

# A Review of Good Practices in Developing Networks of MPAs in the ASEAN

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The Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) is considered as an ASEAN-Marine, because it includes 9 maritime countries (Brunei Darusalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam), except Lao PDR. With the coastline is of total some 173.000 km, these countries have extensive river deltas and diverse coastal and marine habitats that support the richest concentrations in the world and encompass globally significant marine biodiversity areas (30% in area of coaral reefs and 35% mangroves in the world). An estimated some 600 million people among them about 50%, many of them poor, are directly dependant on the coastal, marine and ocean resources for food and to generate at least part of their livelihoods. Fisheries and ecosytem-based tourism encourages essential foreign investment, generates local economies. Coastal and marine ecosystems can act as the first line of defence in mitigating natural disaters, such as cyclones, hurricanes, storm surges and tsunamis, especially climate change and sea level rise which have a serious impacts on coastal and marine economy and community life and health in ASEAN region.

The benefits provided by the sea are only maintain possible with a healthy coastal and marine environment which is critical to sustain the social and economic development in the ASEAN region, as well as to protect these globally significant ecological values and resources for the world community. Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) established in ASEAN member country, in their variety of forms and scales, from village community level managed areas to large scale nationally designated marine parks, are considered as one of the effective tools and sollutions to threats facing the coastal and marine environment. However, in the pass years only a few (some 20-30%) of the established MPAs are effectively managed and remaining MPAs are inadequate. The such gaps have been evaluated in 2002 and currently (2008-09) by ASEAN Biodiversity Centure (ABC). An ASEAN regional network of MPAs should be established to contribute to fulfilling the MPAs management gaps and is one of high priorities in consultative activities of the ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment (AWGCME). In fact, effective MPAs are locally managed and that MPA networks in ASEAN member countries (in different degree) plays an important role in linking and sharing timely the management experiences and lessons learned



from individual MPAs management and between the member countries. Such good practices in developing networks of MPAs in ASEAN will be reviewed initiatively in the paper.