

Second Informal Consultations Developing a Strategic Framework for COBSEA's Marine and Coastal Ecosystems

Meeting Summary

Date: 14 September 2022, Wednesday

Time: 13:00 – 14:50 (UTC +7)

Welcome Remarks and Recap of Early Consultation

1. The Coordinator for the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), Mr. Mahesh Pradhan, welcomes the participants for joining the second informal consultations in developing a strategic framework for the Marine and Coastal Ecosystems of the East Asian Seas (EAS). Mr. Pradhan acknowledges the participants from 6 COBSEA countries and colleagues from the Marine and International Waters Branch of UNEP.
2. Mr. Pradhan recaps the earlier meeting from 4th of August where COBSEA presented the Framework. Countries were generally accepting of the framework, with the adjustment to make Blue Economy the overarching theme of the entire framework. COBSEA participating countries also welcomed the establishment of a Working Group. Mr. Pradhan also mentioned that we had a guest from UNEP-WCMC who presented their work relevant for this discussion.

Updates on UNEP Activities on Marine and Coastal Ecosystems and Blue Economy

3. UNEP Blue Economy Coordinator, Mr. Ole Vestergaard, provided a discussion on the work of UNEP on Marine and Coastal Ecosystems, highlighting the integral role of Blue Economy towards a well-managed and healthy ocean. The concept of blue economy is a holistic approach of understanding connectivity, from land to sea, across different actors, interests, and sectors, and developing synergies to attain both environmental and economic sustainability. UNEP's Sustainable Blue Economy follows five core elements to guide decisions, although Ms. Vestergaard reiterated that there is no one way to do blue economy.
 - protects, restores, and regenerates healthy ecosystems
 - equitable and inclusive processes and outcomes
 - climate stability and resilience
 - sustainable consumption and production
 - circular economy approach
4. Mr. Vestergaard reiterated that there is no one way to do blue economy and provided guiding questions and a Sustainable Blue Economy three step transition plan; understand the system, enhance the system, and deliver change.
5. UNEP Chief for Marine and International Waters Unit, Ms. Sinikinesh Beyene Jimma, raised potential resource mobilization options that the Framework and COBSEA can tap on. The main option is upcoming Global Environment Facility (GEF) 8th funding cycle, which has the International Waters Focal Area. Objective 1 of this focal areas is to “accelerate joint action to support Blue Economy Development”, which is relevant for the COBSEA draft Framework. UNEP is also applying to be the lead agency for the Clean and Healthy Ocean Integrated Programme of GEF-8 which can potentially provide further support on this area of work. Another funding option

is the Global Fund for Coral Reef in which UNEP is a board member of. The Unit will continue to collaborate with COBSEA in developing the Framework to access these funds.

6. Mr. Pradhan opened the floor for feedback from countries regarding the presentations by Mr. Vestergaard and Ms. Jimma.
7. RO Korea: Dr Won-Tae Shin expressed agreement on the development of the Framework towards Blue Economy. He calls on the needs to focus on environmental conservation rather than development. He agreed with Mr. Vestergaard's presentation on Blue Economy as a good framework for conservation moving forward.
8. China: Professor Liu Zhenghua welcomed the introduction and information on Blue Economy presented by UNEP. He expressed the need to combine and find the balance between conservation and development and ensure that it is people-centered.
9. Indonesia: Ms. Retno Suratri shared that working on land-based conservation and forestry also ensures the quality of the marine ecosystems beneath. Therefore, the conservation of the marine ecosystems should include working in partnership across different bodies and organizations.
10. The Philippines: Mr. John Erick Avelino expressed that Blue Economy is very much in line with the national priorities of the Philippines and is integrated in their programs
11. Mr. Vestergaard recommended avoiding an either/or conversation between development or conservation. Both of these can be achieved in a sustainable way. Both benefits must be captured in the Framework. He further recognized the recent role of Indonesia as the current president of the G20 in pushing for the work on blue economy.
12. Ms. Jimma appreciated the commitment of COBSEA participating countries to blue economy. While UNEP is supportive of the initiative, it is up to the leadership to make this happen. One of the main points of blue economy is working, coordinating, and integrating across the different sectors.

Second Draft Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Framework

13. COBSEA UNV, Ms. Margarita Victoria Caballa, shared the changes for the second draft of the Framework. The main change was that Blue Economy is now the overarching thematic area, and that the other themes are ecosystem based management tools that supports Blue Economy. The rest of the Framework, including the Terms of Reference for the Working Group, remains largely unchanged. Ms. Caballa mentions that this Framework was distributed to guide countries in their review and presentation.

Presentation of Priorities of COBSEA Participating Countries

14. Each participating country presented their national priorities, regional recommendations, and feedback to improve the Framework. Main points are highlighted below:
15. China: Mr. Yunjun Yu cautions that due to limited resources, efforts should be more focused. He further cautions the need to ensure territorial integrity and avoid causing dispute in the region. The Framework must account for the new targets in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. On China's priorities, Mr. Yu shared that China is currently undertaking the "Beautiful Coast Initiative" since 2020. They are also updating their marine spatial planning, which is currently in the third process of planning. The central government is investing in coastal restoration. In terms

of recommendations and expectations on the framework, Mr. Yu indicates that this would require agreement by all participating countries. He further recommends the possibility of establishing a Regional Activity Centre (RAC) on marine and coasts and the need to increase communication and role from science and technology experts in the proposed working group.

16. Indonesia: Ms. Nur Isna Khairunnisa shared appreciation on COBSEA's effort to advance the Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Framework, including the establishment of the Working Group. Ms. Khairunnisa notes the good practices from the Marine Litter work and hope to see it replicated for the marine and coastal ecosystems. However, to be able to effectively implement the Framework would require strong, broad, and inclusive coordination at the national level. Indonesia further encourages COBSEA to facilitate knowledge and information exchange, sharing of best practices, capacity building, etc. that are related to the themes.
17. Malaysia: Mr. Dunstan Anthony Pereira expressed an overall agreement with the contents of the Framework, including the Working Group, and its relevance in addressing issues on the marine ecosystems and with international targets. The Framework is also aligned with national priorities including improving MPA conservation and developing a comprehensive spatial mapping. Malaysia is presently developing the National Blue Economy Draft, which will be out by the end of the year. He reiterated the need towards having more resources and awareness with regards to the matter and calls on COBSEA to have workable solutions to achieve the objectives.
18. The Philippines: Mr. John Erick Avelino shared that the Framework is in alignment with the different regional plans of action of other regional cooperation mechanisms that the Philippines is a part of and with national action plans and targets. He highly recommends, however, the need to incorporate a results-based monitoring and evaluation framework, with concrete goals, targets, objectives that are measurable at the regional and national levels. Several Philippine priorities include a geospatial mapping of the coastal and marine ecosystems, national capital accounting, blue economy, coastal and marine spatial planning, and mobilization of financing mechanisms. The Philippines recommend including climate change issues, carbon credits, operationalization at transboundary level, defining a common standard on biodiversity to be used across the region, capacity building and sharing, and calls for COBSEA to conduct proactive instead of reactive restoration.
19. Republic of Korea: Dr. Won-Tae Shin agreed with the overall construction of the Framework while noting the need to incorporate more ground actions, marine species protection, and marine ecosystems services for project ideas. Dr. Won-Tae recommend including work on marine species to be protected across the EAS region. To improve the narrative in the framework, Blue Economy can be highlighted as a tool to both manage the marine environment and enhance income of coastal stakeholders and knowledge sharing should have its own point item under Cross-Cutting and Supporting Mechanisms. Finally, Dr. Won-Tae further recommended developing an implementation plan, financial mechanisms, and the establishment of a Regional Activity Centre for Marine and Coastal Ecosystems.
20. Thailand: Ms. Chanokphon Jantharakhantee is in agreement with RO Korea to also include marine species protection as an element in the Framework as species-based conservation and protection is one of Thailand's priorities. Overall, the Framework integrates all important issues on conservation and governance and the activities on marine spatial planning, ecosystem approach and nature-based solutions, and blue economy are all aligned. These are relevant to national priorities including ecosystems protection and restoration. Ms. Janatharakhantee only recommends strengthening integrated coastal zone management within the Framework and states that Thailand looks forward to regional cooperation towards fulfilling relevant activities.

21. The powerpoint presentations of each country were given to COBSEA for reference in improving the Framework.

Open Discussions and Way Forward

22. Mr. Pradhan proceeded to open the floor for further discussions on the Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Framework and working group.

23. Professor Liu Zhenghua of China provided recommendations for concrete and specific activities to push forward the ideas in the Framework into practice. Professor Liu suggests to have demonstration or pilot sites in member countries in the different thematic areas, to increase cooperation on projects that encourages in-person learning and participation from COBSEA countries, and to strengthen capacity building to engage more participants, government officials, and scientific researchers. Professor Liu Zhenghua also recommended a knowledge sharing platform and training workshops for experts, participants, and MPA managers.

24. Mr. Vestergaard recommends to potentially design a theory of change in the Framework to be able to define the change that we want to see. This will allow the ideas to be turned into actionable plans, targets, and indicators with specific delivery schedule. Mr. Vestergaard echoes the Philippines action towards proactive restoration instead of reactive. UNEP work has been moving towards conservation as well since it is more cost effective to manage areas than to restore.

25. Mr Pradhan thanked all the participants for a lively and important discussion to improve the Framework. The COBSEA Secretariat will be improving the draft to integrate what have been discussed. Mr. Pradhan expressed that all these would be brought up during Part 2 of the 25th Intergovernmental Meeting to be held in Hanoi, Viet Nam in October 2022. We are endorsing the Framework alongside the establishment of the Working Group. Once approved by the IGM, we will proceed with its implementation.

Annex 1: Agenda

Second Informal Consultations Developing a Strategic Framework for COBSEA's Marine and Coastal Ecosystems

Date: 14th September 2022, Wednesday
Time: 13h00 – 14h50 (UTC +7)

Content	Speaker
1. Welcome and recap of earlier consultations	Mahesh Pradhan COBSEA Coordinator
2. Updates on UNEP Activities on Marine and Coastal Ecosystems and Blue Economy	Ole Vestergaard Blue Economy Coordinator
3. Resource mobilization options supporting the Framework	Sinikinesh Beyene Jimma Chief for Marine and International Waters Unit
4. Second Draft of the COBSEA Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Framework	Margarita Caballa COBSEA UNV
5. Presentations by COBSEA Participating Countries 5.1. National priorities related to marine and coastal ecosystems 5.2. Recommendations at the National and Regional levels 5.3. Comments on 2 nd Draft Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Framework	COBSEA Participating Countries
6. Open Discussions and Way Forward	Mahesh Pradhan COBSEA Coordinator

Guiding Questions for Country Presentations

- What are your national priorities and challenges on marine and coastal ecosystems?
- What are your national capacity needs on marine and coastal ecosystems?
- What are regional recommendations for marine and coastal ecosystems?
- Any general comments and what should be highlighted in the Marine and Coastal Ecosystem Framework? What is missing but should be included?

Annex 2: List of Participants

COBSEA PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

CHINA

Prof. Liu Zhenghua
Professor and Deputy Executive Director
APEC Marine Sustainable Development Center
Third Institute of Oceanography
Ministry of Natural Resources
Email: liuzhenghua@tio.org.cn

Mr. Yunjun Yu
Team Leader
Marine Environmental Policies and International
Cooperation
South China Institute of Environmental Sciences
Ministry of Ecology and Environment
Email: yuyunjun@scies.org

INDONESIA

Ms. Novy Farhani
Deputy Director of Pollution and Degradation
Control Regional I
Ministry of Environment and Forestry
Email: novyfarhani@yahoo.com

Ms. Fatimah Nur Muthiah
Environmental Impact Controller Officer
Direktorat Coastal and Marine Pollution and
Degradation Control
Ministry of Environment and Forestry
Email: fatimahnurmuthi01@gmail.com

Ms. Ardhian Indra Cahya
Environmental Impact Controller Officer
Direktorat Coastal and Marine Pollution and
Degradation Control
Ministry of Environment and Forestry
Email: ardhianindrac@gmail.com

Mr. Tedi Bagus Prasetyo Mulyo
Programme and Technical Cooperation Officer
Secretaria Direktorat Environmental Pollution
and Degradation Control
Ministry of Environment and Forestry
Email: tedibagus@menlhk.go.id

Mr. Fahmi Octavialdo
Environmental Impact Controller Officer
Direktorat Coastal and Marine Pollution and
Degradation Control
Ministry of Environment and Forestry
Email: fahmiocavialdo@gmail.com

Mr. Nico Sinaga
Policy Analyst
Ministry of Environment and Forestry
Email: nicosinaga.klhk@gmail.com

Ms. Nur Isna Khairunnisa
Environmental Impact Controller Officer
Direktorat Coastal and Marine Pollution and
Degradation Control
Ministry of Environment and Forestry
Email: nur.isna707@gmail.com

Ms. Retno Suratri
Cooperation Data Analyst
Ministry of Environment and Forestry
Email: retno.suratri@gmail.com

MALAYSIA

Mr. Dunstan Anthony Pereira
Coastal Management and Oceanography
Research
National Water Research Institute of Malaysia
Email: dunstan@nahrim.gov.my

PHILIPPINES

Mr. John Erick Avelino
Office-in-Charge Chief
Integrated Coastal and Marine Partnership
Section
Coastal and Marine Division
Biodiversity Management Bureau
Department of Environment and Natural
Resources
Email: johnerrick.avelino@bmb.gov.ph

Ms. Criselda Castor
Senior Ecosystems Management Specialist
Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management
Section
Coastal and Marine Division
Biodiversity Management Bureau
Department of Environment and Natural
Resources
Email: criselda.castor@bmb.gov.ph

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Dr Won-Tae Shin
Project Development Specialist
Korea Marine Environment Management
Corporation
Email: wtshin7@gmail.com

Ms. Juyoung Ham
Assistant Manager
Korea Marine Environment Management
Corporation
Email: jyham@koem.or.kr

THAILAND

Ms. Chanokphon Jantharakhantee
Fishery Biologist Professional Level
Department of Marine and Coastal Resources
Email: chanokphon_017@windowslive.com

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Mr. Mahesh Pradhan
Coordinator
Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia
Ecosystems Division, UNEP
Email: mahesh.pradhan@un.org

Ms. Sinikinesh Beyene Jimma
Chief
Marine and International Waters Unit
Ecosystems Divisions, UNEP
Email: sinikinesh.jimma@un.org

Ms. Margarita Victoria Caballa
UN Volunteer
Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia
Ecosystems Division, UNEP
Email: margarita.caballa@un.org

Mr. Ole Vestergaard
Blue Economy Coordinator
Marine and International Waters Unit
Ecosystems Division, UNEP
Email: ole.vestergaard@un.org

Ms. Krittika Kleesuwan
Administrative Assistant
Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia
Ecosystems Division, UNEP
Email: krittika.kleesuwan@un.org

Mr. Chris McOwen
Lead Marine Scientist
UNEP – WCMC
Email: chris.mcowen@unep-wcmc.org

Ms. Aidan McKean
Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia
Ecosystems Division, UNEP