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NOWPAP



**Northwest
Pacific
Action Plan**

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Third Extraordinary Intergovernmental Meeting of
the Northwest Pacific Action Plan
Virtual Meeting
27 January 2021

**Resolutions of the Third Extraordinary Intergovernmental Meeting
of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan**

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**Regional
Seas**

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List of Acronyms

CEARAC	Special Monitoring and Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Center
DINRAC	Data and Information Networking Regional Activity Center
GPML	Global Partnership on Marine Litter
IGM	Intergovernmental Meeting
HNS	Hazardous Noxious Substances
MERRAC	Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Activity Centre
NOWPAP	Northwest Pacific Action Plan
NW	Northwest
POMRAC	Pollution Monitoring Regional Activity Center
PoW	Programme of Work
RAC(s)	Regional Activity Center(s)
RAP MALI	Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter
RCU	Regional Coordinating Unit
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

1. Introduction

The 24th Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) of the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP), planned to be organized in Beijing, China, on 11-13 February 2020, was postponed due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 coronavirus. The Government of China officially informed the NOWPAP Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) of the need to postpone the IGM until later 2020 on 30 January 2020.

Since access to the resources of the NOWPAP Trust Fund for starting any activities was restricted until the Programme of Work 2020-2021 was approved, RCU requested the Member States on 31 January 2020 to send their consent in writing on starting spending from the NOWPAP Trust Fund to implement the urgent activities until the IGM was held later in 2020.

The Member States decided to take this approach and provided their feedback by correspondence within several rounds of communication. The first round of consultations with the Member States was carried out during February 11–March 20, 2020. RCU received detailed feedback from all four Member States with a number of questions and requests for clarification. This feedback and responses from RCU and, wherever required by the RACs, are presented in the IGM document UNEP/NOWPAP IG. EO3/12 under Round 1 (UNEP/NOWPAP IG. EO3/12, Table 2).

The second round of country consultations was completed on April 17, 2020. The Member States requested several additional clarifications. Those, as well as the management response from RCU, are included in the IGM document UNEP/NOWPAP IG. EO3/12 under Round 2 (UNEP/NOWPAP IG. EO3/12, Table 2). The NOWPAP Programme of Work 2020-2021 was then updated according to the Member States' positions.

Finally, all questions, comments, and requests for clarification from the NOWPAP Member States, supplemented by responses of the NOWPAP RCU and actions taken or to be taken, were summarized by RCU and included in UNEP/NOWPAP IG. EO3/12. A special section was added to UNEP/NOWPAP IG. EO3/12 (Section 2) with a table that included the date of approval, exact wording used by the Member States, and conditions on which the PoW 2020-2021 was approved (UNEP/NOWPAP IG. EO3/12, Table 1, page 4).

There have been also several rounds of consultations with the Member States related to the organization of the 24th NOWPAP IGM. Altogether, three rounds of consultations were required.

As a result of these consultations, the Member States decided that the coming IGM had to be titled not as the “24th NOWPAP IGM” but the “3rd Extraordinary NOWPAP IGM” and would be chaired by the Russian Federation as the Chair of the 23rd NOWPAP IGM. The Member States also decided to take with the proposed procedure that the IGM documents to be processed by correspondence. The opportunity of a face-to-face virtual meeting would be used by the Member States and NOWPAP Structural Units to discuss remaining policy and programmatic issues further. Specific attention would be paid to discussing NOWPAP operation during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 further.

As decided by the Member States, the Third Extraordinary NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting was held online on Wednesday, January 27, 2021. This document includes the key decisions and resolutions of the meeting.

2. Resolution 1: Status of the Implementation of Resolutions of the 23rd NOWPAP Intergovernmental Meeting

Acknowledging RACs and RCU efforts in implementing the NOWPAP 2018-2019 Programme of Work (PoW) and acknowledging the continued support to these efforts by the Member States and expert community of the Northwest Pacific region,

Recognizing the importance of joint efforts to protect the shared marine environment and manage sustainably its natural resources by engaging neighboring countries in comprehensive and specific national and regional initiatives and actions also contributing to the global environmental agenda, including the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, the Global Biodiversity Framework, the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and the Decade of Ocean Science,

Recognizing the need to initiate new activities in line with the NOWPAP Medium-term Strategy 2018-2023,

The Third Extraordinary Intergovernmental Meeting

1. Takes note of the NOWPAP implementation progress and the status of resources in the NOWPAP Trust Fund in the 2018-2019 biennium. Reports for 2018-2019 of UNEP Executive Director and RACs will be approved by the Member States by correspondence¹.
2. Takes note that contributions to the NOWPAP Trust Fund in 2020 was approved and confirmed by the Member States by correspondence in April 2020 as presented in Table 1 below.
3. Decides that the contributions to the NOWPAP Trust Fund by the Member States in 2021 will be at the same level as in 2020 as presented in Table 1 below.
4. Approves the total contribution of the Member States to the NOWPAP Trust Fund for 2020-2021 biennium as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1 Approved Contributions of NOWPAP Member States in 2020-2021

NOWPAP Member States	Contribution, US\$		TOTAL
	2020	2021	
People's Republic of China	125,000	125,000	250,000
Japan	125,000	125,000	250,000
Republic of Korea	125,000	125,000	250,000
Russian Federation	125,000	125,000	250,000
Total	500,000	500,000	1,000,000

¹ The process of approval will be coordinated by RCU. A special document will be prepared by RCU to facilitate the approval process. When finalized, the document will become a part of the documentation set of the 3rd Extraordinary NOWPAP IGM.

5. Requests UNEP and RCU to develop an overview of the financial status and situation of the NOWPAP Trust Fund (40PNL) in order to estimate the financial gap, if any, to carry out additional resource mobilization activities.
6. Encourages NOWPAP RCU and RACs to continue their best efforts to mobilize additional financial resources for the implementation of the NOWPAP Programme of Work 2020-2021 including NOWPAP Special Project, and to scale up successful outcomes. NOWPAP RCU and RACs are expected to update the Member States on their efforts through the regular reporting process. Prior to formalizing any resource mobilization engagements, they have to duly consult with the NOWPAP Member States.

3. Resolution 2: Information of NOWPAP Programme of Work for 2020-2021 as approved by correspondence on May 18, 2020

Acknowledging RCU and RACs efforts in implementing the NOWPAP 2018-2019 Programme of Work (PoW) and acknowledging the continued support to these efforts by the Member States and expert community of the Northwest Pacific region,

Highlighting the need of a regular reporting by RCU on the progress of implementation of NOWPAP Programme of Work 2020-2021,

Expressing concerns over the delayed implementation of many activities of PoW 2020-2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic,

The Third Extraordinary Intergovernmental Meeting

1. Takes note of the process of approval of the NOWPAP Programme of Work 2020-2021 by correspondence.
2. Encourages RCU and RACs to design additional activities to expedite and support the achievement of goals and outcomes under Priority Area 1 of the NOWPAP MTS 2018-2023 "Support Ecosystem-Based Integrated Coastal and River Basin Management (ICARM)".
3. Requests RCU and RACs to exert extraordinary efforts to implement work program and budget for 2020-2021, by introducing and applying innovative way of working methods, i.e., virtual meetings or workshops, collaborative works on documents or papers through various channels of communications and collaboration tools or technology.
4. Requests RCU to provide all necessary supports to RACs to facilitate their implementation of activities of PoW 2020-2021.
5. Requests RCU to further continue regular (quarterly) update of the NOWPAP Member States and National Focal Points on the progress of implementation of PoW 2020-2021.
6. Requests the Member States to further encourage national experts from the countries to more actively engage in the NOWPAP activities, specifically those implemented and coordinated by RACs.

4. Resolution 3: Progress of the development of the NOWPAP Regional Action Plan on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity (RAP BIO)

Recognizing the importance of the role of RAP BIO in supporting the priorities and vision of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans, as well as SDG 14,

Stressing that RAP BIO will be instrumental for subsequent revisions of the NOWPAP Medium Term Strategy and NOWPAP's other activities in the field of conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity,

Acknowledging RCU, CEARAC and nominated experts' efforts in the development of the NOWPAP Regional Action Plan on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity (RAP BIO),

The Third Extraordinary Intergovernmental Meeting

1. Encourages NOWPAP Member States to further support the development of RAP BIO and approves the next steps presented at the meeting, especially on organization of national consultations to provide guidance and inputs to the RAP BIO.
2. Requests RCU, in cooperation with the nominated experts, CEARAC and other RACs closely, to finalize the text of RAP BIO by the end of September 2021 and submit the RAP BIO to the 24th NOWPAP IGM for adoption.

5. Resolution 4: NOWPAP Special Projects: Progress and Status

Having considered progress achieved and lessons learned in the development of NOWPAP Special Projects,

Acknowledging the delays of Special Projects "Monitoring and Assessment Methods for Microplastics Pollution", and "Identification of Key Indicator Species and Ecosystems of Biodiversity Change in the NOWPAP Region",

The Third Extraordinary Intergovernmental Meeting

1. Notes the progress and lessons learned while developing NOWPAP Special Project "Monitoring and Assessment Methods for Microplastics Pollution".
2. Requests RCU to coordinate with the leading agency and other partners to complete the project proposal before March 2022.
3. Requests RCU to coordinate with the National Focal Points on Marine Litter and relevant external partners the process of mobilization of additional financial resources for the approved NOWPAP Special Project "Monitoring and Assessment Methods for Microplastics Pollution".
4. Requests RCU to provide detailed background information and analysis on the delay of the project "Identification of Key Indicator Species and Ecosystems of Biodiversity Change in the NOWPAP Region" for the Member States to consider whether to continue the project.
5. Decides to suspend this project until more information is available on whether it is possible to implement the project with other partner organization(s).

6. Encourages RCU to continue explore possibilities that the Project to be developed and implemented under the RAP BIO umbrella including finding a new leading organization able to continue the biodiversity project.

7. Requests RCU to prepare a scoping paper containing i) lessons learned during the development of the Special Projects and ii) how to improve the operational procedure and a business method, as well as to develop a manual with Guidelines on preparing NOWPAP special projects and submit them for consideration by the 24th IGM.

6. Resolution 5: Draft NOWPAP Communication Strategy (2018-2023) and New NOWPAP Promotional Videos

Acknowledging RCU and RACs efforts in the development of the NOWPAP Communication Strategy 2018-2023,

Recognizing the need for further improvement of the NOWPAP Communication Strategy 2018-2023 approved in principle at 23rd NOWPAP IGM and further evaluation in according with the meeting resolutions by RCU and RACs,

Recognizing the need of an effective Communications Strategy to popularize achievements of NOWPAP and support public awareness efforts in the NOWPAP Region, including environmental knowledge strengthening and awareness of the wider public and decision-makers on relevant topics, including marine litter, conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity, disaster risk reduction and supporting public communications in the case of oil and NHS spills,

Recognizing the process of developing of the NOWPAP Communication and Outreach Strategy 2018-2023 and Promotional Videos as presented by RCU at the meeting,

The Third Extraordinary Intergovernmental Meeting

1. Approves the process of finalization of the NOWPAP Communication Strategy 2018-2023 and Promotional Videos as presented by RCU.

2. Takes note of the progress in the development of the NOWPAP Communication and Outreach Strategy, including and Promotional Videos, and encourages the National Focal Points of the Member States to consider further steps towards the completion and approval. This work is expected to be completed and presented for approval in Q4 2021.

7. Resolution 6: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework of the NOWPAP Medium-Term Strategy 2018-2023

Acknowledging RCU and RACs efforts in developing the proposed Monitoring and Evaluation Framework of NOWPAP MTS 2018-2023,

Recognizing the process of revision of the draft Monitoring and Evaluation Framework of NOWPAP MTS 2018-2023 as presented by RCU at the 23rd IGM,

Recognizing the need for more detailed information on the approach proposed by RCU to use an adapted methodology available in UNEP and/or GEF on a mid-term reviews/evaluation,

The Third Extraordinary Intergovernmental Meeting

1. Takes note of the progress in the development of the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework of NOWPAP MTS 2018-2023 and proposed approach to operationalize the evaluation process of implementation of the NOWPAP Midterm Strategy 2018-2023 at mid-point of its implementation in 2021, notably:

- 1) March 2021: RCU to develop ToR for a Mid-Term Review based on existing guidance documents (UNEP, GEF)
- 2) May 2021: Consultations with the Member States on ToR, Comments Addressed
- 3) May-Sep 2021: An International Consultant to carry out a NOWPAP Mid-Term Review of MTS 2018-2023 is recruited
- 4) 2022: RCU and RACs, supported by an International Consultant – Completion of MTS M&E Framework
- 5) Q3 2023: MTS 2018-2023 Implementation - Final Review.

2. Requests RCU to prepare a concept paper on a Mid-Term Review of the implementation of the NOWPAP MTS 2018-2023 and circulate to the Member States along with the existing guidelines from UNEP and/or GEF.

8. Resolution 7: Overview of and discussions on arrangements and work of NOWPAP required adjustments of the IGM process in 2021 in the prolonged COVID-19 Pandemic

Recognizing the need for adjustment of the regular IGM process due to the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the need to combine meetings organized in-person and through virtual online platforms,

Also recognizing that due to COVID-19 pandemic significant budget will be saved due to restrictions imposed by the countries on travelling, additional activities could be designed and funded through available budget on the basis of consensus by the Member States,

Recognizing common interests of member countries in strengthening NOWPAP mechanism and its institutional arrangements to meet changing priorities in our region,

The Third Extraordinary Intergovernmental Meeting

1. Decides that the next Intergovernmental meeting, the 24th NOWPAP IGM, will be hosted by China at the end of 2021. The Chairmanship of NOWPAP will be transferred to China. Depending on the development of the COVID-19 pandemic, the next IGM could be organized through an online platform. RCU will facilitate the technical support to the meeting if required.

2. Decides that the order of holding IGMs will come back to the original one. The 25th IGM will be hosted by Korea (tentatively 2022), the 26th IGM – by Japan (tentatively 2023). The final decision on timing of these IGMs will be taken later in accordance with the existing NOWPAP practice.

3. Request RCU in coordination with the NOWPAP Member States and RACs to prepare a positioning paper on:

- i) an assessment of the *modus operandi* of NOWPAP RACs and the collaboration between RCU and RACs

- ii) how to improve the overall operation of NOWPAP and operation of individual RACs in terms of an efficient division of activities, better collaboration or coordination, and re-prioritization of mandates including possible options for discussions and timetable to address this issue, for the consideration by the 24th IGM.
4. Requests RCU to work closely with Russia as the proponent and to develop a Concept Note of a NOWPAP Award to recognize outstanding achievements in the implementation of NOWPAP activities to be launched not later than in 2024 also to celebrate the 30th NOWPAP Anniversary and submit the Concept Note, including a selection procedure, to the 24th IGM for consideration.

Annex 1. History of Revisions

Revision Number	Date	Changes Introduced	Comments
Rev 0	31 Jan 2021		
Rev 1	5 Mar 2021	Multiple editorial changes based on feedback from the Member States and RACs	
Rev 2	30 Mar 2021	Minor editorial improvements	
Rev 3	Apr 5, 2021	A typo was corrected in Resolution 1, item 3.	