



Workshop 4: Initiatives in East Asia for Addressing Transboundary Issues through Regional and Subregional Seas Cooperation

Background

- The workshop aimed to discuss various transboundary environmental issues and their implementing mechanisms, especially on governance, and to identify good practices and areas of collaboration among the programmes and stakeholders involved.
- Quite a number of regional, sub-regional and international organizations including UNDP and UNEP and initiatives including South China Sea, Yellow Sea, COBSEA, NOWPAP, PEMSEA, Sulu-Sulawesi, Arafura Timor Seas, Coral Triangle Initiative and Mangrove for the Future have been involved in the Session. SEA countries representatives provided valuable insight and feedback on progress made and challenges in coastal and ocean governance in the region.

Objectives

- share information on governance and environmental aspects of various regional and sub-regional seas and initiatives in the region;
- outline key transboundary issues and actions taken at the regional and sub-regional level and its implications for future;
- identify good practices and possible areas of collaboration between and among the regional and sub-regional initiatives in the region.





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Discussion Points

- Creating synergies and complementarities among the regional and sub-regional organizations and initiatives;
- Replication of good practices;
- Sharing relevant information and experience;
- Enhancing regional coordination among programmes and initiatives; and
- Identification of areas of collaboration





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Conclusions

- Coordination is necessary for efficient use of available resources among initiatives; there is a need for a good platform for collaboration in a structured and coherent way, bearing in mind that countries are the key stakeholders;
- Methodological approaches vary: top down vs. bottom up: TDA/SAP, MPAs, Fish refugia, ICM/ecosystem-based mgmt, demonstrations/pilot sites on ICM, etc., information on those and lessons learned are not sufficiently organized for optimal cooperation and for ease of use by countries and other stakeholders;
- Commitments from the governments should be recognised and reflected in the regional and sub-regional programmes and initiatives – what countries want to do to address the TB issues, with clear goals to be transformed to national implementation plans of action;
- Adherence to ASEAN practices and utilisation of its Working G on environment and fisheries
- SDS- SEA – can serve as an umbrella document, ongoing and new programmes should revisit it in order to identify new challenges and gaps; programmes could be accounted towards the SDS-SEA;
- Climate Change considerations and impacts need to be incorporated into plans, actions and activities;
- Inter-sectoral and inter-ministerial coordination within the countries (e.g., fisheries and environment departments) is critically important for coherence between ICM and sustainable fisheries management and habitat protection;
- Ownership of the initiatives by the country is critically important.



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Recommendations

- Sharing of information and experience through an organized, structured and cohesive information management mechanism for identifying the needs of countries and initiatives aiming at improving coordination and efficient use of resources should be developed and promoted;
- To start this process a review of all ongoing initiatives and programs to be conducted asap, utilizing PEMSEA exercises, which is underway, and other similar exercises;
- Develop and promote better mechanisms for identification and replication of best practices from pilots and demo sites and for dissemination of lessons learned; consolidate and organize existing distribution channels of good practices and lessons learned such as through GEF IW:LEARN;
- Consider the use SDS-SEA as a platform for collaboration within the region. Promote ICM including fisheries and habitat management at national and local levels as is the operational tool of the SDS-SEA; Mutual invitations and cross-participations in regional events could be used for coordination and information exchange;
- All partners are encouraged to strive for a better compatibility of data ; standard methodologies for monitoring and assessment and common format for data exchange should be promoted aiming at data harmonization for better coordination of interventions.
- Stronger mobilization of governments resources is needed; countries are encouraged to increasingly provide resources for cooperating with each other

