms.
3. H.E. Soehardjono Sastromihardjo, Ambassador of Indonesia to Kenya and Permanent Representative to UN Environment, welcomed delegates to the 24th Intergovernmental Meeting on behalf of H.E. Siti Nurbaya Bakar, Minister of Environment and Forestry of Indonesia. He highlighted priority issues for Indonesia such as the protection of the marine and coastal environment from pollution and other threats and the implementation of global frameworks. He expressed optimism that the meeting would result in strong commitments to addressing common concerns through regional and national action. He reflected on the Bali Declaration adopted at the 4th Intergovernmental Review Meeting on the Implementation of the GPA (IGR-4), which stressed capacity building, sharing know-how and including various stakeholders, technology transfer and exchange of best practices on the protection of the marine and coastal environment, the spirit of which inspired the establishment of the Regional Capacity Centre for Clean Seas (RC3S) in Bali noted in the UNEA-4 resolution on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (UNEP/EA.4/Res.11).

### ***1.2 Introduction of participants***

4. The participants introduced themselves to the meeting. The list of participants is attached as Annex 1 to this report.

### ***1.3 Presentation of credentials***

5. The Bureau of the Meeting examined the credentials of the representatives of countries participating in the 24th Intergovernmental Meeting of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia, in accordance with Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, applicable *mutatis mutandis* to this meeting.
6. As of 10:00 a.m. of 19 June 2019, the representatives of the nine COBSEA participating countries were in attendance. The credentials issued by or on behalf of the Head of State or Government or by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, had been received in original for the representatives of the following

eight participating countries: Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

7. The Secretariat noted that for the opening of the meeting the applicable Rules of Procedure (Rule 32) required the presence of one third of participating countries with valid credentials, i.e. at least three of the nine participating countries. It further noted that for decisions to be taken, such as adoption of strategic documents, the applicable Rules required the presence of a majority of the participating countries with valid credentials, i.e. at least five of the nine participating countries. On the basis of the received credentials, the meeting agreed that the necessary quorum for the opening of the meeting and decision-making had been met.

## **AGENDA ITEM 2: ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING**

### **2.1 Designation of Officers**

8. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, applicable *mutatis mutandis* to this meeting, the participating countries were invited to elect a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and a Rapporteur.
9. The Meeting agreed to elect the following officers:

<b>Chairperson</b>	H.E. Makarim Wibisono, Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Indonesia
<b>Vice-Chairperson</b>	Mr. Ukkrit Satapoomin, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources of Thailand
<b>Rapporteur</b>	Mr. Eddy Mazuaansyah Bin Mohd Ali Murad, Ministry of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change of Malaysia

### **2.2 Organization of work**

10. The Chair announced that the meeting would take place on 19 and 20 June 2019 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and from 2:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., subject to adjustment as necessary.
11. The Chair invited the Secretariat to introduce the working and information documents as presented in information document UNEP/COBSEA IGM24/INF2 rev.3. The Secretariat brought to the attention of the meeting the revision of the Annotated Provisional Agenda (UNEP/COBSEA IGM24/2 rev.1) to reflect the correct date of the Intergovernmental Meeting. The Secretariat apologized for the late submission of working document UNEP/COBSEA IGM24/8.
12. The Secretariat briefed the meeting participants on the logistical arrangements for conducting the meeting. It was agreed that the meeting would be conducted in plenary and in English.

### **2.3 Adoption of the agenda**

13. The Chair invited the Secretariat to introduce the Provisional Agenda of the meeting, presented as working document UNEP/COBSEA IGM24/1. He said that the Provisional Agenda and the Annotated

Provisional Agenda had been circulated, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure applicable to the meeting, six weeks in advance of the meeting.

14. Countries proposed to include consideration of the Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Marine Litter as a separate Agenda item under 4.2, suggested to move the presentation of a Regional Node to 5.3 and to rearrange the order of discussion of items under 5.1 and 5.2 to provide general guidance on Regional Activity Centres (RAC) before considering the establishment of the Regional Capacity Centre for Clean Seas (RC3S) as a COBSEA RAC.
15. After considering the Provisional Agenda submitted by the Secretariat and the additional proposals, the meeting adopted the Agenda attached as Annex 2 to this report.

#### **2.4 *Opening remarks by participating countries***

16. The Chair invited the participating countries to make short opening statements related to their support to COBSEA.
17. Cambodia made reference to the East Asian Seas Action Plan and provided an update of national policies on sustainable management of natural resources including the National Environment Strategy and Action Plan, noting that the country increased protected areas to approximately 7.5 million hectares. Activities at national level include monitoring and supervision of local-level implementation of regulations on pollution control, management of plastic bags and electric waste, and pollution prevention in coastal zones. Support needs for communication, good governance, cooperation, policy making, and technology transfer in line with the Action Plan and Strategic Directions was emphasized as well as the need for a mechanism for follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with commitments at regional level in collaboration with all actors through joint action and partnerships in-country as well as in the region.
18. China attached importance to the East Asian Seas Action Plan and the associated programme and expressed their hope for fruitful discussions and good meeting results.
19. Indonesia expressed strong commitment to the implementation of the COBSEA Strategic Directions and to moving them from policy to implementation and real action such as is happening in relation to the work on marine litter and microplastics. All participants were invited for coffee with H.E. Siti Nurbaya, Minister of Environment and Forestry of Indonesia.
20. Republic of Korea encouraged COBSEA to play a role in supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and looked forward to a discussion on the implementation of the COBSEA Strategic Directions, the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and the RC3S.
21. Malaysia applauded various efforts of COBSEA over the last 12 months including the work in relation to marine litter aiming at long-term cooperation to address this problem. With the cost of marine litter estimated to be USD 1.3 billion to Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) countries alone, concerted and holistic action was needed in line with Sustainable Development Goal 14. Particular emphasis was placed on the urgency of stricter control of plastic scrap waste from other parts of the world, with 0.87 million tonnes received by Malaysia in 2018 – an increase of 59 per cent since the previous year. They called on developed countries to take domestic action to ensure that adequate control of plastic waste is carried out at national level prior to any transboundary movement of plastic waste. Malaysia highlighted that it had closed down 153 illegal plastic recycling factories in the country as well as increased border enforcement, returning five cargos to the originating country and

placing another 60+ cargos under investigation. The Malaysia Roadmap on Single-Use Plastics and their support in furthering the amendment to the Basel Convention Annexes were mentioned as well as the proposal to create a new waste category of plastics under Annex II of the Basel Convention. The need to look into development of alternatives to replace plastic and the exploration of new technologies in this regard was also mentioned as well as the need for collaboration with all stakeholders and in particular the need for more regional collaboration and cooperation amongst relevant institutions.

22. The Philippines thanked UN Environment for its continued support to the COBSEA Secretariat including towards assisting COBSEA countries in developing or strengthening implementation of National Action Plans on Marine Litter. The Philippines was still at an early stage in this regard, but the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) through the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) had initiated preliminary consultations with other national government agencies and organizations and was making preparations for multi-stakeholder consultation. The establishment of a National Steering Committee for the formulation of a National Action Plan on Marine Litter was underway. In this regard, the importance of achieving good outcomes of the 24th Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA was emphasized. The Philippines conveyed its continued support and commitment to COBSEA.
23. Singapore noted that with the adoption of COBSEA's revised Strategic Directions, there had been increased momentum in the work of COBSEA. Particularly, greater focus was given to the topic of marine litter, which was a relevant issue to all COBSEA members. As the 24th Intergovernmental Meeting covered important agenda items which outcomes would shape the future of COBSEA, Singapore stressed the need for adequate time to discuss important issues, including the endorsement of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, as well as the Guidance on the Establishment and Operation of COBSEA RACs.
24. Thailand referred to various activities that have been implemented in support of the COBSEA Strategic Directions including the establishment of additional Marine Protected Areas, restoration of marine and coastal habitats, land-to-sea interventions and the pollution management plan and related policies and instruments on waste management. Thailand presented the finalization and adoption of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter as a key step to guide how COBSEA participating countries can move forward with synergies and complementarity and looked forward to fruitful discussions of this meeting.
25. Vietnam referred to the approved resolution of the Strategy of Ocean Economy for 2045, transforming the Vietnam economy to an ocean economy from plastic waste to resource recycling. The Ministry of National Resources and Environment supported the Strategic Directions and looked forward to efforts being focussed on implementation as a next step including the continuation of the great importance given to marine litter and microplastics in this regard, anticipating that COBSEA may serve as an umbrella for following guidance on marine litter-relevant issues.
26. Common elements included expression of appreciation to the Government of Indonesia for hosting the meeting, to UN Environment and the COBSEA Secretariat for organizing the meeting and congratulations to Jerker Tamelander for his appointment as COBSEA Coordinator in April 2019.

**AGENDA ITEM 3: REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COBSEA ACTIVITIES 2017-2018**

27. The Chair invited the Secretariat to present a summary of the report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme on the implementation of COBSEA activities carried out during the period 2017-2018, which had been presented as working document UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/3.
28. The COBSEA Secretariat presented the report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, highlighting key activities carried out during the biennium towards implementation of the work plan. The Secretariat drew attention to reporting on specific provisions on resolutions adopted at the 2nd Extraordinary IGM and 23rd IGM. The COBSEA Coordinator highlighted progress made on staffing of the Secretariat including through the project 'Reducing marine litter by addressing the plastic value chain in Southeast Asia' (SEAcircular). He updated the meeting on the current development of the new COBSEA website and logo and stressed that all functionalities and the identity of COBSEA would be retained. The Secretariat announced the first inaugural SEA of Solutions partnership week from 11-15 November 2019 in Bangkok and invited all participants to join the meeting. The Coordinator also noted efforts to leverage cross-institutional cooperation in the region and globally, as exemplified by the workshop on 'Regional Solutions to Combat Plastic Pollution: Consultation on Packaging Industry Regulations and Standards for Design, Labelling, Recovery and Recycling in ASEAN' in December 2018 organized by UN Environment and COBSEA.
29. The Secretariat further presented the financial performance of the East Asian Seas Trust Fund (Trust Fund) for the period of 2017-2018, prepared in accordance with the UN Financial Rules and Procedure and the financial Rules and Procedure for COBSEA adopted at the 23rd Intergovernmental Meeting. The total contribution to the Trust Fund during the period 2017-2018 was USD 671,226. Contributions to the Trust Fund leveraged project funding, excluding Global Environment Facility (GEF) projects, at a ratio of 10 to 1. UN Environment authorized COBSEA to continue operation pending approval of the 2019-2020 biennial budget.
30. The Chairperson thanked the Secretariat for the comprehensive report and invited comments and questions on the report presented.
31. Indonesia extended their compliments for the new COBSEA logo.
32. China stated that given that many activities which help implement the COBSEA Action Plan were supported by extrabudgetary resources, the Secretariat should consider sharing the project pipeline with national focal points of COBSEA participating countries on a regular basis and well advance of Intergovernmental Meetings. The COBSEA Secretariat agreed to strengthen its efforts in information sharing with participating countries.
33. In response to the Secretariat's presentation of upcoming relevant meetings, Singapore asked whether the SEA of Solutions meeting and the meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics would be held back-to-back, since both would be scheduled in Bangkok in November 2019. Noting that there would be a high-level event at the SEA of Solutions meeting, Singapore requested the Secretariat to circulate the invitation early to give participating countries sufficient time to process the request. UN Environment confirmed the intention of holding back-to-back meetings in November 2019 to maximize co-financing and facilitate travel arrangements. In

response to the Secretariat's status update on the work of revamping COBSEA's website, Singapore enquired about the timeline for completion. Singapore also suggested that it would be useful for the Secretariat to seek views from participating countries about the new website, to which the Secretariat agreed.

34. The Chair concluded the discussion by expressing thanks to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the COBSEA Secretariat for activities implemented and progress made.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 4: COBSEA REGIONAL ACTION PLAN ON MARINE LITTER**

##### ***4.1 Revised COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter***

35. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present the revised COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, presented as working document UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/4, including outcomes of the Meeting of the Working Group on Marine Litter on 17-18 June 2019.
36. The Secretariat presented the revised COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, noting it had been prepared in line with the resolution of the 2nd Extraordinary Intergovernmental Meeting, and further noting the outcomes of deliberations at the Meeting of the Working Group on Marine Litter on 17-18 June, where structural and substantive edits were made to the revised COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter text as contained in UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/4. The Coordinator brought to the attention of delegates that the Secretariat had circulated the version of the revised COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter that included edits resulting both from discussions in plenary at the Meeting of the Working Group on Marine Litter and additional edits under Section 2 made by a small group of countries as advised by the Meeting of the Working Group on Marine Litter. The Secretariat further welcomed the additional information and corrections provided on the current status of national policy and planning arrangements presented in working document UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/4 and invited continued communication of updates from participating countries.
37. The Chair noted that in the COBSEA Strategic Directions adopted at the 2nd Extraordinary Intergovernmental Meeting, participating countries agreed to revise the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and agreed on steps towards this. The Chair further noted that countries had engaged in the process, including through two technical meetings held in December 2018 and immediately prior to the 24th Intergovernmental Meeting. The Chair invited questions and comments on the revised COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, to inform its finalization and adoption.
38. Participating countries took note of the constructive discussions and revisions made at the Meeting of the Working Group on Marine Litter on 17-18 June and agreed to consider at this Intergovernmental Meeting the revised version of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter including inputs made at aforementioned meeting, as circulated by the Secretariat on 18 June. Countries further suggested that the Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Marine Litter as contained in Appendix 2 of UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/4 be considered as a separate Agenda item.
39. China stressed that the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter should focus on regional issues, such as capacity building, promoting knowledge and information sharing and guiding participating countries, taking into account national circumstances, including national policies and relevant bodies addressing marine litter issues. The delegation expressed concern over the number of activities contained in the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter in the face of limited

resources and suggested updates on relevant international frameworks on marine litter be reflected in the document.

40. Indonesia took note of the latest revision of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter text, including changes made at the Meeting of the Working Group on Marine Litter, and voiced support for the adoption of the revised COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter. It welcomed the alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals and highlighted Indonesia's efforts to reduce marine pollution by 70 per cent by 2025. The delegate stressed key issues such as the exchange of lessons learned, data and monitoring, capacity building efforts, and the establishment of an Expert Group to achieve activities of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter.
41. Malaysia expressed appreciation for the COBSEA Secretariat's efforts to synthesize participating country inputs and noted support, in principle, for the revised COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, with no objection to the revised draft as shared by the Secretariat. The delegation highlighted that the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter clearly reflected the actions needed for countries to move forward on addressing marine litter and stressed that actions and activities should also support small islands in developing States and take into account challenges arising from the illegal trade of plastic waste as faced by Malaysia.
42. Singapore welcomed the revised draft of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and, with support from China, highlighted that the table of actions served as a useful guide for COBSEA countries to elaborate and develop more detailed rolling work plans for detailed activities.
43. Countries offered views on the purpose and scope of the revised COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and expressed the intention to adopt a text that was agreeable to all participating countries. Deliberations resulted in a change of the document structure of the revised COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter under consideration, including combination and streamlining of the preface and rationale, condensing the specific objectives under Section 2, moving the information on operational modalities to follow the section on actions, and moving the table of detailed descriptions of actions to the Appendix.
44. Participating countries adopted the revised COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter as contained in the resolution adopted by the meeting, in Annex 3 to this report.

#### **4.2 Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Marine Litter**

45. The Chair invited Secretariat to present the Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Marine Litter.
46. The Secretariat welcomed countries' suggestions to discuss the Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Marine Litter presented as Appendix 2 of the draft revision of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/4) as a separate Agenda item for consideration and, as appropriate, adoption by the IGM. The Coordinator highlighted that the Terms of Reference were not discussed in detail at the Meeting of the Working Group on Marine Litter on 17-18 June. He further clarified that Meetings of the Working Group on Marine Litter in December 2018 and June 2019 were convened as mandated by the resolution adopted at the 2nd Extraordinary Intergovernmental Meeting.
47. The Chair invited comments from delegates to inform the finalization and adoption of the Terms of Reference. Countries emphasized that the relevance of the Working Group on Marine Litter was tied closely to the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and were in favour of regular progress



reporting to the Intergovernmental Meeting to ensure dynamic engagement by the Working Group. Malaysia expressed its support in principle of the proposed Terms of Reference of the Working group as they provided strategic support to the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting and COBSEA Secretariat in implementing the technical assessment and way forward. Malaysia also expressed hope that the Working Group would be dynamic in its approach to ensure the successful implementation of working plans. The changes were reflected in the draft document.

48. Participating countries adopted the Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Marine Litter as contained in the resolution adopted by the meeting, in Annex 3 to this report.
49. The Chair thanked participating countries for their constructive efforts and expressed thanks to the COBSEA Secretariat and UN Environment for their work in facilitating the revision of the Regional Action Plan that would provide necessary guidance to strengthen regional action toward combatting marine litter.

## **AGENDA ITEM 5: INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK**

### ***5.1 Establishment and operation of COBSEA Regional Activity Centres***

50. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present working document UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/7 containing proposed Guidance.
51. The Secretariat presented Guidance on the establishment and operation of COBSEA Regional Activity Centres (Guidance Note), including their function, institutional and administrative arrangements, reporting and financing provisions. The Guidance Note was presented to participating countries for consideration and, as appropriate, adoption.
52. The Chair invited comments and questions from delegates on the proposed Guidance and encouraged the representative of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) and respective members to share lessons learned from the establishment and operation of RACs.
53. Countries emphasized the need to ensure that potential RACs served the interests of the participating countries and stressed the importance of sustainable institutional and financing arrangements.
54. Singapore welcomed the Guidance Note and commented that it served as a good foundation for the future establishment of RACs for COBSEA. Singapore also commented that the reporting of RAC's work plans and budget should be aligned with the cycles of the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting.
55. Malaysia emphasized the importance of sustainability of institutional arrangements, financial modalities and operationalization of such RACs by participating countries.
56. The Secretariat noted that core funding for a RAC should not be sourced from the Trust Fund, but that establishing a RAC in line with the Guidance Note could leverage additional financial support. The Coordinator clarified that a RAC could be hosted by different kinds of entities, including international, governmental and non-governmental bodies at the national and regional level.
57. The representative of NOWPAP shared lessons learned from the establishment of RACs in the NOWPAP region, where each member hosts one RAC with distinct financing and governance

arrangements. He noted that the Intergovernmental Meeting approves work plans and budgets biennially and RACs receive financial support from both the Trust Fund and national governments.

58. The GPA Coordinator shared lessons learned from existing RACs in the Regional Seas Programme. He noted that each Regional Seas programme may have an individual governance and financing modality for RACs, but that commonalities included dedicated activities supporting Conventions and Action Plans, complementary scope and focus areas and support by respective experts. He raised that funding for a RAC under COBSEA may not be feasible through the Trust Fund, but advised that in-kind national contributions may be necessary to fund operations sustainably. He stressed that a RAC would be established to benefit the region and to address collective priorities and that participating countries could decide to disassociate an existing Centre from the Regional Action Plan by consensus at the Intergovernmental Meeting should it no longer fit its purpose.
59. The meeting adopted the proposed Guidance on the establishment and operation of COBSEA Regional Activity Centres, as contained in the resolution adopted by the meeting in Annex 3 to this report.

## **5.2 The 'Regional Capacity Centre for Clean Seas'**

60. The Chairperson invited Indonesia to present working document UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/6 rev.1 on the 'Regional Capacity Centre for Clean Seas' (RC3S).
61. Indonesia presented the working document UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/6 rev.1 and thanked participating countries that had joined the consultation meeting for the RC3S held in April 2019 in Jakarta. A recommendation emerged from this meeting on the need for Guidance on the establishment of RACs. Indonesia highlighted the issue of marine litter as a priority in Indonesia, following Presidential Decree 83/2018 and the Bali Declaration adopted by the IGR-4 in 2018, which called for mainstreaming of the protection of coastal and marine ecosystems including from marine litter and microplastics and to foster linkage with Regional Seas programmes. In response, Indonesia established the RC3S as a committed implementing body and was working on the identification of relevant activities to leverage multi-stakeholder collaboration and institutional strengthening, with the strategic theme to assist countries in the development of their national capacities towards implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan and its Strategic Directions. Indonesia further stressed that the RC3S was established as a national centre with initial funding of USD 500,000 allocated from the national budget, and additional finance of USD 500,000 envisaged annually. Indonesia concluded by highlighting the mutual interest of participating countries in addressing the challenge of marine litter as reflected in past meetings, and suggested exploring the opportunity of implementing mutually beneficial activities through the Centre as a RAC of COBSEA, in line with the provisions of the Guidance Note.
62. The Chair invited participating countries to discuss and comment on the proposed Terms of Reference of the RC3S and, as appropriate, consider and approve its establishment as a RAC of COBSEA.
63. Malaysia applauded Indonesia for establishing the RC3S to combat marine litter in the region and expressed the hope that RACs in the region would follow the agreed Guidance.
64. China appreciated the willingness and offer of the Indonesian Government and acknowledged the initiative as a good model for other participating countries to follow. The delegates welcomed further development of the RC3S and suggested revisiting the issue at a future Intergovernmental Meeting, following procedure as outlined in the endorsed Guidance Note.

65. Countries welcomed Indonesia's initiative to establish a regional centre to address land-based pollution including in particular marine litter. They stressed the importance of long-term financial and operational sustainability if Indonesia were to establish its regional centre as a COBSEA RAC. Countries further underlined that any host country agreements and institutional arrangements should adhere to the Guidance Note, and thereafter seek the Intergovernmental Meeting's decision on whether to establish such a centre as a RAC for COBSEA.
66. The Secretariat clarified that as per the adopted Guidance in UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/7, the establishment of a COBSEA RAC would entail consideration of a biennial work plan in alignment with the East Asian Seas Action Plan.
67. The Coordinator of the GPA noted that the RC3S may require additional time to develop its niche and expertise and to work with the Secretariat and participating countries to identify activities that would serve COBSEA country interests and could be presented as part of a work plan for the next biennium. He highlighted that the establishment of a RAC enabled fund raising, based on relevant activities and proven expertise. He informed the meeting that the disassociation of COBSEA with a RAC would bear no risk to COBSEA in terms of staffing or cost to the Trust Fund. He commended Indonesia's initiative and expressed the hope that other countries would follow the example and propose additional RACs that may benefit the interest of COBSEA countries. To conclude, he stressed that RACs would be key implementing arms for COBSEA activities and projects.
68. Countries agreed, in principle, that RACs had value for COBSEA and that Indonesia's proposal had merit, but that it required further development in close collaboration with the Secretariat to operationalize the RC3S as a RAC. In this regard, there was agreement that the Guidance Note was now an important document going forward.
69. The Chair requested the Secretariat to work closely with Indonesia in the further development of the Centre and its activities to serve the COBSEA participating countries as a RAC, in line with the Guidance Note on establishing RACs, for consideration by the next Intergovernmental Meeting.

### **5.3 *Development of a Regional Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter***

70. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present working document UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/5 on the development of a COBSEA Regional Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML).
71. The Secretariat presented information on the development of a COBSEA Regional Node of the GPML contained in the working document UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/5 and requested participating countries to discuss, comment on, and, as appropriate, approve the development of such Regional Node. The Secretariat added that with the approval of the Intergovernmental Meeting the Secretariat would pursue the development of the regional knowledge network relevant to COBSEA. The Regional Node was presented as a networking tool or approach to create an effective regional network of public and private bodies and ensure representation from stakeholders to develop regional communication tools on marine litter.
72. The Secretariat emphasized that the Node was not an institution in itself but would require hosting or co-hosting with a regional institution with a relevant mandate and capacity. The COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter would provide oversight and guidance. The funding would be mainly from COBSEA projects and the GPML and beneficiaries would be mainly the participating countries of COBSEA.

73. The Chair invited participating countries to discuss and comment on the development of a COBSEA Regional Node of the GPML.
74. COBSEA participating countries requested additional clarification from the Secretariat on (1) funding arrangements for the GPML Node, (2) the differences in roles between the RC3S and a GPML Node, (3) the relevance of the approval process through the Intergovernmental Meeting, and the (4) procedure with respect to expression of interest for hosting the GPML Node.
75. The Secretariat responded that funding for the GPML Node would initially be secured through the SEA circular project given its component on knowledge management, as well as through modest additional resources from the GPML. It was further noted that the RC3S was a physical institution and a potential RAC, whereas a GPML Node would serve as a networking function. As a new process, it was considered prudent to seek Intergovernmental Meeting formal approval for the establishment of a Node, upon which the GPML Steering Committee would review as a formality the expression of interest to acknowledge the matter. It was further clarified that through the GPML as a global partnership, exchange amongst the Nodes would be facilitated.
76. Participating countries discussed the development of a COBSEA Regional Node of the GPML. The Chair requested the Secretariat to note the suggestions made and to work in close consultation with participating countries on this issue.

**AGENDA ITEM 6: DELIVERING ON THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: OUTLOOK ON COBSEA FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW OF OCEAN-RELATED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

77. The Chair invited the Secretariat to present progress made in the development of an Outlook on COBSEA follow-up and review of ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals, as contained in working document UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/8.
78. The Secretariat presented on the development of an Outlook document to seek guidance from participating countries on the further progress, including input on objectives of the document. As the way forward, the Secretariat suggested to develop the draft further to be shared with countries for national review and for discussion at a regional consultation in the third quarter of 2019, for adoption at the Intergovernmental Meeting.
79. The Chair took note of the suggested next steps for development of the Outlook document as presented by the Secretariat and invited participating countries to review and discuss the draft presented and to provide guidance on its further development and finalization.
80. China suggested the Outlook document identify ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals and targets, assess the implementation status of these Goals and targets in COBSEA countries, as well as difficulties or challenges faced in participating countries, and recommend what is expected to be done to address difficulties or challenges.
81. Countries agreed that the further development and finalization of the Outlook document would include preparation of a revised draft by the Secretariat as basis for national review and consultation, and a regional workshop, to be held in the last quarter of 2019, towards finalization of the document for consideration at the 25th Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA.

82. The Chair requested the Secretariat to take note of the discussion and to further develop and finalize the Outlook document accordingly.

## **AGENDA ITEM 7: PROJECTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EAST ASIAN SEAS ACTION PLAN**

### ***7.1 Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea***

83. The Chairperson invited UN Environment to present the current status of GEF-funded projects implementing the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the South China Sea, as presented in working document UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/9 rev.1.
84. The Secretariat drew attention to the revision of the project pipeline contained in working document UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/9 rev.1 and invited the GEF Task Manager to present updates on the GEF-funded projects.
85. The GEF Task Manager presented an update on the South China Sea SAP, which had made progress in terms of staffing, was currently undertaking national consultations and developing technical assistance tools and would launch the operational phase in October 2019. The Task Manager presented opportunities arising from leveraging tools and products developed through global GEF projects in collaboration with the GPML and global partners, including indicators for the assessment of large marine ecosystems, a systemic approach to addressing marine plastics, a mapping of the global plastic value chain and projects on nutrient management. The task manager concluded with an overview of GEF project development opportunities and invited the representative of Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) to provide an overview of the South China Seas Fisheries Refugia project.
86. SEAFDEC presented an update of the GEF-funded Fisheries Refugia project which had to date identified 15 priority fisheries refugia sites in six countries. SEAFDEC emphasized the need for regional cooperation for effective habitat conservation as well as multi-stakeholder cooperation for the establishment of fisheries refugia.
87. The Chair thanked the Task Manager for her informative presentation and opened the floor for questions and comments on the status of the projects.
88. China proposed a stronger role for the National Focal Point mechanism to support implementation of project activities and requested increased communication between the Secretariat and participating countries to provide relevant project information at early stages. Related to the South China Sea projects, China stressed the need to ensure an important role of COBSEA for the implementation of the project.
89. The Secretariat welcomed China's suggestions and proposed a practice of seeking input from National Focal Points to identify opportunities arising through projects and provide input for identification and approval of projects. The Coordinator encouraged countries to alert the Secretariat to potential opportunities for project activities.
90. UN Environment stressed that while the South China Sea projects had dedicated implementation arrangements, they sat under the umbrella of COBSEA.

## **7.2 *Reducing marine litter by addressing the management of the plastic value chain in Southeast Asia***

91. The Secretariat presented an overview of the project ‘Reducing marine litter by addressing the management of the plastic value chain in Southeast Asia’ (SEAcircular) as contained in UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/9 rev.1, highlighting the project’s contribution to COBSEA and global goals and targets, including the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and Sustainable Development Goals, through a multi-stakeholder upstream value chain approach.
92. The Chair noted with appreciation the efforts underway to build multi-stakeholder partnerships to address the key challenge of marine litter and the support provided by the Secretariat to countries to take action in line with the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and nationally established priorities.

## **7.3 *Other projects including projects under development***

93. The Secretariat presented the rationale and overview of the project pipeline as contained in UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/9 rev.1 and suggested determining a modality to regularly share updates on project progress between the COBSEA Secretariat and countries. The Coordinator provided an update on the status of ongoing projects, including ‘Support towards marine litter work in the context of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter’ which supported convening regional consultations on the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, developing a methodology for marine litter hotspot assessment, and would continue to support national planning in the context of COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter in collaboration with the GPML. The activity ‘Assessment of investment opportunities arising from activities implemented in the context of the East Asian Seas Action Plan’ was presented as a foundational activity to leverage investment in implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan based on mapping of environmental and development priorities and frameworks.
94. The Secretariat presented the outcomes of the concluded project ‘Including coral reef resilience and vulnerability to climate change in marine spatial planning in Malaysia’ which would be shared throughout the region to inform integrated climate-responsive spatial planning, as contained in UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/9 rev.1.
95. The presentation brought to the attention of the meeting planned projects in the pipeline and under development, such as ‘Promoting Conservation and Sustainable Management of Key Coastal and Marine Ecosystems: Phase 1 Data platform’ and opportunities to leverage funding from the European Commission or International Climate Initiative (IKI) to support activities related to the COBSEA Strategic Directions.
96. The Chair welcomed the presentation of outcomes of concluded and ongoing projects that support participating countries in achieving the targets of the Strategic Directions and the Secretariat’s efforts to explore additional project opportunities.

## **AGENDA ITEM 8: WORK PLAN AND BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2019-2020**

97. The Chair invited the Secretariat to present the draft work plan and budget for COBSEA for the biennium as contained in the working document UNEP/COBSEA IGM 24/10.

98. The Secretariat presented the work plan and budget. The Secretariat explained that the UN Financial Rules and the specific procedures for the operation of COBSEA were applicable to the management of the Trust Fund. The Coordinator provided an overview of the proposed budget for the biennium 2019-2020. It was stressed that despite the forecast of a positive cash closing position in 2019 and in 2020, the proposed budget exceeded the expected income of the East Asian Seas Trust Fund in both years due to increases in standard staff and office costs and current yearly contribution levels falling short of the level agreed in resolution 1 adopted at the 21st Intergovernmental Meeting. The Secretariat emphasized that the accumulated fund balance of the Trust Fund was not sustainable long term and that participating countries may wish to consider increasing annual contributions to the Trust Fund and that the depletion of the Trust Fund would be avoided where possible by mobilizing extrabudgetary funding.
99. The Chair invited comments and questions on the work plan and budget.
100. Delegates requested clarification on the funds for the P3 position after the completion of the SEAcircular project. The Secretariat responded that the expanding work of the Secretariat needed human capacity, and project funding would be pursued to this end since current levels of Trust Fund contributions were insufficient to cover additional staff costs. In the long term, COBSEA countries could benefit from enhancing the capacity of the Secretariat, following the good practice of other Regional Seas programmes.
101. The participating countries of COBSEA approved the work plan for the biennium 2019-2020, and the budget for the biennium 2019-2020 as contained in the resolution adopted by the meeting, in Annex 3 to this report.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 9: DATE AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

102. The Chairperson invited proposals and offers from the participating countries on the venue of the 25th Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA. The Chair noted that the issue of hosting the Intergovernmental Meeting on a rotational basis was raised at the 2nd Extraordinary Intergovernmental Meeting in 2018 and invited delegations to share their opinions on the matter, including whether they wished to request the Secretariat to prepare a suggested modality for rotational hosting, for consideration at the next Intergovernmental Meeting.
103. Vietnam offered to host the 25th Intergovernmental Meeting. The proposal was warmly welcomed by all participating countries.
104. The Chair thanked Vietnam for their generous offer. There was no further discussion regarding a mechanism for rotational hosting.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 10: ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

105. The Chairperson invited participants to raise any other matter that they would like to discuss in the meeting.
106. Malaysia expressed its appreciation and thanks to the Government of Sweden for providing support through the SEAcircular project to address the priority issue of marine litter in the region. They further suggested that COBSEA could facilitate information sharing on potential support available through

financial institutions such as the Commonwealth Clean Ocean Alliance, the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and the European Union, which would allow COBSEA countries to strengthen implementation in their respective countries. Malaysia expressed its intention to share the Clean Coast Index methodology with COBSEA countries through the Working Group on Marine Litter or other COBSEA and UN Environment fora, and to seek support to enhance this index further in Malaysia through relevant projects or partnerships.

107. The Secretariat brought to the attention of the meeting the resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly in its 73rd Session on the 2020 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development (A/RES/73/292).
108. The Coordinator of the GPA provided an update on the ongoing deliberation regarding the future of the GPA. He informed the meeting that consultations were ongoing with the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) in Nairobi and that, pending consensus, a final decision would be taken at the UN Environment Assembly in its 5th Session (UNEA-5). Further, he noted that a possible change in the governance of the GPA could entail substituting the 5-year cycle of the IGR with a biennial meeting back-to-back with UNEA.
109. In response to the Secretariat's update on the GPA, Singapore expressed concern about the suggested approach of holding the CPR in Nairobi to discuss the future of the GPA and take a final decision at UNEA-5. Singapore highlighted that while the GPA comprised universal membership, not every country was represented at the CPR and thus not all COBSEA countries were represented. In this regard, Singapore proposed that the Secretariat explore organizing the respective consultations back-to-back with the three sessions of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics that would be open to all participating countries and key experts. This would also help to ensure fair, inclusive, and transparent discussions on the future of the GPA. Singapore also requested the Secretariat, to the best of its ability, provide relevant updates to participating COBSEA countries on the intergovernmental review process and related meetings of the GPA.
110. UN Environment informed the meeting of the 3rd Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific that was hosted by the Government of Singapore from 23-25 January 2019 to discuss key environmental issues and innovations of the region under the theme 'Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production' and provided input to UNEA-4, held from 11-14 March 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya. UN Environment noted that UNEA-5 was expected to take place in the last week of February 2021, in Nairobi. The 4th Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific was expected to take place in September or October 2020, to be hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 11: ADOPTION OF THE MEETING REPORT**

111. Due to time constraints, it was agreed that the report of the meeting would be circulated by the Secretariat, inviting corrections to the report by participating countries within 10 days upon which the report would be finalized by the Secretariat. Upon clearance of the finalized report by the Rapporteur, the report would be considered adopted.
112. Following the procedure outlined in the paragraph above, the report of the meeting was adopted on 16 July 2019.



113. The meeting adopted the resolution contained in Annex 3 to this report.

**AGENDA ITEM 9: CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

114. The Chair expressed his sincere thanks to all participating countries for the constructive meeting and thanked UN Environment and the COBSEA Secretariat for their support. He also extended his appreciation to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Indonesia for the cooperation and support throughout the meeting.
115. The Coordinator of the GPA extended, on behalf of the Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme, his warmest regards and thanks to the Government of Indonesia and H.E. Siti Nurbaya Bakar, Minister of Environment and Forestry of Indonesia, for hosting the 24th Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA.
116. Upon completion of the business of the meeting, the Chairperson declared the closure of the meeting on 20 June 2019, at 7:41 p.m.

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## **ANNEX 2 – AGENDA**

- 1. Opening of the meeting**
  - 1.1 Welcome address and opening remarks
  - 1.2 Introduction of participants
  - 1.3 Presentation of credentials
- 2. Organization of the meeting**
  - 2.1 Designation of officers
  - 2.2 Organization of work
  - 2.3 Adoption of the agenda
  - 2.4 Opening remarks by participating countries
- 3. Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme on the Implementation of COBSEA activities 2017-2018**
- 4. COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter**
  - 4.1 Revised COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter
  - 4.2 Terms of Reference of the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter
- 5. Institutional framework**
  - 5.1 Establishment and operation of COBSEA Regional Activity Centres
  - 5.2 The ‘Regional Capacity Centre for Clean Seas’
  - 5.3 Development of a Regional Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter
- 6. Delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Outlook on COBSEA follow-up and review of ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals**
- 7. Projects in the context of the East Asian Seas Action Plan**
  - 7.1 Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea
  - 7.2 Reducing marine litter by addressing the management of the plastic value chain in Southeast Asia
  - 7.3 Other projects including projects under development
- 8. Work Plan and Budget for the biennium 2019-2020**
- 9. Date and Venue for the Next Meeting**
- 10. Any Other Business**
- 11. Adoption of the Meeting Report**
- 12. Closure of the Meeting**

### ANNEX 3 – RESOLUTION OF THE 24TH INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING OF COBSEA

#### **The Participating Countries of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), taking part in its 24<sup>th</sup> Intergovernmental Meeting:**

*Thanking* the Government of Indonesia for hosting the 24th Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA;

*Bearing in mind* the COBSEA Strategic Directions 2018-2022, which includes focus on marine litter and microplastics with the purpose to prevent and reduce marine litter and microplastics in the marine and coastal environment, and identifies the revision of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI) as a priority activity to this end;

*Noting further* that the COBSEA Strategic Directions 2018-2022 recognizes that establishment of regional centres hosted by participating countries can support resource mobilization and partnership building;

1. *Adopt* the Guidance on the Establishment and Operation of COBSEA Regional Activity Centres as contained in Appendix 1 to this resolution;
2. *Encourage* Indonesia to further develop the Regional Capacity Centre for Clean Seas (RC3S), aiming at making it a COBSEA Regional Activity Centre, in line with the Guidance contained in Appendix 1 to this resolution, for consideration at the 25<sup>th</sup> Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA;
3. *Adopt* Terms of Reference of the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter as contained in Appendix 2 to this resolution;
4. *Adopt* COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter 2019 as contained in Appendix 2 to this resolution and encourage the Working Group on Marine Litter to use the supporting documents of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter to develop a rolling work plan;
5. *Further* request the Secretariat, in consultation with the Working Group on Marine Litter, to develop projects to support implementation of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and, upon request and subject to availability of funds, develop relevant national activities in participating countries;
6. *Request* the Secretariat, in consultation with the Working Group on Marine Litter, to develop an East Asian Seas Regional Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML), for consideration by the 25th Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA;
7. *Reiterate* their determination to strengthen the implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan and its current priorities as defined in the Strategic Directions 2018-2022, and in this regard their commitment to COBSEA and efforts towards its further development and sustainability;
8. *Request* the COBSEA Secretariat to follow up on the Outlook of COBSEA by organizing a workshop, using extrabudgetary resources;
9. *Request* the COBSEA Secretariat to continue developing the project pipeline, ensuring information sharing on project development with COBSEA National Focal Points;
10. *Approve* the budget for 2019 and 2020, as contained in Appendix 3 to this resolution;
11. *Decide* to hold the 25th Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA in 2021 in Vietnam.

## **Appendix 1 of the resolution: Guidance on the Establishment and Operation of Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) Regional Activity Centres**

### **I. Introduction**

1. Regional Activity Centres (RACs) provide a means to support and supplement efforts by governments and other partners towards implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan.
2. In the implementation and coordination of the East Asian Seas Action Plan, sub-regional and regional institutions will be used to the maximum possible extent (paragraph 62 of the East Asian Seas Action Plan). Where appropriate, national institutions will be proposed by a State to assume a regional role with the objective of providing services in support of the East Asian Seas Action Plan (paragraph 63). Governments may decide that such an institution assumes the role of a Regional Activity Centre (paragraph 67).
3. Further to this, the COBSEA Strategic Directions 2018-2022, in paragraph 37, recognizes that establishment of regional centres hosted by participating countries can support resource mobilization and partnership building under the East Asian Seas Action Plan.
4. This document provides guidance on the establishment and operation of COBSEA RACs, drawing on the experiences of and similar guidance prepared by other Regional Seas programmes. It is intended to serve as a resource for COBSEA participating countries and relevant organizations, establishing common praxis in the development, establishment and operation of RACs, including the evaluation of proposals for establishment of RACs and administration and implementation of RACs. It is recognized RACs will be developed in often differing contexts and with differing aims and objectives. Some flexibility in application of this guidance may therefore be required.

### **II. Definition of Regional Activity Centre**

5. A Regional Activity Centre (RAC) is an autonomous, international or regional organization, or a national institution with regional remit, designated by the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting to coordinate or carry out specific technical functions and activities in support of the East Asian Seas Action Plan and decisions of the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting, with the purpose to strengthen delivery and support participating countries in meeting their commitments. RACs operate under the overall authority of the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting and the guidance of the COBSEA Secretariat, decentralizing delivery of activities while adding human, technical and financial capacity to the work of COBSEA.

### **III. Objectives and functions of Regional Activity Centres**

6. The general objective of the East Asian Seas Action Plan is the protection and sustainable development of the marine and coastal area of the region. Under the authority of the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting and the guidance of the COBSEA Secretariat, COBSEA RACs assist, within their respective mandate and field of activity, in the implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan as well as of decisions of the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting.
7. All COBSEA RACs shall strive to enhance the impact and visibility of COBSEA through:
  - i. Concrete, effective activities, developed and implemented on the basis of best available science;

- ii. Enhanced cooperation among national institutions as well as with relevant regional and global initiatives;
  - iii. Effective and targeted communication, including dissemination of results of activities;
  - iv. Strengthened shared information systems, including websites and databases.
8. Common operational principles for COBSEA RACs include:
- i. Development of biennial work plans focussing on COBSEA priorities and needs, under the guidance of the COBSEA Secretariat and for approval by the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting, and providing progress and financial reports to the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting;
  - ii. Consultation with COBSEA countries and national institutions, with a view to strengthening collaboration in development and delivery of activities as well as increasing efficiency, avoiding duplication and improving the overall coherence of COBSEA efforts;
  - iii. Supporting resource mobilization towards activities undertaken in the context of the East Asian Seas Action Plan;
  - iv. Transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities;
  - v. RACs will respect the regulations of the United Nations System and in particular the United Nations Environment Programme relating to the administration and operation of RACs.
9. Common functions of COBSEA RACs are to:
- i. Maintain regular contact with national, regional and global agencies and institutions related to the relevant scientific and technical aspects of the East Asian Seas Action Plan;
  - ii. Foster scientific and technical cooperation with, for example, UN specialized agencies, intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental organizations;
  - iii. Facilitate the provision of technical and scientific assistance to participating countries and other partners as appropriate;
  - iv. Develop, resource and implement projects on topics relevant to the mandate of the RAC;
  - v. Promote the implementation of specific activities in cooperation with relevant partners including UN specialized agencies, intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental organizations;
  - vi. Compile, update and disseminate data and information relevant to the mandate of the RAC, promoting accessibility to this information among participating countries and other partners as relevant.
10. RACs will be utilized for technical, scientific and financial aspects; political and policy aspects of activity development and implementation will be coordinated by the COBSEA Secretariat. The COBSEA Secretariat will provide programmatic supervision of RAC activities unless other arrangements are made by decision of the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting.
11. Any products prepared by RACs (such as publications) that will be issued as COBSEA documents and bearing the COBSEA and United Nations Environment Programme logos will be approved by the COBSEA Secretariat or, where appropriate, the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting, prior to their publication in final form by the RAC.

#### **IV. Establishment of Regional Activity Centres**

##### *Key considerations in the establishment of COBSEA RACs*

12. The COBSEA Secretariat is the primary entity for coordination of the East Asian Seas Action Plan and related activities. RACs should be established when circumstances necessitate it *inter alia* to enhance or

supplement the technical capacity of the COBSEA Secretariat, assist in mobilizing additional financial resources, promote activities to implement the East Asian Seas Action Plan, and support COBSEA in general.

13. As a technical institution, a RAC should have the necessary capacity to undertake the activities envisaged, including for staff and facilities.
14. The level and nature of the specialization of a RAC will determine the types of activities that it can implement or coordinate, and how these complement or supplement the functions available within the COBSEA Secretariat and other regional institutions where relevant.
15. The work of COBSEA spans several topics and it may therefore be necessary to utilize multiple RACs. However, the staff size and budget of the COBSEA Secretariat overall may limit the number of RACs that can be effectively managed.

*Steps towards the establishment of COBSEA RACs:*

16. A COBSEA participating country may prepare a proposal to establish a RAC. A RAC proposal should clearly identify how the proposed RAC meets the criteria outlined in this guidance document and, to this end, should include terms of reference encompassing a rationale; statement of purpose and objectives; description of functions; operational procedures (including programmatic, financial and reporting); as well as institutional and governance arrangements (including staffing and procedures for appointing a director).
17. The RAC proposal should be submitted to the COBSEA Secretariat for review and comment, after which the Secretariat will share it with participating countries for consideration.
18. A decision to establish a RAC is made by the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting. This decision should define the scope, mandate and role of the RAC, as well as any other provisions that participating countries wish to establish. The decision should authorize the COBSEA Secretariat to develop and enter a hosting agreement (e.g. a host country agreement or memorandum of understanding) with the host government or organization.
19. The hosting agreement should be consistent with the decision adopted by the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting and with this guidance. The final hosting agreement will be shared with COBSEA participating countries for information.

*Criteria for RACs and host institutions*

20. Key criteria for RACs and their host institution include the following, which may guide development of RAC proposals as well as review of such proposals:
  - i. *Institutional Capacity:* The institution must have a policy orientation and organizational objectives which are consistent with those of COBSEA. It is desirable that the institution is recognized as a leader in its sphere of activity. The organizational structure of the host institution should be sufficiently flexible to allow it to function as/host a RAC. The institution must have sufficient human capacity including requisite technical, administrative and managerial expertise. Appropriate office space, equipment and other physical resources must be provided to carry out the activities of the RAC.
  - ii. *Technical Capacity:* The institution must have expertise in the field of project coordination as well as relevant technical, scientific or academic expertise in the particular subject area, enabling it to offer specialized assistance on implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan.

- iii. *Management Capacity*: The institution must possess efficient management systems. It should have expertise in the use of strategic planning tools, budget tracking and financial reporting that meet the needs of COBSEA as a United Nations-administered Regional Seas programme.
- iv. *Financial Capacity*: RACs must be financially self-sustaining and have appropriate financial management mechanisms in place.

## **V. Institutional and Administrative Arrangements**

21. The relationship of a RAC to the East Asian Seas Action Plan, the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting and the COBSEA Secretariat are critical to its functioning. This must be clearly defined in the terms of reference of a RAC.
22. RACs should have an organizational structure appropriate for the fulfilment of its duties. RAC personnel will be attached to the institution hosting the RAC, in accordance with the rules of that organization and relevant national legislation. RAC personnel will normally be selected and hired by the host organization/government, whereas the director of a RAC would normally be selected by the host government in consultation with the COBSEA Secretariat. International staff can be recruited directly for the RAC by a UN organization or the host government in accordance with the laws and regulations of that organization and/or the host government, including through secondments.
23. Each RAC will maintain its own administration for personnel, procurement, travel, and other support functions.
24. Communications on matters related to the activities of a RAC should be directly between the RAC and the relevant designated national authorities or focal points. Such national authorities or focal points should be nominated by the COBSEA National Focal Point. Communication on political and policy matters should be to COBSEA National Focal Points and through the COBSEA Secretariat.
25. A RAC is expected to develop and maintain collaboration with other institutions and entities, within the region and beyond. Development of legal instruments on such collaboration should be done in consultation with the COBSEA Secretariat.
26. The COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting may at any time terminate a RAC if they determine that a RAC is not financially sustainable, or a RAC is not operationally feasible (e.g. staffing), or a RAC is not operating consistently with the decision establishing the RAC, or if they otherwise decide that a RAC's operation no longer further the goals and objectives of the East Asian Seas Action Plan.

## **VI. Work Plans and Budgets**

27. Each RAC will prepare a brief Strategic Plan, in the context of and aligning with the period of the COBSEA Strategic Directions, which will be presented to and approved by the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting. This will include information on trends and developments in the subject area of the RAC and related challenges for the EAS region; the overall strategy of the RAC in addressing these challenges; and identification of appropriate performance indicators.
28. In consultation with the COBSEA Secretariat and in accordance with the approved Strategic Plan, each RAC will prepare a biennial work plan and budget for the approval of the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting, in line with formats provided by the COBSEA Secretariat. The work plan and budget must be submitted to

the COBSEA Secretariat for review and comment at least three months prior to a COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting, so that a final submission can be made to participating countries in line with the Rules of Procedure applicable to the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting.

29. Each RAC will submit brief half-yearly progress reports to the COBSEA Secretariat. Upon completion of an activity, RACs will submit a final report.
30. The RAC or, where appropriate, its host institution, is responsible for all project-related reporting to donors.

## **VII. Finances and Financial Reporting**

31. RACs will not be funded by the East Asian Seas Trust Fund, except when funds are being provided by participating countries or other donors expressly for the RAC through a Trust Fund contribution.
32. *Recurring Expenses:* A RAC is expected to be financially self-sustaining. The host government and/or institution should make appropriate provisions for operating and recurrent costs of the RAC. However, the host government and/or institution is not expected to provide all funding needed for implementation of the activities of the RAC and the RAC must therefore have the ability to leverage project funding from donors. The RAC should not rely on the COBSEA Secretariat to source project funding, but the COBSEA Secretariat will, within its capacity, support the project development work of RACs, including by endorsing RAC proposals for funding to donors.
33. *Finances on Establishment:* When a RAC is established, an initial contribution (in cash and in kind) should be provided by the host government and/or institution, e.g. towards development of activities and project proposals for submission to donors.
34. *Financial Reporting:* In addition to the submission of biennial work plans and budgets, the RAC will submit biennial financial reports and progress reports to the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting, following the United Nations Environment Programme's format for this purpose. The RAC or, where appropriate, its host institution, is responsible for all project-related reporting to donors.

## **Appendix 2 of the resolution: Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter 2019**

### **I. Background and Rationale**

1. Marine litter is a transboundary challenge that is rooted in unsustainable production and consumption patterns, poor solid waste management and lack of infrastructure, lack of adequate legal and policy frameworks and poor enforcement, including on interregional cross-border trade of plastic waste, and a lack of financial resources. Marine litter is any persistent, manufactured or processed solid material discarded into the sea or rivers or on beaches; brought indirectly to the sea with rivers, sewage, storm water or winds; or discarded or lost at sea. Marine litter poses environmental, economic, health, aesthetic and cultural threats, including degradation of marine and coastal habitats and ecosystems that incur socioeconomic losses in marine-based sectors.
2. The majority of the population in the nine East Asian Seas countries lives in coastal areas, contributing to rapid urbanization and the world's highest concentrations of shipping and fishing vessel activity. Reducing and minimizing regional marine litter from both land-based and sea-based sources requires successfully addressing waste leakage and disposal into rivers, along coastlines, and into the ocean, in the East Asian Seas region. This requires multi-stakeholder engagement across all economic sectors and groups of society to overcome linear systems of production, consumption and disposal, and to tackle marine litter at source and at sea.
3. At the global level, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for action to 'Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources' (Goal 14) and 'By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, particularly from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution' (target 14.1). United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) resolutions on Marine Litter and Microplastics (such as UNEP/EA.4/6) recognize the importance of a regional approach to addressing marine litter as a transboundary problem, of multi-stakeholder engagement, coordination and cooperation, and stress the need to strengthen the science-policy interface, harmonize monitoring and methodologies, and prioritize a whole lifecycle approach. Regional Seas Conventions and programmes are prompted to increase their action and coordinate efforts.
4. There is a need for increasing coherence, coordination and synergies between existing mechanisms and to enhance cooperation and governance to better address marine litter and microplastic challenges at local, national, regional and global levels, including coordination across (sub)regional policy frameworks such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). A regional approach enables knowledge sharing, monitoring and assessing marine litter of land-based and sea-based sources, compiling scientific evidence and assessing policy pathways, to inform more coherent and synergistic, and hence more effective policy and management responses.
5. This revision to the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI), originally adopted at the 19th Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA in Cambodia in 2008, has been prepared pursuant to COBSEA Strategic Directions 2018-2022 and based on extensive desk review; information provided by participating countries including through national consultations; recommendations arising from meetings of the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter; and existing regional action plans for marine litter<sup>1</sup> under implementation.

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<sup>1</sup> Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean under the Barcelona Convention, Regional Action Plan for Prevention and Management of Marine Litter in



6. The revised COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter was adopted by the 24th Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA, in Bali, Indonesia, 19-20 June 2019.

## II. Goals and Objectives

7. The *overall goal* of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter is to consolidate, coordinate, and facilitate cooperation, and implement the necessary environmental policies, strategies and measures for sustainable, integrated management of marine litter in the East Asian Seas region. The Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter will thereby directly support COBSEA participating countries to deliver target 14.1 of Sustainable Development Goal 14, to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, particularly from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution, and also contribute to the achievement of other Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets (identified in Appendix 1 of RAP MALI).
8. The *specific objectives* of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter are to:
  - i. *Prevent and reduce* to the minimum marine litter pollution in the marine and coastal environment of the East Asian Seas Region;
  - ii. *Foster sustainable consumption and production* in a multi-stakeholder whole lifecycle approach to prevent and reduce leakage at source;
  - iii. *Remove* to the extent possible already existent marine litter by using environmentally acceptable methods;
  - iv. *Improve* monitoring and assessment of marine litter and its impacts for a science-based approach;
  - v. *Enhance* knowledge sharing and awareness about marine litter and its impacts amongst all stakeholders and all groups of society in the East Asian Seas Region;
  - vi. *Support* national efforts towards adequate institutional, policy and implementation frameworks, cross-sector coordination and regional and international cooperation.
9. The COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter ensures that the management of marine litter in the East Asian Seas Region is performed in accordance with accepted international standards and approaches and, as appropriate, in harmony with programmes and measures applied in other Regional Seas.
10. The COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter also recognizes the respective roles and contributions of participating countries and the COBSEA Secretariat in achieving these collective goals and objectives.

## III. Actions

11. The COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter comprises the following main actions:

**Action 1. Preventing and reducing marine litter from land-based sources.** The bulk of marine litter originates on land, arising as a result of unsustainable production and consumption patterns and poor waste management. Land-based litter can enter the sea directly from loss or disposal on the shoreline, through leakage in the waste management chain and through wastewater and may be transported from inland areas via rivers and storms. COBSEA efforts to prevent and reduce marine litter from land-based sources can be developed and implemented working closely with the United Nations Environment Programme and Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA) coordination office, including joint funding and/or implementation of projects where appropriate.

**Action 2. Preventing and reducing marine litter from sea-based sources.** Sea-based sources of marine litter include maritime activities such as shipping and fisheries, which contribute marine litter through accidental and deliberate discarding. With extensive fisheries and shipping operations as well as regulatory challenges and prevalence of Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing, sea-based sources of marine litter are of concern in the East Asian Seas region. However, the status, impact and associated costs and losses are not well quantified. In addressing sea-based sources of marine litter, COBSEA will work closely with relevant competent agencies in the UN system as well as with relevant regional organizations.

**Action 3. Monitoring and assessment of marine litter.** One of the significant barriers to addressing marine litter is the absence of adequate science-based monitoring and assessment programmes. Monitoring and assessment are indispensable in identifying marine litter status and trends and its most critical impacts, and to support development, tracking and evaluation of policy and management interventions. There is a need to improve knowledge on the main types, sources and amounts of litter that enter the marine and coastal environment, to enable assessment of marine litter status and trends, the impact of marine litter on the marine and coastal environment and human health, as well as the socio-economic aspects of marine litter. Sound marine litter monitoring and reporting is also required to track progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, including target 14.1, and contribution to other relevant Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets.

**Action 4. Activities supporting the implementation of COBSEA RAP MALI.** Implementation of COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter requires enabling conditions for success, including adequate cross-sector and regional and international cooperation; filling knowledge gaps through targeted research; efficient and inclusive involvement of stakeholders; and adequate training, information sharing, outreach and public awareness. COBSEA will catalyse actions that support regional and national delivery of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and provide the regional mechanism for supporting planning, tracking and reporting on the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter including its contribution to relevant Sustainable Development Goals.

12. The COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter will use Appendix 2 of RAP MALI as reference, as appropriate, to develop its biennial work plan as endorsed by the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting.

#### **IV. Modalities for Implementation**

13. The COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter applies to the countries participating in the East Asian Seas Action Plan: Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the People's Republic of China, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.
14. The COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter aligns with the COBSEA Strategic Directions and may be revised or updated as appropriate on the adoption of new COBSEA Strategic Directions and by decision of the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting.
15. The COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter is complemented by more specific biennial rolling work plans as well as progress assessment reports developed through the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter and adopted by the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting. This enables an adaptive approach, strengthening progress in relation to priority issues, ensuring responsiveness to global level developments, e.g. in relation to UNEA resolutions, and reduces risk for duplication of effort. The Terms of Reference of the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter are provided in Appendix 3 of RAP MALI. Implementation of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter may also be supported through development of the

COBSEA institutional framework, including possible future Regional Activity Centres and knowledge management efforts.

16. COBSEA participating countries are encouraged to make their best effort to ensure that the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter is implemented, in a coherent manner.
17. In implementing the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, the participating countries shall be guided by:
  - i. *The integration principle* by virtue of which marine litter management shall be addressed across relevant sectors and as an integral part;
  - ii. *The prevention principle* by virtue of which measures should prioritize addressing the prevention of marine litter generation at source;
  - iii. *The precautionary principle* by virtue of which where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation;
  - iv. *The polluter-pays principle* by virtue of which the costs of pollution prevention, control and reduction measures are to be borne by the polluter, with due regard to the public interest;
  - v. *The ecosystem-based approach* by virtue of which the cumulative effects of marine litter on the marine and coastal ecosystem, habitats and species with other contaminants and substances that are present in the marine environment should be fully considered in management of marine litter;
  - vi. *The principle of public participation and stakeholder involvement* by virtue of which the general public including local communities, private sector, civil society organizations, and local authorities will be involved in the development and implementation of efforts;
  - vii. *The sustainable consumption and production principle* by virtue of which current unsustainable patterns of consumption and production must be transformed to circular lifecycle models that decouple human development from environmental degradation; and
  - viii. *The science-based approach* by virtue of which marine litter management measures should be based on the best available scientific evidence.
18. The COBSEA Secretariat, in consultation with COBSEA National Focal Points and the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter, will where relevant assess national needs in relation to implementation of actions identified in the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, with a view to providing or identifying appropriate support to COBSEA participating countries.

## **Appendix 1 of RAP MALI: Relevant Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets (Supporting document)**

1. The COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI) directly supports participating countries in delivering Sustainable Development Goal 14: ‘Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources’ and associated target 14.1: ‘By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, particularly from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.’
2. The COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter also contributes to national efforts towards the following Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets:
  - (i) Sustainable Development Goal 3: ‘Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages’; target 3.9: ‘By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.’
  - (ii) Sustainable Development Goal 9: ‘Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation’; target 9.4: ‘By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities.’
  - (iii) Sustainable Development Goal 11: ‘Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable’; target 11.6: ‘By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality, municipal and other waste management.’
  - (iv) Sustainable Development Goal 12: ‘Responsible consumption and production’; target 12.4: ‘By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment’; and target 12.5: ‘By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling, and reuse.’
  - (v) Sustainable Development Goal 17: ‘Partnerships for the goals’; target 17.6: ‘Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the United Nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism’; target 17.7: ‘Promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed’; and target 17.16: ‘Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries.’

## Appendix 2 of RAP MALI: Detailed description of actions (Supporting document)

Appendix 2 encompasses further detailed description of key actions and serves as a guide for the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter's deliberations in developing specific activities that will be further elaborated in rolling work plans for implementation of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter. The rolling work plans will also form the basis for assessing progress on implementation of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter. It is considered that, at present, these actions will cover appropriately and feasibly the challenge of marine litter management in the region. Initial prioritization of actions identifies where countries will collectively pursue more specific activities through COBSEA, within its mandate, competence and comparative advantage, in line with the East Asian Seas Action Plan and the COBSEA Strategic Directions 2018-2022. Countries may, at the national level, further prioritize actions and develop activities, based on national priorities and need.

<b>Key Actions</b>		<b>Lead Authority</b>
<i>Action 1. Preventing and reducing marine litter from land-based sources</i>		
<b>1.1. Legal and economic instruments</b>		
	1.1.1. Encourage and assist countries to enhance leadership, implementation and quality of government efforts.	Secretariat
	1.1.2. In countries where many government agencies and departments are involved in waste management efforts, COBSEA members may wish to consider, as necessary, establishing a policy making mechanism and supporting agency, or strengthening it if already existing, for the implementation of solid waste management policies.	Countries
	1.1.3. 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 and moving towards circular economy models, including harmonization of standards and regulations in the region. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- addressing single-use product consumption (through, for example, fiscal and economic instruments such as a tax on plastic bags and packaging and phase out of single-use plastic items in stores);</li> <li>- establishment and/or further development of deposit refund systems for bottles, containers and cans (e.g. glass, plastics and aluminium).</li> </ul>	Secretariat /Countries
<b>1.2. Integrated waste management</b>		
	1.2.1. Enter into dialogue with the industry on waste management practices that impact on the marine environment and identify incentives/measures to promote sustainable practices.	Secretariat /Countries
	1.2.2. Implement adequate waste reduction, reuse and recycling measures, as well as other relevant approaches such as product replacement, in order to reduce the amount of litter, particularly the fraction of plastic waste that goes to landfill or incineration without energy recovery. Where incineration with energy recovery is used, this should use modern technology with controls on combustion condition capable of meeting stringent emission standards.	Countries

<b>Key Actions</b>		<b>Lead Authority</b>
	1.2.3. Organize the front and middle end of the waste system by building a modern waste collection and separation system, including recognizing and integrating waste pickers in formal systems of waste management and accelerating recycling, while ensuring non-processed waste is disposed of safely in sanitary landfills at the back of the chain.	Countries
	1.2.4. Take the necessary measures to address illegal dumping, including closing existing illegal dump sites on land and strengthening enforcement measures to combat illegal dumping, such as littering on the beach and illegal solid waste or sewage disposal in the coastal zone and rivers, in accordance with national legislation.	Countries
	1.2.5. Seek cooperation with River Authorities, if necessary, municipalities and other relevant authorities in order to address impacts of litter on the marine environment from riverine inputs, including through introduction and improvement of trash traps at river and drainage areas, floating booms and barriers.	Secretariat /Countries
<b>1.3. Removal of existing litter and its disposal</b>		
	1.3.1. Develop and implement, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, programmes and initiatives for identification, removal and sound disposal of accumulations of land-based marine litter, e.g. in combination with existing efforts such as coastal clean-up activities, where economically feasible and ecologically advantageous.	Secretariat /Countries
<b>Action 2. Preventing and reducing marine litter from sea-based sources</b>		
<b>2.1. Legal and economic instruments</b>		
	2.1.1. Encourage and assist countries to develop and adopt legal and economic instruments, which are consistent with the relevant international instruments such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) and its Annexes, to assist the management and prevention of marine litter from sea-based sources.	Secretariat /Countries
	2.1.2. Reinforce the implementation and enforcement of existing national legal instruments in compliance with marine litter related international conventions and agreements such as the MARPOL convention and its Annex V, the London convention and its Protocol, the Basel Convention, and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.	Countries
	2.1.3. Provide assistance in the implementation of the requirements of Annex V to the MARPOL Convention to provide and improve reception facilities for all types of ship-generated waste in ports, harbours, terminals and marinas.	Secretariat
	2.1.4. Develop sectoral guidelines on the prevention and reduction of marine litter from sea-based sources, particularly for fisheries and marine/coastal tourism.	Secretariat
	2.1.5. Develop and/or strengthen existing legislation requiring all fishing gear to be identified/marked in order to contribute to reducing fisheries-related marine litter.	Secretariat /Countries

<b>2.2. Removal of existing marine litter and its disposal</b>		
	2.2.1. Develop and implement, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, programmes and initiatives to locate, remove and dispose of accumulations of sea-based marine litter, where economically feasible and ecologically advantageous.	Secretariat /Countries
<b>Action 3. Monitoring and assessment of marine litter</b> <i>(note: specifically for this section, the proposed activities are to be viewed as a step-by-step approach, in numerical order, towards exploring the development of a regional marine litter and microplastics monitoring meta-database/portal)</i>		
<b>3.1. Expert Group</b>		
	3.1.1. Establish a Marine Litter Monitoring Expert Group under the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter.	Secretariat
<b>3.2. Regional and National Marine Litter Monitoring Programmes</b>		
	3.2.1. Prepare regional guidance on the development of harmonized National Marine Litter and Microplastic Monitoring Programmes, in line with globally established guidelines, e.g. Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection Working Group on plastics and microplastics in the ocean (GESAMP WG 40) Guidelines for the Monitoring and Assessment of Plastic Litter in the Ocean, and in consultation with relevant ongoing regional monitoring programmes.	Secretariat
	3.2.2. Conduct regional training on the development and implementation of harmonized National Marine Litter and Microplastic Monitoring Programmes, also addressing associated data management needs and reporting.	Secretariat
	3.2.3. Work towards developing and implementing National Marine Litter and Microplastic Monitoring Programmes, based on respective national policies, approaches and circumstances.	Countries
	3.2.4. Prepare regional reports on marine litter and microplastic and delivery against Sustainable Development Goal target 14.1, and other relevant Goals and targets, based on National Marine Litter and Microplastic Monitoring Programmes.	Secretariat
	3.2.5. Explore development of a regional marine litter and microplastic monitoring meta-database/portal, as appropriate building on available global infrastructure, to facilitate the preparation of periodic regional reports.	Secretariat
<b>Action 4. Activities supporting the implementation of COBSEA RAP MALI</b>		
<b>4.1. Regional and international cooperation and reporting</b>		
	4.1.1. Establish a COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter, to include national focal points and experts. This group will promote implementation of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, advising and assisting the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting and the COBSEA Secretariat. Terms of Reference for the group is provided in Appendix 3 of RAP MALI.	Secretariat

	4.1.2. Establish institutional cooperation with relevant global and regional entities in relation to implementation of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and relevant global multilateral environmental agreements, e.g. the MARPOL Convention and its Annex V, the London Convention and its Protocol, the Basel Convention, the Convention on Biological Diversity, Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) as well as the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and Voluntary Guidelines on Gear Marking.	Secretariat
	4.1.3. Establish partnerships with cities, to provide effective transfer of knowledge and innovation, and promote collaboration between cities/countries.	Secretariat /Countries
	4.1.4. Convene regional conferences for stakeholder engagement and partnerships and coordinate ongoing efforts with relevant regional and international partners and frameworks, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).	Secretariat
<b>4.2. National planning and policy frameworks</b>		
	4.2.1. Develop and implement National Action Plans on Marine Litter or equivalent planning or policy documents (where relevant building on existing efforts such as development of or updating GPA national programmes of action to strengthen the management and mitigation of land-based pollution), or similar initiatives that contribute to addressing land-based and sea-based sources of pollution.	Countries
	4.2.2. Develop regional sectoral guidelines on the prevention and reduction of marine litter from land-based sources, particularly for sectors of waste management, tourism and plastic manufacturing.	Secretariat
	4.2.3. Develop, at the regional level, a reporting format on national planning and policy frameworks.	Secretariat
<b>4.3. Research activities</b>		
	4.3.1. Support research and development including of technology and approaches, as well as the consideration of social and behavioural sciences, to prevent marine litter input from land-based sources and promote environmentally sound production and waste management technologies.	Secretariat /Countries
	4.3.2. Develop and carry out research on the impact of marine litter on the marine and coastal environment and economy (including economic costs and impacts on human health and safety).	Secretariat /Countries
	4.3.3. Develop and support research on the effectiveness of market-based instruments related to marine litter.	Secretariat /Countries
	4.3.4. Undertake marine litter trajectory modelling in the COBSEA region, to identify sources and accumulation zones for marine litter. Such models will assist participating countries in tracking progress towards Sustainable Development Goal target 14.1.	Secretariat /Countries
	4.3.5. COBSEA participating countries to consider undertaking analysis of plastic flows into the region and their relative contribution to marine litter generation.	Countries
<b>4.4. Information, education, outreach and involvement of stakeholders</b>		
	4.4.1. Encourage and assist the appropriate involvement of various stakeholders including local authorities, civil society and private sector in implementation of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter.	Secretariat /Countries



	<p>4.4.2. Support the implementation of marine litter clean-up campaigns on a regular basis, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- organization of clean-ups as a tool in educating and involving local stakeholders, communities and media, in combination with public awareness campaigns;</li> <li>- encouraging and assisting entities with a particular interest in or responsibility for certain coastal areas, such as tourist resorts and port authorities, to undertake regular clean-ups;</li> <li>- encouraging stakeholder engagement in relevant international initiatives, such as the International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) campaigns, Clean Up the World (CUW) campaigns, Green Fins, Project Aware and similar campaigns or programmes.</li> </ul>	Secretariat /Countries
	<p>4.4.3. Formulate and implement awareness raising campaigns and activities, in line with the Clean Seas campaign and other relevant campaigns, for the general public, various sectors, municipal authorities, local communities and particularly vulnerable groups, school children and youth and other groups.</p>	Secretariat /Countries
	<p>4.4.4. Develop suitable information material on the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and translate it into national languages.</p>	Secretariat
<b>4.5. Training and capacity building</b>		
	<p>4.5.1. Develop and implement regional education and training for different target groups (across sectors and stakeholder groups) to enhance understanding of marine litter generation pathways, impacts, and preventive action, and to facilitate the application of technical sectoral guidelines.</p>	Secretariat
	<p>4.5.2. Provide technical training and capacity building to staff from national and municipal governments, port authorities and the shipping industry on the prevention and reduction of marine litter from land-based and sea-based sources through regional workshops and training courses.</p>	Secretariat

**Appendix 3 of RAP MALI: Terms of Reference of the Coordinating Body of the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) Working Group on Marine Litter (Endorsed document)**

**I. Background**

1. The Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI) identifies arrangements for its operationalization, including the establishment of a regional Working Group on Marine Litter consisting of national Working Group focal points and experts to assist and advise on implementation.
2. These Terms of Reference describe the purpose, role, composition and working modalities of the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter.

**II. Purpose**

3. The COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter is established to promote implementation of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, providing strategic as well as technical support and advice to the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting and COBSEA Secretariat; exchanging information that supports implementation of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter; and promoting regional cooperation in the context of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter.
4. The basis of the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter would be generally tied to the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter. The Working Group may regularly review its relevance for approval at the Intergovernmental Meeting.

**III. Functions**

5. The COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter will:
  - i. Identify and share knowledge and scientific evidence where available, identify capacity and other gaps and needs, and provide guidance on information exchange, knowledge management, technical cooperation, education, training and technology transfer or other efforts to address such gaps and needs;
  - ii. Provide support, including technical guidance and strategic advice, in relation to development of project proposals and implementation of projects or other activities in the context of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter;
  - iii. Establish Expert Groups composed of experts nominated by COBSEA participating countries to undertake specific functions, e.g. related to assessment and monitoring or scientific and technical issues, and prepare Terms of Reference for and supervise the work of such Expert Groups;
  - iv. Identify and facilitate strengthening of cooperative actions in the region towards implementation of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter, including through exploring synergies with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Framework of Action on Marine Debris and relevant ASEAN Working Groups and mechanisms;
  - v. Develop biennial COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter work plans and progress reports for approval by the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting;
  - vi. Where relevant, provide recommendations on revision of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter to the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting;
  - vii. Advise the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting on amendments to the present Terms of Reference;

- viii. Carry out other relevant tasks as decided by the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting.

#### **IV. Participation**

6. COBSEA participating countries shall be invited to participate in the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter through nomination of a Working Group focal point. The Working Group focal point should represent the national agency with lead or coordinating responsibility at the national level regarding marine litter management and should have relevant experience and expertise. COBSEA participating countries may also nominate additional experts to attend Working Group meetings, to ensure that the full range of national expertise and interest is brought to the Working Group, and to enable the Working Group to take into consideration the multiple dimensions of marine litter management.
7. Relevant United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations, as well as relevant regional bodies and organizations concerned with marine litter management, may be invited to participate in Working Group meetings as observers. Local authorities, private sector entities and non-governmental organizations may be invited to participate as observers on recommendation by Working Group focal points. Observers may, upon invitation of the Chairperson, make contributions on matters being discussed in the meeting and within the scope of their activities and expertise. Certain meeting discussions may be limited only to representatives of COBSEA participating countries.

#### **V. Organization of work**

8. The COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter will function through meetings as well as intersessional work. Intersessional work will be carried out mainly by correspondence. Subject to availability of funds, the intersessional work may be carried out through meetings of Expert Groups and workshops. The working language is English.
9. The COBSEA Secretariat will function as secretariat for the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter, including its Expert Groups.
10. Meetings of the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter are held at least once per year. Where practical, meetings may be held in association with other COBSEA meetings. The Secretariat, in consultation with Working Group focal points, prepares a provisional agenda and distributes relevant meeting documents one month prior to each meeting. Meeting officers consisting of a Chairperson and a Rapporteur are elected by consensus from among meeting attendees representing COBSEA participating countries. The Meeting Chairperson and Rapporteur prepare a draft Working Group meeting report, shared with Working Group focal points for comment within one month of the meeting. The final meeting report is submitted by the COBSEA Secretariat for consideration by the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting.
11. Costs associated with COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter meetings are covered through external funds including where possible contributions by participating countries, or from other appropriate sources, unless/until provisions for this are made in the East Asian Seas Trust Fund.

**Appendix 3 of the resolution: Budget for the Secretariat of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) 2019-2020**

<b>Budget year</b>		<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Personnel component</b>			
Coordinator (P4)*		143,550	191,400
Programme Officer (P3)			
Administrative Assistant (G5)		78,650	78,650
Administrative Assistant (G6)			
Administration and Other Personnel		10,000	10,000
<b>Sub-total: Personnel</b>		<b>232,200</b>	<b>280,050</b>
<b>Activities</b>			
Governance	COBSEA 24th Intergovernmental Meeting	25,000	
Governance	COBSEA 25th Intergovernmental Meeting**		30,000
Governance	Travel	15,000	15,000
Governance	Sustainable Development Goal Implementation Outlook	15,000	
<b>Sub-total: Activities</b>		<b>55,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>
<b>Operational component</b>			
Rent		16,000	16,000
Office Equipment and Misc.		7,000	7,000
<b>Sub-total: Operation component</b>		<b>23,000</b>	<b>23,000</b>
<b>Grand total</b>		<b>310,200</b>	<b>348,050</b>
13 per cent Programme Support Cost (PSC)		40,326	45,247
<b>Grand Total with PSC</b>		<b>350,526</b>	<b>393,297</b>

\* in 2019, budgeted from 1 April when the Coordinator assumed full-time duties, to 31 December.

\*\* to enable scheduling of the 25th Intergovernmental Meeting prior to the start of biennium 2021-2022.