

**10th EAS Partnership Council Meeting
Agenda Item: 4.0 (Technical Session)**

STATE OF OCEANS AND COASTS (SOC) REPORTING

REGIONAL POST-2015 TARGET 2:

By 2018, a regional State of Oceans and Coasts reporting system to monitor progress, impacts and benefits, and to continually improve planning and management of SDS-SEA implementation.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The development of national and regional SOC reports is being pursued in accordance with Target 2 of the Da Nang Compact. The SOC reporting and blue economy assessment is also in line with the post-2015 SDG Targets, Aichi Biodiversity Targets, Changwon Declaration Toward an Ocean-based Blue Economy (2012), Xiamen Declaration of the Fourth APEC Ocean-related Ministerial Meeting Towards a New Partnership through Ocean Cooperation in the Asia Pacific Region (APEC 2014), and other international conventions and agreements.
- 1.2 The theme of the first SOC report is, “State of Oceans and Coasts Report for the Seas of East Asia: Blue Economy Development.” The blue economy assessment aims to facilitate understanding of: (a) the role of the ocean and its contribution to the regional and national economies; (b) the impacts of human activities on ocean health and sustainability; (c) potential areas for investments in blue economy; and (d) interventions and innovative mechanisms and policies responding to changing environments and climate. The SOC reports will also show the progress being made by the region and the countries in implementing the SDS-SEA and other international agreements, and provide an evidence base for region-wide ocean policy- and decision-making.

2.0 Progress on National and Regional SOC Reports

- 2.1 National SOC Inception Workshops were held in Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, RO Korea, Thailand, Timor Leste and Viet Nam in 2016, and in Singapore in 2018 to discuss the scope, outline and components of their respective national SOC reports, available information, and workplan, including the establishment of National Technical Working Groups (TWGs). Japan has indicated that a report will be prepared and shared at the EAS Congress 2018.
- 2.2 Stakeholder consultation workshops were held Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Timor Leste in 2017 to get feedback on the draft SOC reports.

- 2.3 The Blue Economy Forum was co-organized with the Thailand Research Fund and Department of Coastal and Marine Resources (DMCR) of Thailand, and held in Bangkok on 14-15 November 2017. The Forum served as a venue for both government and non-government participants to review the SOC reports from each country. Nine countries presented key information from the draft SOC Reports, e.g., ocean economy accounts, status and valuation of coastal and marine ecosystems, marine water quality, area under MPA and ICM, blue economy initiatives, and key policies and governance mechanisms. Presentations on LMEs were made by Indonesia on the Arafura-Timor Seas, CI-Philippines on the Sulu-Sulawesi Seas, UN Environment/COBSEA on the South China Sea, and YSLME on Yellow Sea. In addition to providing feedback on the SOC reports, other partners and international organizations also shared their blue economy initiatives, and innovative policies and programs for scaling up the application of blue economy across the region. Information and recommendations from the Blue Economy Forum were used in the revisions of the national and regional SOC reports. The Proceedings of the Blue Economy Forum 2017 and ppt presentations are available for downloading from the PEMSEA website (<http://pemsea.org/publications/meeting-documents/blue-economy-forum-2017-proceedings>).
- 2.4 Draft SOC reports have been prepared by Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, RO Korea, Thailand, Timor Leste and Singapore. The reports are in various stages. The SOC's of Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Thailand, and Timor Leste will be the first batch for copyediting. Japan has confirmed in early June 2017 that they will proceed in developing their national SOC brief based on the Japan white paper.
- 2.5 The ocean economy of nine EAS countries is estimated to be worth around **US\$1.5 trillion** in value-added. The value of the global ocean-based economy is estimated between US\$ 3-6 trillion/year (UNCTAD)¹. Over 50 million people in Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam are employed in the ocean industries. For seven countries in the EAS Region, the total estimated value of coastal and marine ecosystems is around **\$531 billion**. Habitat and biodiversity loss, IUU fishing, nutrient loading, marine plastic debris, and impacts of natural disasters and climate change are key issues that need to be addressed. Blue economy initiatives include sustainable tuna fisheries, climate-smart aquaculture, ecotourism, marine parks and MPAs, green ports, marine biotechnology, marine renewable energy, innovative wastewater treatment and reuse, and mangrove and coral reef rehabilitation with alternative livelihood and co-management arrangements.
- 2.6 In addition to the Blue Economy Forum 2017, the SOC initiative was presented at (a) Fourth Workshop held under the auspices of the United Nations in support of the second cycle of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects (co-organized by IOC-WESTPAC), held in Thailand in November 2017; (b) 19th Meeting of the ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment (AWGCME), held in Myanmar in March 2018.

¹ <http://unctad.org/en/Pages/DITC/Trade-and-Environment/Oceans-Economy.aspx>

2.7 The national and regional SOC reports will be launched during the EAS Congress 2018 and the 6th Ministerial Forum. A second Blue Economy Forum is being organized as part of the EAS Congress.

3.0 Actions requested from the Technical Session:

3.1 The Technical Session is invited to comment on the SOC reporting process and its potential contribution to national, regional and global objectives and targets in support of sustainable development of oceans and coasts and blue economy.

3.2 The Technical Session is requested to urge the participation of all Country and Non-Country Partners and regional organizations to support the development and submission of national, sub-regional/LME and regional SOC reports to the EAS Congress 2018 and the 6th Ministerial Forum.

3.3 The Technical Session is requested to promote the national and regional SOC reports in their respective countries, organizations, and networks, including media, to create more awareness about the contributions of oceans and coasts to economic and social welfare and climate resiliency, as well as the pressures and threats, and blue economy initiatives.

3.4 The Technical Session is requested to encourage to all Country and Non-Country Partners and regional organizations to actively participate in the Second Blue Economy Forum during the EAS Congress.
