The 2026 PEMSEA Network of Local Governments for Sustainable Coastal Development (PNLG) Forum

8-10 September 2026
Busan, Republic of Korea

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'Empowering Coastal Cities for a Blue Future'
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INTRODUCTION

i. The 2026 PEMSEA Network of Local Governments (PNLG) Forum, with the theme, "Empowering Coastal Cities for a Blue Future," was organized by PEMSEA Network of Local Governments for Sustainable Coastal Development (PNLG), in collaboration with PEMSEA Network of Learning Centers, PEMSEA Resource Facility, and hosted by Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea. The forum was held on September 8-10, 2026, at the Paradise Hotel Busan.

ii. Around 160 participants from: a) PNLG member local governments; b) PNLG Associate members; c) PNLC members; d) resource speakers and other invited experts, e) the PNLG Secretariat, f) the PNLC Secretariat, g) the PEMSEA Resource Facility; h) the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries (MOF), Republic of Korea; i) and observers from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Forestry (MALFF) of Timor-Leste, Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST), Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM), Korea Maritime Institute (KMI), Rare Philippines, and Rare Coastal 500 municipality (Municipal Government of Guiuan, Eastern Samar, Philippines) attended the forum.

iii. Participating PNLG regular members included: Cambodia (Kep Province, Koh Kong Province, and Preah Sihanouk Province); China (Xiamen City); Indonesia (Gorontalo Province, and Tangerang Regency); Philippines (Bataan Province, Batangas Province, Cavite Province, and Guimaras Province); Republic of Korea (Ansan City, Changwon City, and Busan Metropolitan City); and Timor-Leste (Atauro Island, Dili City, and Manatuto City). Participating PNLG associate members included: Coastal and Ocean Management Institute, Xiamen University; Dongying Huanhai Institute of Marine Conservation and Development; and First Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources of China.

iv. PNLG delegates participated in the following activities:
a. Opening Ceremony of the 2026 PNLG Forum
b. PNLG-PNLC Joint Learning Forum
c. PNLG General Assembly
d. Field Trips

v. Supporting documents can be found in the Annexes:
   a) Annex 1 - Program
   b) Annex 2 - List of Participants
   c) Annex 3 - Link to presentations
   d) Annex 4 - Photos, news or videos

1. OPENING CEREMONY

1.1. The opening ceremony of the 2026 PNLG Forum commenced at 10:00 UTC+9 on 8 September 2026 at the Grand Ballroom, Paradise Hotel Busan.

1.2. On behalf of PNLG, **Dr. Ma. Lucille Nava**, PNLG President and Governor of Provincial Government of Guimaras, Philippines, opened the ceremony by welcoming participants to the Forum under the theme "Empowering Coastal Cities for a Blue Future."

1.3. She emphasized that coastal cities are the economic engines of their nations, yet stand on the frontlines of rising sea levels, extreme climate events, marine pollution, and deteriorating ocean health. She stressed that local governments must ground their policies and plans in science—while national policies and international treaties set the vision, it is at the local level that vision becomes action.

1.4. She reaffirmed that, through more than three decades of Integrated Coastal Management, PNLG has proven local governments to be active, transformative leaders rather than passive beneficiaries. She called for collaborative mechanisms to bridge science and policy, mobilize blue financing, and facilitate peer-to-peer learning, while ensuring that vulnerable women, youth, and artisanal fisherfolk are active co-creators of the blue future. She urged participants to use the Forum to challenge one another, inspire bold local commitments, and strengthen collaborative ties across the East Asian Seas.

1.5. On behalf of PEMSEA, **Ms. Aimee Gonzales**, Executive Director of the PEMSEA Resource Facility, delivered opening remarks at the forum. She emphasized that while the threats facing marine and coastal ecosystems—climate change, habitat loss, land-based pollution, and unsustainable resource extraction—are immense, local governments hold the key to addressing them, as they are closest to the challenges, ecosystems, and communities. She described local governments as living learning laboratories where innovative governance models are tested and climate adaptation strategies put into practice.

1.6. She stressed that people must remain at the heart of ocean governance, noting that a "Blue Future" is about fisherfolk, coastal families, young people, and local communities, and that a healthy ocean cannot be achieved without healthy, empowered communities. She reaffirmed the PRF's commitment as a steadfast partner and called on participants to exchange knowledge, build stronger networks, and forge actionable commitments.

1.7. On behalf of the Busan Metropolitan City Government, **Mr. OH Seok-keun**, Vice Mayor for Future Innovation, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea, warmly welcomed delegates to the 2026 PNLG Forum. He emphasized that the climate change and marine pollution facing our oceans cannot be solved by any single city or country alone, making cooperation and action among allied cities all the more important.

1.8. He noted that the Busan Declaration, reflecting the collective commitment of PNLG local governments, would be adopted at the Forum, and expressed the hope that it would lead to concrete action in each city and serve as a starting point for jointly building a sustainable ocean future.

1.9. He highlighted that Busan will host the 4th UN Ocean Conference in 2028 and reaffirmed the city's commitment to actively joining the international community in cooperation and action for a sustainable ocean.

1.10. **Ms. NAM Myung-sook**, Vice Chairperson of the Maritime City and Safety Committee of the Busan Metropolitan Council, Republic of Korea, delivered congratulatory remarks. She noted that a sustainable ocean future is an unavoidable task for all, as the ocean offers new growth opportunities through the blue economy while facing challenges of climate change, sea-level rise, marine pollution, and ecosystem change. She expressed her hope that the PNLG Forum would serve as a platform for sharing experiences and policies, and for jointly seeking solutions.

1.11. She highlighted that Busan will host the 4th UN Ocean Conference in 2028 and expressed hope that the solidarity and partnership forged through PNLG would extend beyond East Asia to protect the world's oceans.

1.12. **Mr. Peter Thomson**, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean, delivered congratulatory remarks via video message. He stressed that ocean health cannot be preserved without the engagement of coastal towns and cities—the East Asian Seas region alone holds 31% of the world's mangroves, 33% of its seagrass beds, and over 30% of its coral reefs, all under pressure from over-exploitation, warming, and pollution.

1.13. He called on coastal cities to become engines of ecological resilience rather than sources of environmental pressure, reminding governors and mayors that global goals are ultimately fulfilled at the local level.

1.14. He issued three calls to action: fund local leaders by directly financing local marine management; prioritize green over grey by investing in nature-based solutions rather than concrete sea walls; and empower the grassroots by ensuring local fishers and coastal communities are the primary beneficiaries of the sustainable blue economy.

1.15. He looked forward to reviewing progress at the 4th UN Ocean Conference in the Republic of Korea in June 2028.

1.16. In his keynote address, **Mr. SEO Jeong-ho**, Deputy Minister for Marine Policy at the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries (MOF), Republic of Korea, emphasized that this year's Forum holds special significance as it marks ten years since the 2016 PNLG Forum in Ansan, where the Ansan Declaration was adopted. He shared Korea's experience of restoring Lake Sihwa from a symbol of environmental degradation to a clean and vibrant lake, and posed two questions: what have we changed over the past decade, and what kind of ocean should we build after 2030?

1.17. He presented Korea's policy efforts in four areas: conservation, including the designation of a large marine protected area and plans to manage 30% of the ocean as MPAs and OECMs by 2030; restoration, including the restoration of tidal flats in 18 areas and the inscription of Korean tidal flats as UNESCO World Natural Heritage; pollution reduction, including the collection of about 131,000 tons of marine litter annually and a shift toward full-cycle waste management; and climate response, including Korea's 2035 greenhouse gas reduction target of 53% to 61% compared to 2018 levels.

1.18. He stressed that marine environmental issues are a common task requiring international cooperation, and that Korea seeks to be a partner sharing experience rather than presenting a single answer. He noted that the 2030 SDG deadline is approaching and called for viewing 2030 as a new turning point, urging discussions on new technologies such as AI and drones for marine environmental management.

1.19. Furthermore, he emphasized that local governments are not merely implementers but co-designers of international goals, and that the PNLG network will become increasingly important. He invited local government representatives to consider three questions over the next two years: what experiences their cities can share, what new marine issues should be addressed after 2030, and what concrete actions their cities

can take with the international community. He looked forward to meeting again in Busan in 2028 for the 4th UN Ocean Conference.

2. PNLG-PNLC JOINT LEARNING FORUM

2.1. The PNLG-PNLC Joint Learning Forum commenced at 13:30 UTC+9, following the opening ceremonies. The Forum provides a platform for knowledge exchange, peer learning, networking, and collaboration among local governments, learning centers, and coastal and marine stakeholders. Organized under the PEMSEA framework, the Forum brings together PNLG and PNLC in collaboration with Korea Maritime Institute (KMI), Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST), Coastal 500, and the Metropolitan City of Busan, strengthening linkages among scientific knowledge, local experience, institutional practice, and policy implementation toward resilient and sustainable coastal and marine development.

2.2. The program was organized around two panel discussions:

- **Panel 1**: **Pathways for Blue Carbon and Nature-Based Solutions** examined local pathways for blue carbon and nature-based solutions, with emphasis on source-to-sea management, seagrass and tidal-flat conservation, wetland restoration, and community participation.

- **Panel 2: Capitalizing on Coasts: Financing and Innovating Local Blue Economies** discussed the financing and innovation needed to build local blue economies, drawing on cases from the local governments of Busan, Kep, Bataan, Gorontalo, and Guiuan.

Each panel was followed by an open forum and a synthesis of the lessons emerging from the presentations.

2.3. Opening Remarks

2.4. **Dr. Ma. Lucille Nava,** President of PNLG and Governor of the Province of Guimaras, Philippines described the forum as a convergence of policy and science, action and research, local leadership and academic rigor. She emphasized that coastal governments face immediate public demands during storms, fisheries decline, and other coastal pressures, while durable policies require sound science rather than trial and error. She presented the PNLC institutions as partners that can translate research, mapping and spatial tools, and monitoring into local planning decisions. In return, local governments provide real settings where approaches can be tested, adjusted, and made useful to communities. Meanwhile, local governments offer real-world living

laboratories: shorelines, coral reefs, mangrove forests, seagrass beds, salt marshes, waste systems, settlements, and local economies where researchers can test whether an approach works under actual legal, financial, and social conditions.

2.5. Dr. Nava called for practical and field-tested solutions, including science-based zoning, risk-informed planning, and community-centered blue economy initiatives. She encouraged deeper institutional ties, joint research, and policies that remain scientifically credible and locally relevant, with coastal communities at the center of resilience efforts.

2.6. She emphasized placing people at the center of resilience. The purpose of the network is to strengthen institutional relationships, encourage joint research, and help local leaders adopt policies that are scientifically sound and locally relevant.

2.7. **Dr. Yonvitner,** President of PNLC and Director for the Center for Coastal and Marine Resources Studies in IPB University, Indonesia, emphasized the urgency of strengthening regional cooperation to address shared coastal and marine challenges across the East Asian Seas region. He highlighted two key messages from the earlier discussions: “find your partner, not find your answer” and “take this moment as a turning point.” He explained that finding partners means strengthening collaboration among national and local governments, academic institutions, and other stakeholders across countries to jointly address marine, coastal, island, and disaster-related challenges.

2.8. Dr. Yonvitner also encouraged participants to use the PNLG Forum in Busan as a turning point for greater harmonization in regional working approaches, methodologies, technical standards, and implementation practices. He noted that regional challenges cannot be effectively addressed by individual countries or institutions working in isolation and emphasized the importance of active engagement among PNLC and PNLG members. He encouraged participants to actively discuss issues, identify potential partners, and develop stronger connections that could generate impactful, peaceful, and fruitful regional cooperation. He concluded by encouraging all participants to make full use of the learning forum as an opportunity to build partnerships and strengthen collaborative action across the region.

2.9. **Context Setting**

2.10. **Dr. Fang Qinhua**, Deputy Secretary-General of the PNLG Secretariat, Vice President of PNLC, and Deputy Director of the Coastal and Ocean Management Institute at Xiamen University, China, provided the context for the technical session.

2.11. *Overview.* He welcomed the participants and reflected on the origins of the PNLG partnership, recalling the first joint forum held in China in 2021, which was conceived to build collaboration between local governments and learning institutions. He noted that the session would examine, over the course of four hours, how coastal cities can move beyond coastline protection toward building thriving local economies around their coastal assets, under the overarching theme "Empowering Coastal Cities for a Blue Future."

2.12. Dr. Fang referenced the PEMSEA 2025 State of the Coasts report, highlighting that sea levels in parts of Asia are rising faster than the global average, along with accelerating habitat loss, biodiversity decline, pollution, and converging pressures on densely populated coastlines — compounded by natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions, flooding, and landslides. He stressed that these challenges can no longer be addressed as isolated problems handled by separate sectors and actors, but must instead be tackled through integrated approaches, framing risk and opportunity as interconnected, in line with the Chinese concept of "wei-ji" (危机), where crisis and opportunity coexist.

2.13. *Session Objectives.* He outlined five expected outcomes of the forum:

a. Deepen understanding of blue carbon and nature-based solutions as practical tools for coastal resilience, and clarify the role of local governments in advancing them.
b. Provide a clearer picture of how smart financing, blue economy models, and technological innovation can convert coastal protection from a municipal cost into a sustainable economic opportunity.
c. Present concrete examples of PNLG member local governments implementing strategic action plans aligned with SDGs 6, 11, 13, and 14.
d. Identify practical entry points and partnership mechanisms for advancing Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) at the local level.
e. Develop a set of collective messages and commitments to feed into the Forum's joint declaration and future action.

2.14. *Session Structure.* Dr. Fang previewed the format of the afternoon, consisting of two panel discussions followed by a Q&A periodand synthesis after each, and closing remarks from the PEMSEA Executive Director, Ms. Aimee Gonzales, synthesizing the afternoon’s discussions and financing models going forward.

2.15. He encouraged participants to examine not only the environmental outcomes presented by each speaker, but also the governance arrangements behind them. These included the use of local ordinances and management plans, mechanisms for intergovernmental coordination, community roles in monitoring and enforcement,

scientific support for site selection and evaluation, and financing models that linked public investment with private participation and local livelihoods.

2.16. PANEL DISCUSSION 1: LOCAL PATHWAYS FOR BLUE CARBON AND NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS

2.17. **Ms. Nancy Bermas,** Regional Project Manager of the Integrated Riverbasin Management (IRBM) Project at the PEMSEA Resource Facility, moderated the session. This session featured a keynote presentation followed by four on-the-ground case studies from the Philippines, China, and the Republic of Korea. The keynote provided the broader context and highlighted key opportunities and strategies for advancing nature-based solutions through government action, while the case studies presented practical experiences from science-based research and stakeholder- and community-based ecosystem restoration initiatives. Each speaker was allocated ten minutes for the presentation, followed by a joint question-and-answer session.

2.18. Participants were encouraged to consider two key questions throughout the session:

- What practical steps allow local governments to integrate scientific research and nature-based solutions into spatial and development plans?
- How can local governments and universities co-design solutions when fisheries, aquaculture, infrastructure, conservation, tourism, and community access compete for the same coastal space?

2.19. **Speakers**

Speaker	Position	Presentation
Usec. Jonas Leones	Chair, EAS Partnership Council Undersecretary, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippines	Scaling Blue Carbon and Nature-based Solutions through Government Action
Dr. Yasmin Primavera-Tirol	Professor, Aklan State University - New Washington, Philippines	From Source to Sea: Unlocking the Watershed–Estuary Nexus for Climate Resilience in Aklan
Dr. ZHAO Linlin	Professor, Marine Ecology Research Center, First Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources of China	Qingdao Longwan Seagrass Bed Protection: Nature-based Solutions through Community Co-management

Speaker	Position	Presentation
	Deputy Director, China-PEMSEA Sustainable Coastal Management Cooperation Center	
Dr. Young-Nam Kim	Department Head, Marine Protection and Restoration Department, Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation	Korea's Tidal Flat Restoration: Public-Private Collaboration and Resident Participation
Dr. Jinwon Seo	Director, Nakdong Estuary Eco Center, Busan	Ecological Restoration of Eulsukdo Island in the Nakdong River Estuary, Busan

2.20. **Keynote: Scaling Blue Carbon and Nature-based Solutions through Government Action**

2.21. **Usec. Jonas Leones,** Chair of the EAS Partnership Council and Undersecretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines, delivered his keynote message through a video. He began by addressing the local government leaders, scientists, and development partners gathered at the Forum, expressing regret that he could not join physically but noting his pleasure at being part of the discussion at what he called a decisive moment for the region and for the shared ocean.

2.22. He framed East Asia as sitting at the epicenter of both climate vulnerability and climate opportunity; home to more than 35 percent of the world's mangroves and to the Coral Triangle, the richest marine biodiversity on Earth, yet simultaneously on the frontlines of warmer seas, stronger storms, rising tides, and mounting coastal pressures. He acknowledged that much of the region's historical response to coastal vulnerability had relied on hard engineering: seawalls, rock armor, and grey infrastructure, which remains important where appropriate, but stressed that nature offers another form of infrastructure: living, adaptive, and self-renewing systems that protect shorelines while providing food, livelihoods, biodiversity, and climate benefits. Mangroves, seagrass beds, coral reefs, and wetlands, are not merely scenic landscapes but natural and increasingly strategic infrastructure. The regional imperative, he argued, is to stop treating nature as an afterthought to economic growth and instead recognize it as essential infrastructure for resilient and sustainable development.

2.23. *From Regional Vision to Local Action.* Turning to the work of PEMSEA and PNLG, Usec. Leones noted that since 2016 the PEMSEA Blue Carbon Program has worked with

partners to unlock the potential of blue-carbon ecosystems and to better understand the conditions for a sustainable blue-carbon economy, including supply and demand, certification, and harmonized measurement. Yet even as blue carbon becomes better understood from environmental and macroeconomic perspectives, he posed a set of unresolved questions: How is this knowledge translated into action at the local level? How can communities effectively participate in and benefit from blue-carbon opportunities? How can local governments work with the communities living around these ecosystems? And how can emerging initiatives be kept environmentally credible, socially inclusive, and beneficial to the people who depend on them? He characterized these as governance and development questions at their core, ultimately about connecting science, policy, local action, and finance — and identified fora such as PNLG as important precisely because they let local governments share experience, learn from one another, and engage scientific and technical institutions.

2.24. *The Philippine Context.* He then shared the Philippine experience as illustration, citing the country's more than 36,000 kilometers of coastline, approximately 327,000 hectares of mangroves, and extensive seagrass ecosystems as marking it a natural blue-carbon powerhouse. But he cautioned that natural wealth alone is not enough. Transforming this natural capital into credible, scalable climate solutions requires bridging scientific research, policy design, and the realities of local action; in his words, making science useful to policy, and policy actionable at the local level. He described DENR's efforts as resting on a simple principle: that NbS must work for nature, for people, and for climate resilience.

2.25. He outlined DENR's approach across five points:

2.26. *Scientific Integrity* — Adoption of the IUCN Global Standard for NbS, and initiatives such as the NbS Catalogue and National Blue Carbon Action Partnership (NBCAP), to correct past fragmented restoration practices and ensure interventions are scientifically sound and socially appropriate.

2.27. *Policy to Practice* — A need to strengthen internal DENR coordination and awareness, while recognizing that NbS success depends on LGUs, where national policy meets land use, livelihoods, and budget realities.

2.28. *Bridging Policy with LGU Projects* — Proposed reframing NbS planning to start from the local problem (erosion, flooding, degraded mangroves, declining fisheries) rather than a predetermined project, integrating NbS into local climate action, land-use planning, and disaster risk reduction.

2.29. *Learning by Doing* — Advocated testing a replicable NbS process with selected LGUs end-to-end, rather than assuming a national methodology applies uniformly, to identify what works and what can be adapted elsewhere.

2.30. *Sustainable Financing* — Cautioned against starting from "how do we sell carbon," proposing instead to first define the problem, place, and people, then match financing — carbon finance, Payment for Ecosystem Services, blended finance, sustainable tourism, or blue-economy enterprises — to the context.

2.31. *Closing.* Usec. Leones stated the region's goal should be more local governments capable of identifying, designing, implementing, monitoring, financing, and sustaining NbS — moving from isolated projects to institutional practice. He closed with three transitions: from policy to practice, from practice to proof, and from proof to scale, and called for continued collaboration among science, policy, local action, and responsible investment across the East Asian Seas region.

2.32. **From Source to Sea Unlocking the Watershed Estuary Nexus for Climate Resilience in Aklan**

2.33. **Dr. Yasmin Primavera-Tirol,** Professor at Aklan State University, Philippines presented research on Aklan province, located on Panay Island in the west-central Philippines. The province's economy relies heavily on agriculture, fisheries, and two key water systems: the Batan Estuary and the 97-kilometer Aklan River, which spans a 230-square-kilometer watershed. Together, these systems sustain more than 60% of the local population. However, Copernicus satellite data reveals that between 1990 and 2020, population growth and the conversion of forestland to agriculture significantly heightened soil erosion and sediment runoff across the area.

2.34. Despite this documented risk, she said the province was unprepared when Typhoon Nalgae struck in 2022 following several days of heavy rain. The typhoon prompted local governments to partner more actively with her university team, building on earlier, more limited engagement through a blue carbon project. Community consultations initially pointed to a mangrove area as a possible cause of flooding, but investigation instead identified a natural floodplain at a river bifurcation point, validated by 2017 LiDAR data with the University of the Philippines Cebu and a partner university, which had historically absorbed floodwater. By 2020, satellite and Google Earth imagery showed that a bridge and revetment wall had blocked one of the two river branches, eliminating this floodplain and shifting flooding further downstream.

2.35. She explained that since 1985, local communities have expanded mangrove planting, mainly of Rhizophora species. Coverage grew from about 128,000 square meters to

nearly 1,000,000 square meters, or roughly 100 hectares. This sequesters carbon, but it also alters local hydrodynamics and sediment transport. Consequently, sediment delivery to a downstream beach has decreased. The beach has eroded roughly 153 meters since 1985, including about 40 meters over the last 30 years. This leaves a sandbar less than a kilometer wide.

2.36. In the Batan Estuary, she said mangrove area fell from about 5,000 hectares in the 1950s to about 400 hectares by 2008. They were converted mainly to fishponds. This conversion has been linked to increased chlorophyll and turbidity between 2000 and 2020. It has also led to poor tidal flushing of internal waters. Across 12 monitored points, researchers recorded an estimated 29 to 30 tons of sediment per square kilometer per year. This affects larval and juvenile stages of key fishery species.

2.37. Simulating the removal of fishpond dikes, her team found that sediment would instead shift closer to the estuary mouth, worsening conditions, since the dikes now function as a proxy for the mangroves that once occupied that space. She cited the tiger shrimp fishery, *sugpo* or Penaeus monodon, which comprised about 90 to 95% of the local catch in 1978 but had by 2006 shifted toward smaller species such as Metapenaeus, with total daily catch falling from about 24 kilograms to under 5 kilograms per fisher.

2.38. Her team's response began with identifying non-operational fishponds for possible mangrove restoration using drone mapping and ground-truthing. In one restored, non-operational fishpond area, trees taller than the average person were recorded after seven years, restoring nursery, sediment-trapping, and carbon storage functions, and two locally endemic mangrove species, referred to as Patatpat and Api-api, were found to persist. Majority of fishponds are privately owned and held under tax declarations, titles, or Fishpond Lease Agreements. Because converting abandoned fishponds involves complex legal and land-tenure issues, her team helped institutionalize an Integrated Management Council through a provincial ordinance, bringing stakeholders together to plan implementing rules and regulations collectively rather than imposing a technical solution top-down. She closed by stressing that durable nature-based restoration depends on partnership on the ground, built through a transparent, inclusive process rather than technical or legal fixes alone.

2.39. **<u>Qingdao Longwan Seagrass Bed Protection: Nature-based Solutions through Community Co-management</u>**

2.40. **Dr. ZHAO Linlin,** Professor at the First Institute of Oceanography and Deputy Director of the China-PEMSEA Sustainable Coastal Management Cooperation Center, presented a case study from Longwan, a seagrass area in Langya Town, Qingdao West

Coast New Area, outside the Yellow Sea. The area supports native *Zostera marina* seagrass important for fisheries, biodiversity, water quality, and blue carbon storage. He said the seagrass beds face pressure from agricultural runoff, abandoned fishing gear, and beach-community damage, and identified four local challenges: a data gap, since the extent and health of the seagrass beds were unknown; pollution and unsustainable fishing activity; low awareness of the seagrass's importance among fishermen and residents; and weak governance to address these pressures.

2.41. In response, he shared that the local community established a governance framework shifting from government-led to social co-governance, bringing in the Ocean University of China for research, local government, local community members, and NGOs, including a newly formed NGO, the Qingdao West Coast New Area Blue Bay Ecological Environment Public Service Center. The university conducted baseline surveys, including sonar survey, on-site survey, and laboratory analysis, to map the exact distribution of the seagrass beds, identify pollution sources, and understand life-cycle timing, incorporating local fishermen's and residents' knowledge alongside the scientific survey.

2.42. Community outreach measures included eco-friendly beach-cleaning promotion and the establishment of a Community Marine Guardians group of 25 local fishermen from three fishing villages, alongside meetings, media, education activities, and a Seagrass Conservation and Langya Fishing Culture Science Museum.

2.43. He reported that these efforts have reduced damage from human activity, increased public awareness, and shown early signs of fishery recovery linked to reduced habitat loss. He then summarized three takeaways: that a small, technical, nature-based intervention can address specific local pressures through science-based assessment, behavior guidance, and public education; that it can shift the local community from rule-followers to active guardians of the resource; and that it depends on sustained multi-stakeholder collaboration and governance, with ongoing scheduled monitoring going forward. He highlighted that Longwan shows how a small coastal ecosystem can become a practical model for nature-based, community-centered, and replicable local governance.

2.44. **Korea's Tidal Flat Restoration: Public-Private Collaboration and Resident Participation**

2.45. **Dr. Young-Nam Kim,** Department Head of the Marine Protection and Restoration Department at the Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM), explained that Korea's tidal flats, known as *getbol*, were inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in phases, beginning about five years earlier with an initial set of sites

and expanding further in May 2026. He described the tidal flats as a critical stopover on the East Asian–Australasian Flyway, which spans from Siberia to Australia. He noted that Korea has more than 2,000 kilometers of tidal flats and operates 40 Marine Protected Areas, 18 of which are tidal flat areas, with around 60% of the tidal flat area along this coastline now designated as World Heritage.

2.46. He said that while tidal flat area declined historically due to reclamation, area figures have stabilized over the last 20 years, reflecting a shift in use from decline toward conservation, reinforced by growing recognition of tidal flats' role in climate change adaptation and blue carbon. Korea enacted a dedicated Tidal Flat Act in 2020, alongside the Marine Ecosystem Conservation and Management Act, to formalize a restoration process that begins with scientific baseline assessment and diagnosis of degradation before construction or restoration activity. Local governments submit project proposals to the central government and participate throughout, including forming local committees with stakeholders and residents; more than 13 restoration projects were ongoing as of date, out of more than 30 completed or in progress overall.

2.47. He outlined KOEM's tidal flat restoration master plan that narrowed from five restoration types over the last five years to four current types: ecosystem restoration; habitat preservation, including maintaining seawater flow at World Heritage sites; climate-change-focused restoration, covering vegetation planting and blue carbon; and transition to "marine healing," or recreational and wellness use.

2.48. On private-sector collaboration, he described a 2022 memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries (MOF) and Kia for tidal flat recovery and restoration, motivated in part by Kia's ESG and carbon-offset goals. Their first project, in the Hwaseong area, covered about 27,000 square meters with a modest initial budget, while a second phase beginning this year scales the area roughly tenfold and the budget roughly threefold, with MOF providing additional oversight.

2.49. He closed by stressing that tidal flat restoration is important for both NBS and blue carbon management, but requires deliberate effort to build public and private-sector interest, including creating local jobs and participation opportunities.

2.50. **<u>Ecological Restoration of Eulsukdo Island in the Nakdong River Estuary Busan</u>**

2.51. **Dr. Jinwon Seo**, Director of the Nakdong Estuary Eco Center, explained that the Nakdong River, about 525 kilometers long and the longest of the Republic of Korea's four major river systems, meets the sea at Eulsukdo Island. It is part of the East Asian–Australasian Flyway and a wintering, breeding, and stopover site for roughly 180 bird

species, among the most diverse in South Korea, including the whooper swan, a natural monument and endangered species. He said an estimated 11,000 whooper swans travel the Siberia-to-Korea migration route, with 2,500 to 3,000 typically present at the Nakdong Estuary.

2.52. He traced Eulsukdo's history: it first appeared on a cadastral map in 1916 and was designated Natural Monument No. 179 in 1966, when the protected area covered about 232 square kilometers. The area is now also covered by the Wetland Conservation Act, the National Heritage Act, the Marine Environmental Management Act, and the National Land Planning and Utilization Act. However, industrialization and development in Busan have since reduced the protected area to about 62% of its original extent. He described the island's shifting land uses over time: green onion farming from the 1960s to the 1990s; a night-soil, or human waste, processing and disposal facility from 1992 to 2005, where waste was shipped out and dumped at sea; and use as a sanitary landfill, including Korea's first waste-compaction system to reduce landfill volume.

2.53. He recounted that the Eulsukdo Bridge was redesigned into a C-shaped curve rather than a straight line in response to environmental protests over its planned route through whooper swan habitat. In the late 1990s Busan Metropolitan City began restoring wetland areas on the island, now zoned into an education and public-access zone, a core conservation zone reserved for wildlife, and a buffer zone between them. Restoration has focused on the whooper swan and its main food source, the flat-stem clubrush, a marsh plant whose tubers the swans dig for. Interventions include monitoring, supplemental feeding with sweet potatoes, nursery cultivation, planting, and education programs. Comparing 2004 and 2020–2023 data, he reported that clubrush habitat area increased by about 72%, with earlier declines linked to salinity intrusion attributed partly to development-related changes in water flow.

2.54. He noted that the project received the Global Gold Winner award at the 2025 Green World Awards, received from approximately 350 outstanding environmental best practices from 56 countries across 20 categories. The center also hosted a tour for the 48th Session of the World Heritage Committee meeting held in Busan in August 2026.

2.55. **Q&A**

2.56. **Ms. Anabelle Cayabyab,** Provincial Environment Officer of Cavite, Philippines, asked Dr. Tirol on Aklan's process for converting abandoned fishponds, many of which are privately owned, and how the associated costs are budgeted, noting that Cavite faces a similar situation.

2.57. **Dr. Primavera-Tirol** responded that the legal process in the Philippine system is tedious, requiring exact coordinates to be matched against legal documents such as tax declarations, titles, or Fishpond Lease Agreements. Her team's approach was to first institutionalize an Integrated Management Council so that all stakeholders move forward together and transparently, rather than navigating the legal process piecemeal. The university's role is focused on providing technical data through assessments and drone surveys conducted with permission from local government and site stakeholders, and sharing reports publicly so the community and local government jointly decide next steps. She noted that the Council has since been formally established through a provincial ordinance and is now developing implementing rules and regulations, which will take time given the number of stakeholders and the size of the area, and that national agencies, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and DENR, are also holding discussions on how to handle non-operational fishponds nationally.

2.58. **Ms. Cayabyab** also asked Dr. Seo how Busan has addressed river waste and transboundary garbage issues affecting the estuary and its migratory birds, noting that Cavite experiences similar problems.

2.59. **Dr. Seo** replied that the issue is complex, and that Busan Metropolitan City has struggled with how to manage a sanitary landfill area where waste has been buried for over 30 years. A decision point is expected around 2027–2028 that may be deferred another decade. He said development near or within natural monument areas was historically possible but has become increasingly difficult as environmental NGOs push back even as local officials seek development, and that the way forward is continued, good-faith communication among stakeholders rather than confrontation, balancing city development with protection of natural habitat as a legacy for future generations.

2.60. **Dr. Kazumi Wakita,** of Tokai University, Japan, and Technical Session Co-Chair of the EAS Partnership Council, asked Dr. Young-Nam Kim to share more about job creation across KOEM's marine restoration projects, referencing his point that making such projects profitable and beneficial to people is important.

2.61. **Dr. Kim** explained that restoration projects are categorized by focus, such as "climate change" or "landscape," and typically center on planting vegetation. When designing site-specific projects, organizers consult local residents on planting priorities. Rather than treating funds as a pure grant, a fixed portion of the budget directly pays local residents and private-sector partners for their work. Local committees meet every three to four months to set agendas for each tidal flat restoration site. Additionally,

short-term work opportunities—lasting one to two weeks during planting—have provided well-received support for surrounding communities.

2.62. **Dr. Aryanto Husain,** from Indonesia, asked Dr. ZHAO how co-management worked smoothly under the Chinese administrative system.

2.63. **Dr. ZHAO** replied that survey work combined multiple methods to precisely locate the seagrass beds and capture the range of ecosystem services they provide, recognizing that seagrass supports many other species, drawing on both scientific survey and community and fisher knowledge. This produced a combined report identifying the location and ecosystem services of the seagrass beds in the Longwan area, which was then shared with local community and fishing organizers in accessible language so fishermen would know the location and importance of the seagrass beds, enabling them to organize a team to safeguard the resource, with the academic findings providing the basis for the protection approach. He highlighted that co-management succeeds by using scientific data to bridge top-down administrative governance with bottom-up community action.

2.64. **Ms. Bermas** asked Dr. ZHAO on how local governments and universities co-design solutions when fisheries, aquaculture, infrastructure, conservation, tourism, and community access compete for the same coastal space.

2.65. **Dr. ZHAO** explained that in coastal ecosystem governance, different agencies and departments carry different responsibilities: the government's role is to establish regulations, while research institutions' role is to generate credible academic findings and submit them to the government. The government’s decisions should be grounded in that research. At the same time, decisions must reflect the reality that communities living around protected areas, such as a marine protected area, depend on the ecosystem and must be involved, or regulations will not be implementable or sustained over time. Ultimately, co-management succeeds because each agency and stakeholder fulfills a distinct role, rather than any single actor trying to manage the ecosystem alone.

2.66. **Synthesis and Closing of Panel 1**

2.67. **Ms. Nancy Bermas** thanked the panelists and the audience for their engagement and offered a synthesis of the session's five presentations, including the keynote, returning to its framing that nature-based solutions must work for nature, for people, and for climate resilience.

2.68. She noted that the four ground case studies demonstrated local pathways for conserving and protecting mangroves, seagrass meadows, tidal flats, and wetlands, and their associated biodiversity, backed by science-based tools and knowledge, and that across the case studies, on-the-ground efforts are generating increased community engagement, increased public awareness and advocacy, increased job opportunities including private-sector participation, and increased ecosystem resilience to climate change.

2.69. From the Q&A, she highlighted communication as a critical attribute for ensuring all stakeholders are engaged, informed, and part of government decision-making, alongside the continued importance of scientific knowledge in informing policy. She suggested that the logical next step is scaling, using the PNLG–PNLC platform to replicate good practices generated both in this session and across members' own experience, and that local actions should be explicitly connected to global agenda contributions, reinforcing the sustainability and recognition of local governments' role in coastal development.

2.70. **PANEL DISCUSSION 2: CAPITALIZING ON COASTS FINANCING AND INNOVATING LOCAL BLUE ECONOMIES**

2.71. **Dr. Kazumi Wakita**, Professor at Tokai University and Technical Session Co-Chair of the EAS Partnership Council moderated the second panel. The session shifted the discussion from ecosystem conservation to the economic dimensions of coastal management.

2.72. She invited the participants to consider three guiding questions throughout the session:

- What self-sustaining business models can effectively finance long-term coastal conservation?
- How can cities combine public budgets with private-sector or philanthropic capital?
- How can energy, food, and ecosystem needs be balanced in practical implementation?

2.73. **Speakers**

Speaker	Position	Presentation
Dr. Suk-Jae Kwon	Technical Session Chair, EAS Partnership Council Principal Research Scientist, Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology	Financing the Blue Future: Driving the Local Blue Economy

Speaker	Position	Presentation
Hon. Bun Yaung	Deputy Governor, Kep Province Spokesperson, Kep Provincial Administration, Cambodia	Sustainable Marine Resource Management and Blue Economy in Kep Province
Hon. Jose Enrique S. Garcia III	Provincial Governor, Province of Bataan, Philippines	Blue Partnerships: Stakeholder Convergence in Bataan's ICM Program
Dr. Aryanto Husain	Head, Marine Affairs and Fisheries Service, Provincial Government of Gorontalo, Indonesia	Sustaining Tomini Bay, Gorontalo's Strategy Towards a Blue Economy
Hon. Annaliza Gonzales-Kwan	Mayor, Municipality of Guiuan, Eastern Samar, Philippines	Resilience Beyond Borders: The Power of Local Government Partnerships

2.74. **Keynote: Financing the Blue Future Driving the Local Blue Economy**

2.75. **Dr. Suk-Jae Kwon**, Technical Session Chair of the EAS Partnership Council and Principal Research Scientist at the Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST), served as keynote speaker for the panel session. He first addressed distinguished leaders, mayors, and champions of coastal development, and introduced the central premise of his presentation: that the answer to the ocean's biggest challenges will not come from Seoul, Tokyo, or Jakarta, but from the towns and cities sitting right on the coastline — from the officials, the farmers, and the small enterprises who know these waters best. He said he wanted to talk about growth that starts local and scales from there.

2.76. He described the seas of East and Southeast Asia as not merely offering scenery but as the heartbeat of heritage, food security, and local economies. Yet coastal communities, as previous speakers had noted, stand on the frontlines of climate change, facing rising seas, fiercer storms, and degraded marine life. He said that where others see vulnerability, leaders must choose to see opportunity, and that the path forward lies in a bold, inclusive Blue Economy where ecological health and economic prosperity reinforce one another. He stressed that this transformation does not start in distant conference halls but in provinces, cities, and coastal municipalities.

2.77. He framed local governments as the guardians of the coast that translate global climate pledges into real action, and identified Blue Small and Medium Enterprises (Blue SMEs) as the true secret weapon in this effort: the seaweed farmers replacing

single-use plastics, the artisanal fishers using smart tracking technology, the eco-tourism guides restoring mangroves, and the waste innovators keeping plastic out of reefs. He said Blue SMEs are agile, rooted in communities, and fiercely protective of their home waters, and that when a local Blue SME thrives, it creates jobs, builds social cohesion, and strengthens natural barriers against climate shocks, making them the true shock absorbers of coastal towns.

2.78. To enable these innovators to replicate and scale up, he outlined four key pillars that local leaders must build:

- Smart Zoning through Integrated Coastal Management — clear policies protecting marine space and de-risking eco-friendly ventures.
- Incubation — local training hubs helping traditional workers transition into sustainable aquaculture or eco-tourism, which is where the PEMSEA Network of Learning Centers works hand in hand with local governments.
- Data Integration — combining traditional ecological knowledge with modern marine science.
- Sustainable Finance — turning conservation from a cost into a bankable asset.

2.79. On finance, he called for moving beyond short-term grants toward three instruments of Sustainable Blue Financing: Municipal Blue Bonds, to raise capital for resilient water infrastructure; Blended Finance, that mixes public seed funds with private capital to back local startups; and Parametric Insurance, that pays out immediately after major storms to restore coral reefs and coastlines. He cited pioneers across East and Southeast Asia as proof that coastal communities are already leading the way: Kitakyushu, Japan, which transformed from an industrial hub into a circular blue city helping SMEs pioneer port decarbonization and green marine technology; Sabah, Malaysia, which partnered with local entrepreneurs to scale up community oyster farming, generating resilient income while restoring natural coastal defenses; Iloilo City, Philippines, which built public-private partnerships with local hatcheries to co-manage Marine Protected Areas; Bali, Indonesia, which is incubating circular economy SMEs that turn ocean plastic waste into commercial products backed by blended finance; and Busan, where blue technology SMEs are being empowered by scaling land-based smart aquaculture clusters using closed-loop water recirculation systems to produce sustainable seafood without polluting coastal waters.

2.80. He closed with a direct message to mayors, governors, and local leaders: the sea does not divide us, it connects us. He encouraged them not to view their shoreline as the end of their jurisdiction but as their greatest economic asset — to invest in local entrepreneurs, build the financial pipelines that turn small coastal ideas into scalable

solutions, and protect mangroves and reefs, because a healthy ecosystem is a natural sea wall from storm surges and sea level rise.

2.81. **Sustainable Marine Resource Management and Blue Economy in Kep Province**

2.82. **Hon. Bun Yaung**, Deputy Governor of Kep Province, presented the province's marine resource management and blue economy priorities. He described Kep as a coastal province in the southeast of Cambodia with a land and sea area of about 255 square kilometers, a population of approximately 45,401, and annual tourist arrivals of 1,747,622. The province holds 1,005 hectares of mangroves along the coast, about 3,095 hectares of seagrass, and over 52.5 hectares of coral reef, and is home to diverse marine biodiversity including sea turtles, dolphins, dugong, seahorses, and crab. He described the local economy as resting on artisanal fishing, eco-tourism, and local seafood processing, with the taste of Kep crab described as one of the unique specialties among coastal destinations.

2.83. He explained that before laws and regulations were enacted, Kep's biodiversity was under serious threat: mangroves were cut to make charcoal, water was polluted, seagrass and other biodiversity including rare species such as the dolphin were degraded or found injured. After the government launched conservation and education initiatives, the ecosystem began showing signs of recovery: mangroves were replanted, seagrass returned, coral reefs recovered, crab bands were established, and populations of seahorses and dolphins — including mothers with young — were documented. He said the government set up a legal framework for marine protection, with over 30,000 hectares protected from 2018 to protect the marine ecosystem and coastline, and undertook law enforcement against illegal fisheries and destructive practices such as trawling, which he described as causing wholesale destruction to seagrass, coral reef, and all marine species large and small.

2.84. He described the government's community-centered response: setting up strategic benefits for both people and the environment by establishing four fisheries community management committees, with about 4,000 hectares of mangrove area divided into four community zones. Through these committees, the government built infrastructure, replanted mangroves, set up aquaculture, and developed other facilities to promote ecosystem recovery. He reported that following this reform, communities benefited significantly, with fishers choosing to join community management and practice artisanal fishing rather than destructive methods.

2.85. He described additional governance mechanisms: a national marine management committee working jointly with local government to coordinate command and enforcement against illegal activities; subnational diplomacy and alliances including

sister-city relationships with Vietnam and with Beihai and Linchang in China; and a partnership with an NGO called NCC, which assists in enforcing and applying laws in marine areas, including through the construction of block structures to prevent destructive boat practices and support biodiversity recovery.

2.86. He closed with three calls to action: first, that national and local government must explain and enforce laws and regulations in marine preservation areas; second, that clear dissemination and promotion of participation by all stakeholders are essential for the benefit of communities and marine conservation, including fisheries and blue restoration of marine ecosystems; and third, that strong relationships and cooperation at national and international levels are needed, especially technical and financial support from NGOs and partners such as PEMSEA, which he cited as a present and valuable partner providing technical support and learning opportunities.

2.87. **Blue Partnerships: Stakeholder Convergence in Bataan's ICM Program**

2.88. **Hon. Jose Enrique S. Garcia III,** Governor of Bataan in the Philippines presented the province's long-term use of public-private partnership to sustain integrated coastal management (ICM). He described Bataan as a peninsula in central northern Philippines composed of 11 municipalities and one city, most of which run along the coastal area, with municipal waters almost as large as its land area. He said Bataan's east coast serves as a port hub where many maritime industries are located, while the west coast is its tourism destination. He framed Bataan's natural resources, from its uplands down to its coastlines and seas, as making ICM a suitable governance framework and the Blue Economy a logical development pathway.

2.89. He traced Bataan's ICM history: it began in 1999 when Petron Foundation partnered with the provincial government to conduct *Kontra Kalat Sa Dagat*, a series of coastal cleanup activities in three towns. Petron subsequently linked the province with UNDP, GEF, and PEMSEA, and in 2000 Bataan officially became an ICM demonstration site. That same year, the Bataan Coastal Care Foundation (BCCF) was formed as a consortium of corporate partners supporting ICM implementation. With PEMSEA's help, the Bataan Sustainable Development Strategy was developed in 2006, and the coastal land and sea use zoning plan was formulated in 2007. Bataan achieved Level 1 ICM certification in 2015, and in 2017 published its first State of the Coasts report with BCCF support. In 2016, however, management and personnel changes within member companies became a challenge to BCCF's continued operation.

2.90. He said that in 2023, private sector support for ICM was revitalized when Bataan was selected as a pilot local government partner for the DENR flagship initiative Project TRANSFORM. It is a transdisciplinary approach for resilience and environmental

engagement that enables the business sector and civil society organizations to advance environmental and disaster resilience initiatives across Philippine LGUs. Among key corporate partners, GM Power adopted 37 hectares of mangroves and sponsored publication of Bataan's second State of Coasts in 2023. He reported that from 2000 to 2015, BCCF allocated a total of about PHP30 million in counterpart funding for ICM-related projects, while corporate partners under Project TRANSFORM have since provided at least PHP76 million in counterpart support covering air quality monitoring, electric or green mobility, mangrove rehabilitation, sea turtle conservation, upland reforestation, and alternative livelihood support to people's organizations.

2.91. He described the public-private-people partnership model that sustains Bataan's ICM: the public sector provides the enabling environment through policies, plans, strategies, and governance mechanisms; the private sector contributes to sustainable financing by investing in various programs; and the people sector, including people's organizations and academic and civil society organizations, is treated not as mere project beneficiaries but as project partners involved throughout the project cycle from planning to monitoring and evaluation. He noted that Bataan's vision and strategy align with the PNLG strategic action plan and the priority management programs under SDGs 6, 11, 13, and 14, contributing to the goal of a highly livable province where resilient families live.

2.92. He cited pioneering local policies. Bataan is the first province in the Philippines with an integrated coastal land and sea use plan, which provided a framework for comprehensive land and water use plans in two LGUs: Balanga City and the municipality of Abucay. In 2025, Bataan became the first province in the Manila Bay region to pass local legislation establishing a network of coastal greenbelt zones, and a few months later the Department of the Interior and Local Government issued Memorandum Circular 2025-066 mandating coastal LGUs across the Philippines to establish mangroves and/or beach forests as coastal greenbelt zones.

2.93. He described ICM implementation across sectors. From only three towns in 1999, Bataan now conducts province-wide cleanup drives with more than 26,000 participants in the previous year. Fisher folk and coastal communities are frontliners in the conservation of about 27% of Bataan's mangroves, with partner people's organizations installing fences to prevent damage from marine litter and illegal fishers, conducting monthly cleanup drives, assisting mangrove outplanting, and managing mangrove nurseries as alternative livelihood. With private sector partners, the province introduced electric shuttles for a free ride program, deployed highway patrol electric vehicles (EVs), and rolled out solar- and battery-powered charging stations, with financing options for transport groups to acquire EV through EV dealers, financial

institutions, and cooperatives. Academic and research institutions support ambient air quality monitoring and public awareness on air quality data. Local communities lead sea turtle conservation across three distinct nesting species; several conservation groups are spearheaded by former poachers. These initiatives have added over 5,000 sea turtles to the global population since 2008.

2.94. He described early economic results. EV drivers earn an average daily income of PHP1,400, about 135% higher than the minimum wage in Bataan. People's organizations managing mangrove nurseries generate supplemental income by selling seedlings at PHP20-30 each, yielding annual revenue of PHP50,000 to PHP100,000 — a vital safety net for fisher folk communities during poor weather when fishing is not possible. He closed by emphasizing that no single actor can drive ICM alone, and that everything Bataan has achieved over the past two decades is made possible through strong public-private-people partnerships, which he described as enabling the province to navigate complex coastal challenges and lay the groundwork for a thriving blue economy.

2.95. **Sustaining Tomini Bay, Gorontalo's Strategy towards a Blue Economy**

2.96. **Dr. Aryanto Husain**, Head of Marine and Fisheries Office at the Provincial Government of Gorontalo described Gorontalo not only by its geographic features but as life, livelihood, and culture — not only for Gorontalo's people but also for the two neighboring provinces of North Sulawesi and Central Sulawesi. He noted that Gorontalo is located at the center of the Coral Triangle, along the equatorial line, with Tomini Bay covering about 137 square kilometers, a coastline of almost 1,350 kilometers, borders with river basins, and about 11 districts along the coastline.

2.97. He outlined two main economic potentials from Gorontalo's marine environment. The first is the fisheries sector: the sustainable yield is about 300,000 units per year, mainly located in Fisheries Management Area 715, which remains largely unexploited, demonstrating significant untapped potential. He said fisheries in Gorontalo are not only economic but also part of the social fabric and daily activity of coastal communities. The second is marine and coastal tourism, with destinations such as Olele, Botubarani, and Saronde, where coral reefs can be found in Tomini Bay and along Gorontalo's coastline. He acknowledged that the potential of both fisheries and marine tourism is threatened by the rise of macro and micro waste and destructive fishing practices that weaken both the ecological foundation and the economic future of coastal communities.

2.98. He described Gorontalo's response through an agro-maritime umbrella program, an interconnected system between agriculture and fisheries, under which his office developed three strategic pillars for the blue economy:

- First pillar is inclusive fishing, covering the updating of the database of fishers and fishery data, a local program called the Fishing Boat Taxi, and empowering coastal communities to use marine resources successfully.
- Second pillar is value-added enhancement: since Gorontalo is the smallest province in Sulawesi with the smallest fiscal capacity, the government is working to increase value-added contributions, including improving fishing ports and quota systems, supporting national and local programs, improving ease of doing business in the marine sector, and using local law to make it easier for investors to participate in marine production.
- Third pillar is blue economy development, emphasizing sustainability for both present and future generations, and strengthening institutional cooperation in the management of MPAs, with Gorontalo's MPA covering more than 76,000 hectares.

2.99. He described two major programs supporting these pillars. At the national level, the Kampung Nelayan Merah Putih (Red and White Fishing Village) program seeks to modernize traditional fisheries into integrated economic hubs, with planned infrastructure, future fishing stations being built, and efforts to minimize half-wasted resources. At the local level, a co-management system between government and cooperative sector brings three parties together, allowing elimination of the burden of initial operating costs so that fishers can go directly to sea, while providing more shared opportunities for the cooperative sector. A complementary equipment program — cool boxes and motorcycles for fish delivery — works to stabilize fish prices, boost economic well-being, and bring fish directly to the point of consumption and to the doors of households.

2.100. He described community-based management at Olele Marine Park, where local communities conduct monitoring and build awareness among tourists visiting the area, informing them of applicable regulations. He noted that Gorontalo's strategy is linked to SDG Goals 13 and 14, and closed with the key message that sustaining community is not a choice between conservation and development — it is a matter of collaborating to design one integrated system in which clean water, safe settlements, climate resilience, and healthy marine ecosystems reinforce one another. He said collaboration is the key to a sustainable future.

2.101. **Resilience Beyond Borders: The Power of Local Government Partnerships**

2.102. **Hon. Annaliza Gonzales-Kwan,** Mayor of Guiuan, Eastern Samar in the Philippines and a Coastal 500 member, presented the Alliance of Seven Municipalities, or A7, as an inter-local government approach to managing shared fisheries and coastal ecosystems in Eastern Samar. She thanked PEMSEA and RARE Philippines for the opportunity and described it as a great honor to represent her coastal hometown in the Forum. She described Guiuan as a coastal municipality at the southeasternmost tip of Samar Island, surrounded by water: the Pacific Ocean to the east and Leyte Gulf to the west. She said that in many ways Guiuan is more water than land, with a total land area of approximately 17,549 hectares but municipal waters covering approximately 313,897 hectares; of 60 barangays, 41 are located along the coast, and about 80% of the population depends on the sea for their livelihoods. Guiuan is home to the nationally legislated Guiuan Marine Resource Protected Landscape and Seascape. She highlighted that protecting the coastal environment is not simply an environmental concern but a matter of livelihood, food security, economic development, and ultimately community survival.

2.103. She gave a brief historical context: Guiuan is historically associated with the arrival of Ferdinand Magellan and his expedition in the Philippines in 1521, and its geography made it strategically important during the Second World War as one of the major naval and air bases of the Allied forces in the region. She said these chapters of history reinforce that Guiuan has always been a gateway — shaped by the sea, connected to the world, and open to people beyond its shores — and that this connection to history, culture, and natural environment led to fisheries and tourism becoming flagship development programs. She noted, however, that Guiuan's location beside the Pacific Ocean also means it lies along the path of some of the strongest tropical cyclones entering the Philippines, and that this risk does not stop at municipal boundaries: municipalities share interconnected coastlines, ecosystems, fisheries, climate risk, and ultimately shared responsibility.

2.104. She said this shared reality led to one important realization — that no municipality can do it alone — and to the creation of the A7 for ICM along the Northern Leyte Gulf, recognizing that challenges in fisheries, coastal resource management, climate change, and disaster risk are not confined to individual jurisdictions. The A7 is supported by various government agencies and partners and serves as a cooperation platform providing an institutional mechanism for attracting private investments and partnerships. Shared resources and those dedicated to coastal resilience are managed by the Guiuan Development Foundation, Inc., the convenor of the Alliance. The vision is empowered coastal communities, healthy and productive coastal ecosystems, and

sustainable fisheries and livelihoods, requiring three things working together: conservation, good governance, and community participation.

2.105. She described the A7 Fisheries Management Plan for 2024 to 2030, developed using scientific data and stakeholder participation in response to observed declines in mainstream species, including blue swimming crabs, rabbitfish, and parrotfish, due to unregulated fishing, increasing fishing pressure, and fish stocks already approaching limit reference points.

2.106. The A7 identified three key measures: gear regulation, size regulation, and fishing restrictions including temporal and spatial closures to protect spawning grounds, nursery areas, and critical habitats. She stressed that these measures are not about taking away livelihoods but about protecting the resource that livelihoods depend on, and that the real challenge is turning shared public objectives into enforceable local policies that communities understand, accept, and support. Another milestone was the A7's participation in the Coastal 500 pledging and memorandum of agreement signing, framing this not as a ceremonial commitment but as a public affirmation that the work of the A7 is part of a much larger global movement to help oceans and sustainable coastal communities.

2.107. She outlined four strategic goals:

- First, ensuring healthy coastal ecosystems: beach forests and other coastal ecosystems protect coastlines, sustain livelihoods, and keep fisheries productive; Guiuan is a critical source of larval dispersal for the wider region, and the LGU works closely with the DENR Protected Area Management Office to advance sustainable ecotourism, establish strict protection zones, and strengthen land use policies.
- Second, empowered communities: eight marine protected areas in Guiuan are community-managed through civil society organizations with LGU support, and communities around these areas experience increased fish stocks and improved fishery resources, earning national awards and recognition.
- Third, renewable energy: solar-powered ice plants and solar-powered ranger houses in marine sanctuaries help reduce dependence on fossil fuels and ensure essential services and livelihoods continue even during disasters.
- Fourth, driving a sustainable blue economy: the LGU hosts national surfing competitions and supports community-led surf schools for a growing surf tourism industry; a partner NGO has invested in community-led mangrove ecotourism; a fish catch monitoring program guides management decisions and measures conservation impact; and the A7 promotes an inclusive 15-kilometer municipal water zone for local fishers.

2.108. She closed with the message that Guiuan has something more important than numbers — one shared coastal future. She said the simple message of the A7 is that faith is their virtue, sustainability is their commitment, and resilience is their brand, and that because challenges are shared, so must be the solutions: to protect oceans, strengthen communities, sustain livelihoods, and build a more resilient future for Guiuan, for the oceans, and for their shared future.

2.109. **Q&A**

2.110. **Dr. Yasmin Primavera-Tirol,** Professor at Aklan State University in the Philippines, directed her question to any of the local government leaders. She asked whether they had been able to quantify revenue at any level for their LGU from blue economy activities undertaken through the years, whether those revenues had been increasing, and how they envisioned expanding and growing those benefits so that communities could truly harvest results.

2.111. **Governor Garcia** responded that aside from livelihood projects generating income for communities, which, while not in the millions, represent another source of income, the more impactful gain for Bataan has been the increase in tourist arrivals resulting from working with private sector partners to improve the environment. Particularly through mangrove conservation, ensuring that the sea turtle conservation center and wetland park are managed properly. He said that given Bataan's proximity to Metro Manila in Central Luzon, there has been a notable increase in tourists coming to enjoy the province's coastal areas, forests, and mountains, which he believes has had a significant impact on the overall provincial economy.

2.112. **Mayor Gonzales-Kwan** shared that when she became mayor of Guiuan in 2004, it was a fourth-class municipality, and that through collaboration with the A7, there was an increase in the income of the people. She said that with 80% of the population depending on the sea as their livelihood, and as a result of deepened focus on protecting the sea, Guiuan is now a first-class municipality and is even applying to become a city, which indicates that community income has been growing. She said simply: "There is money in protecting our seas."

2.113. **Governor Yaung** responded that the government's goal is to help communities make better and more sustainable lives. He said this includes building infrastructure, and technical and additional partnerships to promote community members to take greater part in provincial life. Although he acknowledged that quantifying this precisely is difficult and that the scale of benefit depends on how well communities can be engaged.

2.114. **Dr. Husain** said he could not give a specific number, but that if he tried to describe the trend, budgeting for the blue economy has grown, drawing not only from the regional budget but from combined national interventions and contributions from other stakeholders. He noted that the trend looks good and that following the governor's establishment of marine and fisheries sector programs under the agromaritime umbrella, the budget supporting activities in both fisheries and tourism is expected to grow. He cited the LAUTRA or Oceans for Prosperity Project as a significant support mechanism through which the government provides local people with infrastructure and financial support for economic activities, with many villages in Gorontalo already designated as LAUTRA program locations. He said that with Gorontalo joining PEMSEA, he believes local leaders will place increasing focus on the blue economy.

2.115. **Ms. Anabelle Cayabyab**, Provincial Environment Officer of Cavite, Philippines asked about the specific percent targets or way-forward milestones for the initiatives presented, given that budgets and investments have been capitalized on coastal preservation, improvement, and innovation to achieve blue economy goals.

2.116. **Dr. Wakita,** as moderator, helped rephrase the question to ask what the prioritized flagship project or program is for each locality and local government to achieve a specific goal.

2.117. **Ms. Cayabyab** further clarified that in Guiuan, conditions are quite different from her province, which is part of Manila Bay, so while Guiuan focuses on preservation, her area focuses more on rehabilitation. For Bataan, she noted that the provincial approach highlights corporate social responsibility and is initiating projects targeting the blue economy, and asked what percent targets have been set to achieve those goals.

2.118. **Dr. Husain** responded that under the Marine and Fisheries Sector Program established during the governor's term, the target for blue economy objectives will be achieved through a combination of growing regulation support and stakeholder collaboration. He cited the national program, the Red White Fishermen Village program, or Kampung Nelayan Merah Putih — under which fishers are being provided with modern GPS equipment, modern public lighting, and other technology at no cost, and said that the budget for these efforts is large and has the potential to grow further.

2.119. **Mayor Gonzales-Kwan** shared that her vision for the A7 is to make the collaboration stronger and more improved across all seven municipalities. She recounted the origin of the alliance: upon becoming mayor, she grew tired of apprehending fishers from other municipalities who came to Guiuan to fish, and since the mayors of those municipalities were her friends, she approached them with a proposal to collaborate,

invoking the local government code that allows local governments to consolidate for a beneficial purpose. She said her vision includes more research and training for communities across all seven municipalities to improve their capacities, and that she specifically envisions rehabilitating the Pearl Island that was productive in the past, for the benefit not only of Guiuan but of all seven municipalities.

2.120. **Governor Garcia** responded that as a pilot province for DENR's Project TRANSFORM, Bataan is fortunate to depend on the resources of private partners and stakeholders, since part of the province is industrialized and the locators and plants operating in the province share the goal of protecting the environment and building resilience. Through these resources, the province is able to pursue the expansion of mangrove areas, helping companies in terms of their corporate image but more importantly helping fisherfolk communities have sustainable livelihoods through fishing. He noted that the coastal side of the peninsula facing Manila Bay is susceptible to storm surges, particularly during the monsoon season, and that mangrove expansion on that side also helps protect against storm surges and flooding affecting coastal communities. He said the province's role is to help mobilize and channel the funds from private sector partners so that their effect for the people is maximized.

2.121. **Panel Reflections, Synthesis and Closing of Panel 2**

2.122. **Dr. Kazumi Wakita** noted that while the audience likely had more questions, time was limited. She invited short closing comments from the panelists, particularly any reflections from the session, future perspectives, and expectations or requests for the network — for the PNLG, for collaboration between local governments, and between local governments and academic institutions.

2.123. **Governor Garcia** shared that Bataan has been trying to take advantage of carbon credits but has not yet been able to set up the necessary system in the Philippines. He said the province has been looking for partners and experts who can help local governments take advantage of carbon credits for conservation and preservation efforts being undertaken across the Philippines, and appealed to PEMSEA or anyone present who might be able to help, so that conservation and preservation can be made more economically viable.

2.124. **Mayor Gonzales-Kwan** thanked PEMSEA for the invitation and said it was her first time in Busan and that she had learned a great deal. She expressed confidence that upon returning home, something great would happen in her municipality. She emphasized one key point: that when the A7 collaborated and grouped together, they did not surrender their autonomy. As local governments, they retain separate political jurisdictions, but use that autonomy to consolidate and collaborate. And as a result,

they are being recognized by funding entities such as RARE, Coastal 500, and various NGOs, and have signed a memorandum of agreement with the provincial government that commits resources to the collaboration. She said that the fishermen are happy because they have a sustainable future, and that there is now hope for the seven municipalities collaborating and funding together. Her advice to other LGUs: rather than beginning the conversation by asking what is within their jurisdiction, they should ask what resources they have, because if sharing responsibility and resources is necessary, the more the better for the people.

2.125. **Governor Yaung** expressed happiness at attending the forum and said he has learned much and is happy to meet all those present. He expressed deep gratitude to PEMSEA for enabling collaboration and for the ideas and material support for the sea. He mentioned NGOs including NCC that have helped Kep, and cited support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB). He said he and his colleagues look forward to seeing the real practice in the field during the field visit planned for the following day, which he expects will help Kep develop better action plans going forward.

2.126. **Dr. Husain** noted that it was his second time attending the PNLG Forum, having first joined in 2023 in Thailand while in a previous government role, and that he was at that time also part of an MOU signing. He said he can see that PEMSEA's support strengthens his key belief in collaboration and that he intends to call on other regions to join, so that Gorontalo's collaboration can expand. He reiterated that collaboration is the key strategy for sustainability.

2.127. **Dr. Kwon** reflected that coming from an economics background, the concept of the blue economy had previously been something he could not quite touch or see. He said he has learned many lessons from local governments at this forum that are helping translate that concept into tangible reality. And that as an economist, he believes the key step is to impose a price on public-sector ecosystem services, because this is the way to link conservation efforts smoothly into formal financing systems. He said that successful and growing programs will find their way to global foundation financing and formal banking mechanisms, and expressed gratitude to the local governments for the lessons they shared.

2.128. **Dr. Wakita** closed by thanking all the panelists. In response to Governor Garcia's comment on carbon credits, she noted that PEMSEA has been working on blue carbon and that more information would be available in the sessions planned for the following day. She then invited the audience to join in thanking the speakers.

2.129. CLOSING OF THE JOINT LEARNING FORUM

2.130. **Ms. Aimee Gonzales,** Executive Director of the PEMSEA Resource Facility, delivered the closing remarks. She thanked the organizers of the Joint PNLG and PNLC Learning Forum, namely the PNLG Secretariat, PNLC Secretariat, KMI, KIOST, Coastal 500, PRF, and the host, the Metropolitan City of Busan. She noted that the presentations and discussions shared by local government units, academic partners, and think tanks over the course of the Forum illustrated what coastal provinces, cities, and towns can achieve through dedication and strategic vision.

2.131. ED Gonzales observed that the Forum, held under the theme "Empowering Coastal Cities for a Blue Future," had demonstrated the core strength of the PNLG–PNLC partnership: bridging policy with science. She highlighted that the synergy between local government units and academic and scientific institutions transforms scientific data into actionable coastal policy, and that discussions on nature-based, locally driven approaches had advanced sustainable, climate-resilient local blue economies. She further noted that the exchange of best practices, spanning blue carbon ecosystems to integrated coastal and river basin management—had provided participants with concrete paths forward.

2.132. She emphasized, however, that the success of the Forum would ultimately be measured not by the presentations delivered, but by the actions participants carried back to their respective coasts. In closing, she called on delegates to carry forward three commitments as they departed Busan:

- Strengthen Local Action – to implement the governance frameworks and technical tools discussed at the Forum within their respective local coastal management plans;

- Sustain the Synergy – to maintain active links between local governments and local learning centers, ensuring that policies remain grounded in rigorous science; and

- Deepen Knowledge Sharing – to continue city-to-city and institution-to-institution exchanges beyond the Forum.

2.133. ED Gonzales concluded by again thanking the host, the organizers, the interpreters, and all delegates for their time and insights, and expressed hope that the Forum's shared efforts would continue to yield resilient, thriving coastal communities across East Asia.

3. PNLG GENERAL ASSEMBLY

3.1. The 2026 PNLG General Assembly commenced at 09:30 UTC+9 on 9 September 2026 at the Grand Ballroom, Paradise Hotel Busan. **Ms. CHO Jin-suk**, Director of Maritime Capital Policy Division, Bureau of Maritime Affairs, Agriculture and Fisheries, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea, opened the session as the Emcee, welcomed the participants, and introduced the distinguished guests present. She then handed the floor over to **Dr. Ma. Lucille Nava**, President, PNLG and Governor, Provincial Government of Guimaras, Philippines, who served as the Chair.

3.2. On behalf of PNLG, Dr. Nava extended a warm welcome to all members and expressed sincere gratitude to Busan Metropolitan City for hosting this year's Forum and for their warm hospitality.

3.3. She noted that this year's Forum, held under the theme "Empowering Coastal Cities for a Blue Future," focuses on strengthening local resilience, advancing sustainable blue economy pathways, and fostering collaborative action among coastal communities. As frontliners in coastal and ocean governance, she stressed, it is incumbent upon local governments to be proactive and steadfast in protecting the environment and natural resources on which we all depend for food, jobs, security, and stability.

3.4. Opening Remarks

3.5. **Mr. LIN Huaiyuan**, Executive Deputy Secretary-General of PNLG Secretariat and Level II Bureau Rank Official of Xiamen Municipal Bureau of Ocean Development, China, delivered the opening remarks.

3.6. On behalf of the PNLG Secretariat, Mr. LIN welcomed all participants to the General Assembly. He expressed his gratitude to the Busan Metropolitan City Government and the organizing team for their hard work and dedication. He noted that since its establishment in 2006, PNLG has remained committed to the principles of Integrated Coastal Management. With the Annual Forum gaining strong momentum through successive host cities, he reaffirmed the Secretariat's readiness to deepen exchanges with all members and jointly advance sustainable development across the region.

3.7. Presentation and Adoption of 2026 PNLG General Assembly Agenda

3.8. The PNLG Secretariat presented the forum agenda (Annex 1, Item 6) for consideration of the PNLG members.

3.9. **Decision**: The agenda, as presented, was approved by the General Assembly.

3.10. **PNLG Work Progress 2026 and Work Plan 2027**

3.11. **Key Achievements of the PNLG**

3.12. **Prof. FANG Qinhua**, Deputy Secretary-General of PNLG Secretariat and Deputy Director of Coastal and Ocean Management Institute (COMI), Xiamen University provided a review of PNLG's key achievements over the years:

- **Promoting Institutional Development**
  - Expanding membership: Actively engaging local governments and research institutions, the PNLG has grown from 18 to 60 members, covering 10 countries in the East Asian Seas region, with its regional influence continuing to rise;
  - Strengthening strategic guidance: Participating in the development of the PNLG Strategic Action Plan (SAP) and facilitating the adoption of key documents such as Preah Sihanouk Declaration, Tangerang Initiative and Busan Declaration, to support regional sustainable development through local collaboration;
  - Ensuring smooth leadership transitions: Successfully completing the election cycle, optimizing operational mechanisms, and giving full play to the demonstrative and leading role of local governments.

- **Organizing Core Meetings and International Engagement**
  - **PNLG Executive Committee Meetings** are convened annually to review new membership applications, advance the annual work plan, and coordinate preparations for the Annual Forum.
  - **PNLG Annual Forums** have been successfully convened four times in Xiamen, with the Secretariat providing support to other host local governments. These forums serve as an effective platform for sharing experiences and promoting peer learning among members.
  - The Secretariat also actively participates in international meetings such as the East Asian Seas Partnership Council Meeting and other regional governance platforms to promote PNLG activities, share the network's achievements, and enhance the organization's visibility and influence in the region.

- **Advancing Capacity-Building**
  - Training programs: In partnership with PEMSEA, PNLC, Xiamen University, and the First Institute of Oceanography (MNR), conducting regular

training sessions for PNLG members and sharing quality online training resources from within and beyond the region, with a focus on strengthening ICM capacity.
    - Knowledge products: Developing PNLG brochures and other communication materials to systematically document the organization's development history and members' practical achievements, providing knowledge support for capacity-building.
    - Institutional Collaboration: Facilitating the signing of Letter of Cooperation between PNLG and PNLC and Letter of Intent between the Government of Tangerang Regency and PNLC, with a view to deepening collaboration between PNLG and PNLC and strengthening joint capacity-building efforts.

- **Strengthening Member Engagement**
    - Outreach and mobilization: Conducting visits and outreach to encourage local governments to host the Annual Forum and actively participate in PNLG activities, enhancing organizational cohesion and dynamism.
    - Brand exchange events: Organizing signature events such as the PNLG-PNLC Joint Workshop and encouraging member participation in international platforms including the World Ocean Week in Xiamen, to expand cooperation networks.
    - Communication mechanisms: Maintaining updated member contact lists, promptly disseminating activity information, and ensuring smooth and effective communication.

3.13. **2026 Work Progress**

3.14. Prof. FANG Qinhua outlined the following accomplishments in 2026 in support of the implementation of the PNLG Strategic Action Plan (2022-2030):

- **Convening the 17th PNLG Executive Committee Meeting**
    - Held online on April 16, 2026.
    - Focused on preparations for the 2026 Annual Forum, new member recruitment, and ways to strengthen member engagement.
    - Laid a solid foundation for this year's Forum

- **Identifying Candidates for PNLG Vice President**
    - Dr. Ma. Lucille Nava was sworn in as PNLG President at the 2025 General Assembly.
    - The Vice President position remains vacant, with no nominations received by the extended deadline of December 31, 2025.

- Proposal: continue identifying suitable candidates until the 2028 leadership transition.
- In the interim, the Secretary-General will act on behalf of the President if needed.

- **Membership Development**
  - In February 2026, the PNLG Secretariat received a membership application from Atauro Island, Timor-Leste.
  - The application was reviewed in accordance with the PNLG Charter.
  - The review opinion was submitted to and approved by the Executive Committee.
  - At today's General Assembly, the representative of Atauro Island will sign the PNLG Charter, formally joining PNLG as a new member.
  - This brings the total membership to 55 regular members (including the merger of two local government members in Viet Nam) and 5 associate members.

- **Capacity-Building for PNLG Members**

  Youth development
  - With financial support from the Xiamen Municipal Government, the PNLG Secretariat, in partnership with Xiamen University, plans to organize the "East Asian Seas Youth Exchange on Marine Biodiversity Conservation" during the 2026 World Ocean Week in Xiamen.
  - The event, themed "Youth Action for Marine Biodiversity," targets university students from countries with PNLG member local governments.
  - It combines academic exchange with hands-on activities to enhance youth professionalism and promote regional experience sharing.

  Online training resources
  - Quality online training opportunities within and beyond the region are disseminated to members in a timely manner.
  - To date, multiple online events under the GEF/UNDP/ASEAN Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) Project, led by the PRF, have been shared, offering valuable learning opportunities for members.

- **Preparation for the 2026 PNLG Annual Forum**
  - The 2026 PNLG Annual Forum is being held in Busan, Republic of Korea, from September 8 to 10.
  - The Secretariat, in close coordination with the PRF, has provided full support to Busan in its preparatory efforts and on-site arrangements.
  - Through multiple rounds of online coordination, key tasks have been

completed, including agenda development, material preparation, participant invitations, and attendee list compilation.

- The Secretariat has also played a key role in information dissemination and stakeholder coordination, providing solid support for the Forum's success.

3.15. **Financial Management**

3.16. For 2026, no new expenditures were recorded from the PNLG Xiamen account, with a current balance of RMB 500,630 (approximately USD 74,000). From the Manila account, approximately USD 3,489 was disbursed for the participation of the PNLG President and invited special experts in the Annual Forum, and USD 200 for the production of a plaque for the host city. The current balance of the Manila account stands at USD 76,032.69 as of August 31. Please note that this balance does not yet reflect the above-mentioned expenses, which are still to be settled. In addition, the PNLG Secretariat's routine operational expenses are covered by a special allocation from the Xiamen Municipal Government.

3.17. For 2027, PNLG funds will be primarily allocated to cover the participation of Executive Committee members in the 18th PNLG Executive Committee Meeting, the attendance of the PNLG President and invited special experts at the 2027 PNLG Annual Forum, and related meeting support costs. The Xiamen Municipal Government will continue to provide funding support for the Secretariat's routine operations, covering staff recruitment, capacity-building, and outreach activities.

3.18. **Priorities for 2027**

3.19. Prof. FANG outlined the following focus areas:

- **Organizing key meetings**: Convene the 18th PNLG Executive Committee Meeting and prepare for the 2027 PNLG Annual Forum to ensure the orderly progress of all activities.

- **Advance the election of the PNLG Vice President:** Continue to solicit nominations for the position, strengthen the leadership team, and fully leverage the organization's leadership capacity.

- **Membership development:** Actively engage more local governments and research institutions that share the ICM vision to join PNLG, continuing to expand ICM coverage in the East Asian Seas region.

- **Capacity-building:** Focus on the practical needs of PNLG members by organizing training sessions, workshops, and exchange activities in collaboration with partner institutions, facilitating the sharing of ICM experiences and capacity enhancement across the region.

3.20. Prof. FANG expressed his sincere gratitude to the Busan Metropolitan City Government for hosting the event, PRF for its organizational support, and all members of the PNLG, PNLC, and partner organizations for their ongoing collaboration.

3.21. **Decisions**:

- The General Assembly approved the 2027 Work Plan and Budget of the PNLG Secretariat.

- The General Assembly endorsed the continued operational and financial support from the Xiamen Municipal Government.

3.22. **Implementation of PNLG Strategic Action Plan**

3.23. Ms. Nancy Bermas, Regional Project Manager, PEMSEA Resource Facility, presented the PNLG Strategic Action Plan (SAP) 2022–2030 implementation. She recalled the evolution of the SAP framework from 2011–2015 to the current 2022–2030 SAP, which is structured around three interconnected components—Governance and Partnerships, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting, and Management Programs—and aligned with the SDGs, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the Paris Agreement, and the Sendai Framework for DRR.

3.24. Ms. Bermas reported on the 2026 SAP reporting process. The reporting template was sent to 16 PNLG members on 5 August, completed templates were received from 9 members by 19 August, and reporting was consolidated before 9 September. Members are localizing the SDGs by adapting them to their specific contexts, with priority management programs aligned with SDGs 6, 11, 13, and 14.

3.25. She presented examples of local implementation, including Koh Kong's water quality monitoring and waste management, Sihanoukville's wastewater treatment plant and mangrove restoration, Xiamen's Xiatanwei Mangrove Ecological Restoration Project, Bataan's Project TRANSFORM, Batangas' Environment Laboratory and MPA network, Guimaras' Forest Tree Park Management Plan, and Dili, Liquica, and Manatuto's integrated waste management and blue carbon programs.

3.26. Ms. Bermas also introduced the Routledge book series on Paradiplomacy and City Diplomacy, featuring a volume on marine environmental governance in East Asia.

3.27. The General Assembly was requested to review the SAP reporting process and recommend strategies to improve member compliance, showcase collective contributions to the SDGs, and enhance PNLG's visibility at the global level, in the lead-up to the 2027 East Asian Seas Congress and the 2028 United Nations Ocean Conference.

3.28. **Mr. Bun Yaung** of Kep, Cambodia proposed that, to strengthen and expand PNLG membership, efforts should focus on engaging international financial institutions such as the IMF, World Bank, and ADB, as well as other countries—including those without coastlines. He emphasized that PNLG's mission is marine conservation and the sustainability of ecosystems and biodiversity. He noted that it is not enough to simply recognize the efforts of local government members; it is equally important to raise global awareness among all stakeholders of what PNLG is doing and to mobilize blue finance to ensure the sustainability of the network.

3.29. **Ms. Anabelle Cayabyab** of Cavite, Philippines raised a clarification regarding the compliance of PNLG members in SAP progress reporting. She noted that the required 50% participation of members had not been achieved in several meetings, and asked whether such a threshold is technically and legally required to proceed with the Forum. She also suggested that, given the gap between the general commitments stipulated in the PNLG Charter and the specific obligations of members, the PNLG EC may wish to consider developing a specific policy on member participation and reporting, based on past experience and observations of the Secretariat.

3.30. **Dr. Aryanto Husain** of Gorontalo, Indonesia acknowledged that his province had not yet submitted its SAP report and committed to sending it afterwards. He shared Gorontalo's ongoing work aligned with SDGs 6, 11, 13, and 14, including water quality monitoring in rivers, lakes, and seas; waste clean-up campaigns under a national program; early warning and community-based risk reduction; and mangrove and coastal ecosystem rehabilitation and protection, including an MPA in Tomini Bay.

3.31. **Conclusion**: The General Assembly took note of the SAP reporting progress and the observations raised by members on participation and reporting compliance.

3.32. **Recommendations**:

- Consider engaging international financial institutions and other partners as members to mobilize blue finance and expand PNLG's global reach.
- Request the PNLG EC to review the PNLG Charter and consider developing specific policies on member participation and SAP reporting compliance.
- Encourage members to submit outstanding SAP reports and strengthen reporting compliance ahead of the 2027 EAS Congress and 2028 UN Ocean Conference.

3.33. **Induction of New PNLG Members**

3.34. The PNLG Secretariat provided an overview of the review process and criteria for accepting Atauro Island, Timor-Leste as the 55th regular member. The application materials from Atauro Island, Timor-Leste for joining PNLG were received in February and reviewed by the PNLG Secretariat based on the requirements of the PNLG Charter. The recommendations were then submitted to the PNLG Executive Committee members, who approved the application after deliberation. The PNLG Secretariat also emphasized the responsibility of Atauro Island, Timor-Leste to observe the provisions of the PNLG Charter as a new member.

3.35. Dr. Nava called on the representative from Atauro Island, Timor-Leste for the signing of the PNLG Charter, and invited the representative to render a short message.

3.36. The representative of Atauro Island, Timor-Leste expressed appreciation for the island's admission as a regular PNLG member. He highlighted Atauro's marine biodiversity, safeguarded through a Marine Protected Area and 17 Locally Managed Marine Areas, and shared the island's vision for "LINDOS Ataúro"—Clean, Innovative, Natural, Developed, Organized, and Sustainable. He reaffirmed Atauro's commitment to working within the PNLG framework on waste management, marine conservation, sustainable fisheries, and resilient community livelihoods.

3.37. The induction was witnessed by Dr. Ma. Lucille Nava, PNLG President, Ms. Aimee Gonzales, Executive Director of the PEMSEA Resource Facility, and Mr. LIN Huaiyuan, Executive Deputy Secretary-General of the PNLG Secretariat.

3.38. **Conclusion**: The General Assembly endorsed the admission of Atauro Island, Timor-Leste as the 55th regular member of the PNLG and witnessed the signing of the PNLG Charter by its representative, signifying its formal membership and commitment to the network's principles and objectives.

3.39. **Adoption of Busan Declaration on Promoting Local Coastal Resilience and Sustainable Blue Economy**

3.40. **Mr. OH Seok-keun**, Deputy Mayor for Future Innovation of Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea, presented the Busan Declaration on Promoting Local Coastal Resilience and Sustainable Blue Economy. The Declaration reaffirms PNLG members' shared commitment to sustainable coastal development and resilient blue economies in the East Asian Seas, and commits them to four actions: strengthening the Source-to-Sea approach to reduce land- and river-based pollution; conserving blue carbon ecosystems and expanding nature-based solutions for climate resilience; advancing a

sustainable and inclusive blue economy; and strengthening partnerships while expanding knowledge sharing through PNLG. The Declaration was adopted on 9 September 2026 in Busan, Republic of Korea.

3.41. Members that signed the Declaration, including Kep Province, Koh Kong Province, and Preah Sihanouk Province of Cambodia; Xiamen of China; Gorontalo Province and Tangerang Regency of Indonesia; Bataan Province, Batangas Province, Cavite Province, and Guimaras Province of the Philippines; Ansan City and Busan Metropolitan City of the Republic of Korea; and Atauro Island, Dili City, Manatuto City of Timor-Leste; the Coastal and Ocean Management Institute of Xiamen University; the Dongying Huanhai Institute of Marine Conservation and Development; and the First Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources of China, took a group photo.

3.42. Additional members, including Kampot Province of Cambodia, Dongying City of China, Port Klang of Malaysia, Liquica City of Timor-Leste, and the Fujian Institute for Sustainable Oceans (Xiamen University), completed their signatures in written form, further demonstrating broad recognition of and strong support for the regional marine sustainable development agenda.

3.43. **Decision**:

- The General Assembly officially adopted the Busan Declaration, reaffirming members' shared commitment to coastal resilience and a sustainable blue economy.

- The PNLG Secretariat was further instructed to continue engaging other PNLG members to sign the Declaration, thereby demonstrating to the global ocean community that PNLG stands united in advancing coastal resilience and a sustainable blue economy through concrete local policies, programmes, and partnerships.

3.44. **Awarding a Plaque of Appreciation to the 2026 PNLG Forum Host**

3.45. Dr. Nava expressed her gratitude to Busan, the host of this year's annual Forum and its contribution to the promotion of ICM. She, together with Ms. Aimee Gonzales, Mr. LIN Huaiyuan, and Dr. Yonvitner presented the Plaque of Appreciation to the representative of Busan, Mr. OH Seok-keun.

3.46. **Conclusion**: The General Assembly acknowledged and expressed appreciation to the Busan Metropolitan City Government for successfully hosting the 2026 PNLG Annual Forum and for its continued leadership in promoting Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) in the region.

3.47. **Announcement of the 2027 PNLG Forum Host Local Government**

3.48. Dr. Nava announced Tangerang Regency, Indonesia as the local government host for the 2027 PNLG Annual Forum and invited Mr. OH Seok-keun to hand over the PNLG flag to the representative of Tangerang Regency, **Mrs. Prima Saras Puspa**, Assistant for Government Affairs and Public Welfare, Tangerang Regency, Indonesia.

3.49. Mrs. Prima Saras Puspa, representing the Regent of Tangerang Regency, Indonesia, expressed sincere appreciation to Busan Metropolitan City for its excellent leadership and hospitality in hosting the 2026 PNLG Forum.

3.50. She stated that receiving the PNLG Flag symbolizes not only the role of the next host city but also a responsibility and shared trust to carry forward the spirit of partnership for healthy oceans, resilient coasts, and sustainable communities. She highlighted Tangerang Regency's coastal and mangrove ecosystems and emphasized that hosting the 2027 EAS Congress and PNLG Forum is about building a meeting place for ideas, experience, solutions, and friendship.

3.51. She invited all PNLG members to Tangerang Regency in 2027 and reaffirmed its commitment to the shared journey: "One ocean, shared responsibility, a sustainable future." Her speech was followed by a short video on Tangerang Regency.

3.52. **Conclusion**: The General Assembly noted the formal announcement of Tangerang Regency, Indonesia, as the host of the 2027 PNLG Annual Forum.

3.53. **Closing Remarks**

3.54. In her closing remarks, Dr. Ma. Lucille Nava, President of PNLG, expressed gratitude and hope as the 2026 PNLG General Assembly in Busan came to a close. Dr. Nava noted that, beyond sharing ideas, experiences, challenges, innovations, and aspirations, the delegates had strengthened their sense of community, united by one shared responsibility to protect the blue spaces that sustain their people and future. She highlighted the discussions on blue carbon innovation, marine biodiversity, and sustainable local blue economy pathways, as well as the signing of the Busan Declaration and the admission of Atauro Island, Timor-Leste as the Network's newest member. These were cited as milestones showing that PNLG is growing in numbers, relevance, influence, and shared purpose. Dr. Nava emphasized that the Assembly's greatest outcome is the commitment delegates take home, and called on members to build a network where no local government faces coastal challenges alone, where the blue economy delivers sustainable livelihoods, healthy ecosystems, and inclusive opportunities, and where PNLG moves local governments to act together for collective impact. She thanked the speakers and delegates for their engagement, the Busan

Metropolitan City for its hospitality and organization, and the PEMSEA Resource Facility, the PNLG Secretariat, the PNLC Secretariat, and partners for their support, and encouraged participants to join the field trips showcasing Busan's coastal resilience initiatives. Dr. Nava then declared the 2026 PNLG General Assembly officially closed, and announced that the Network would meet again in Tangerang in 2027.

3.55. The 2026 PNLG Forum adjourned at 11:30 AM, UTC+9.

4. FIELD TRIPS

4.1. **Technical Tour A:** Marine Environment and Maritime Heritage (9 September 2026)

The technical tour conducted on 9 September showcased marine environment protection and maritime heritage in Busan.

- The participants first visited the Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM), where they were introduced to marine pollution incident response and cleanup activities. They toured the wave tank with an artificial shoreline that recreates real coastal and wave conditions, and observed a demonstration of oil skimmer operations for recovering spilled oil from the sea surface.
- Subsequently, the participants visited the National Maritime Museum of Korea, exploring Korea's maritime culture and navigation history through its collections, including ships, nautical charts, and compasses. They also visited the marine life aquarium and the special exhibition on mangrove ecosystems.

4.2. **Technical Tour B:** Nakdong River Estuary Eco Center (10 September 2026)

The technical tour conducted on 10 September showcased the ecological restoration and conservation of the Nakdong River Estuary.

- The participants were welcomed by the Center Director with a video presentation introducing the ecological value of the Nakdong River Estuary and Eulsukdo Island. They then divided into two groups and rotated between the Exhibition Hall, featuring the "Four Seasons of Eulsukdo" and the Nakdong River Estuary Archive, and the Wildlife Treatment Center, focusing on the treatment and rehabilitation of wild animals.
- Participants toured the site, enjoying views of the Nakdong River Estuary and visiting a former marine waste treatment facility restored as an ecological space.
- The participants reassembled at the K-water Busan Regional Office to view the Nakdong River Flood Control Center from its observation deck.

ANNEX 1. AGENDA ITEMS

Day 1: Tuesday, 8 September 2026	
Time	**Agenda**
10:00-12:00 **Opening Ceremony**	
10:00-10:10	**Cultural Performance**
10:10–10:20	**Declaration of the Opening and Introduction of Distinguished Guests**
10:20-10:30	**Opening Remarks** **Dr. Ma. Lucille Nava** President, PNLG; Governor, Provincial Government of Guimaras, Philippines **Ms. Aimee Gonzales** Executive Director, PEMSEA Resource Facility
10:30-10:35	**Welcome Remarks** **Mr. OH Seok-keun** Vice Mayor for Future Innovation, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
10:35-10:40	**Congratulatory Remarks** **Ms. NAM Myung-sook** Vice Chairperson of the Maritime City and Safety Committee of the Busan Metropolitan Council, Republic of Korea
10:40-10:45	**Congratulatory Remarks (Video Message)** **Mr. Peter Thomson** UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean
10:45-10:55	**Keynote Address** **Mr. SEO Jeong-ho** Deputy Minister for Marine Policy at the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries (MOF), Republic of Korea
10:55-11:10	**Group Photo**
11:10-11:15	**Closing of the Opening Ceremony**
11:15-12:00	**Individual Media Interviews / Coffee Break**
12:00-13:30	**Welcome Luncheon** **Hosted by: Mr. OH Seok-keun** Vice Mayor for Future Innovation, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
13:30-17:30 **PNLG-PNLC Joint Learning Forum** **In collaboration with KMI, KIOST & Coastal 500** **MC: April Ann Tigulo**, Secretariat Coordinator, PEMSEA Resource Facility	

13:30-13:40	**Opening Remarks** **Dr. Ma. Lucille Nava** President, PNLG; Governor, Provincial Government of Guimaras, Philippines **Dr. Yonvitner** President, PNLC; Director, Center for Coastal and Marine Resources Studies, IPB University, Indonesia
13:40-13:50	**Context Setting** **Dr. FANG Qinhua** Deputy Secretary-General, PNLG Secretariat; Vice President, PNLC; Deputy Director, Coastal and Ocean Management Institute, Xiamen University, China
Session 1 **Theme: Local Pathways for Blue Carbon and Nature-Based Solutions** **Moderator: Ms. Nancy Bermas**, Regional Project Manager, PEMSEA Resource Facility	
13:50-14:05	**Keynote Presentation (Video Message)** **Scaling Blue Carbon and Nature-based Solutions through Government Action** **Mr. Jonas Leones** Chair, EAS Partnership Council Undersecretary, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippines
14:05-14:15	**From Source to Sea: Unlocking the Watershed–Estuary Nexus for Climate Resilience in Aklan** **Dr. Yasmin Primavera-Tirol** Professor, Aklan State University - New Washington, Philippines
14:15-14:25	**Qingdao Longwan Seagrass Bed Protection: Nature-based Solutions through Community Co-management** **Dr. ZHAO Linlin** Professor, Marine Ecology Research Center, First Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources of China Deputy Director of China-PEMSEA Sustainable Coastal Management Cooperation Center
14:25-14:35	**Korea's Tidal Flat Restoration : Public-Private Collaboration and Resident Participation** **Dr. Young-Nam Kim** Department Head, Marine Protection and Restoration Department, Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM)
14:35-14:45	**Ecological Restoration of Eulsukdo Island in the Nakdong River Estuary, Busan** **Dr. Jinwon Seo** Director, Nakdong Estuary Eco Center, Busan

14:45-15:15	**Q&A and Synthesis** **Moderator: Ms. Nancy Bermas**
15:15-15:40	**Break**
Session 2 **Theme: Capitalizing on Coasts: Financing and Innovating Local Blue Economies** **Moderator: Dr. Kazumi Wakita**, Professor, Tokai University, Japan	
15:40-15:55	**Keynote Presentation** **Financing the Blue Future: Driving the Local Blue Economy** **Dr. Suk-Jae Kwon** Technical Session Chair, EAS Partnership Council Principal Research Scientist, Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology
15:55-16:05	**Kep Marine Resource Management** **Mr. Bun Yaung** Deputy Governor, Kep Province Spokesperson, Kep Provincial Administration, Cambodia
16:05-16:15	**Blue Partnerships: Stakeholder Convergence in Bataan's ICM Program** **Hon. Jose Enrique S. Garcia III** Provincial Governor, Province of Bataan, Philippines
16:15-16:25	**Sustaining Tomini Bay, Gorontalo's Strategy towards a Blue Economy** **Dr. Aryanto Husain** Head of Marine and Fisheries Office Provincial Government of Gorontalo, Indonesia
16:25-16:35	**Resilience Beyond Borders: The Power of Local Government Partnerships** **Hon. Annaliza Gonzales-Kwan** Mayor Municipality of Guiuan, Eastern Samar, Philippines
16:35-17:05	**Q&A and Synthesis** **Moderator: Dr. Kazumi Wakita**
17:05-17:15	**Closing Remarks** **Ms. Aimee Gonzales** Executive Director, PEMSEA Resource Facility
18:30-20:30	**Welcome Dinner** **Hosted by: Mr. Chun Jae-soo,** Mayor, Busan Metropolitan City, RO Korea

Day 2: Wednesday, 9 September 2026	
Time	**Agenda**
09:30-11:10 **General Assembly** **Chair: Dr. Ma. Lucille Nava**, President, PNLG; Governor, Provincial Government of Guimaras, Philippines	
09:30-09:35	**Opening Message** **Mr. LIN Huaiyuan** Executive Deputy Secretary-General of PNLG Secretariat Level Ⅱ Bureau Rank Official of Xiamen Municipal Bureau of Ocean Development
09:35-09:40	**Presentation and Adoption of 2026 PNLG General Assembly Agenda** PNLG Secretariat
09:40-10:00	**PNLG Work Progress 2026 and Work Plan 2027** **Prof. FANG Qinhua** Deputy Secretary-General of PNLG Secretariat Deputy Director of Coastal and Ocean Management Institute (COMI), Xiamen University
10:00-10:15	**Implementation of PNLG Strategic Action Plan** **Ms. Nancy Bermas** Regional Project Manager, PEMSEA Resource Facility
10:15-10:25	**Induction of New PNLG member** -**Presentation of the Review Result of New Member:** PNLG Secretariat -**Signing of PNLG Charter by New Member** **Witnessed by:** **Dr. Ma. Lucille Nava**, President, PNLG **Ms. Aimee Gonzales**, Executive Director, PEMSEA Resource Facility **Mr. LIN Huaiyuan**, Executive Deputy Secretary-General of PNLG Secretariat -**Message by the New Member: Mr. Mateus Belo**, President of Atauro Administrative Authority, Timor-Leste
10:25-10:40	**Adoption of Busan Declaration** **on Promoting Local Coastal Resilience and Sustainable Blue Economy** -**Presentation of Busan Declaration: Mr. OH Seok-keun,** Vice Mayor for Future Innovation of Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea -**Group Photo by Heads of Delegations**
10:40-10:45	**Awarding a Plaque of Appreciation to the 2026 PNLG Forum Host** **Presented by:** **Ms. Aimee Gonzales**, Executive Director, PEMSEA Resource Facility **Mr. LIN Huaiyuan**, Executive Deputy Secretary-General of PNLG Secretariat

	Accepted by: **Mr. OH Seok-keun,** Vice Mayor for Future Innovation of Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea **Witnessed by:** **Dr. Ma. Lucille Nava,** President, PNLG **Dr. Yonvitner,** President, PNLC
10:45-10:55	**Announcement of the 2027 PNLG Forum Host Local Government** -**Official Handover of PNLG Flag** **Presented by: Mr. OH Seok-keun,** Vice Mayor for Future Innovation of Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea **Accepted by: Mrs. Prima Saras Puspa**, Assistant for Government Affairs and Public Welfare, Tangerang Regency, Indonesia -**Message by the Host City of the 2027 PNLG Forum** **Mrs. Prima Saras Puspa** Assistant for Government Affairs and Public Welfare, Tangerang Regency, Indonesia
10:55-11:00	**Closing Remarks** **Dr. Ma. Lucille Nava** President, PNLG Governor, Provincial Government of Guimaras, Philippines
11:00-11:10	**Group Photo**
12:00-13:30	**Lunch**
13:30-17:00	**Site Visit Location (Site A)** **Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM)** - Introduction to marine environmental management and pollution response **National Maritime Museum of Korea** - Explore Korea's maritime history, culture, and navigation technology - Visit exhibitions featuring maritime artifacts and marine ecosystems
18:00-20:00	**Networking Dinner** Casual Networking Session **Venue:** Bay 101 Gallery Hall
Day 3: Thursday, 10 September 2026	
Time	**Agenda**
09:30-15:00	**Site Visit Location (Site B)** **Nakdong Estuary Eco Center- Exhibition Hall / Wildlife Medical Center** - Explore the ecological value and biodiversity of the Nakdong Estuary - Learn about migratory birds and wetland ecosystems through exhibitions

	- Visit the Wildlife Medical Center and learn about wildlife rescue and rehabilitation
15:30-	**Departure** Airport/Station Shuttle Service

ANNEX 2. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

No.	Member	Name	Affiliation and Title
Regular Members			
Cambodia			
1	Kep Province	Bun Yaung	Deputy Governor of Kep Province, Cambodia
2	Koh Kong Province	Chhi Va	Governor of Koh Kong Province, Cambodia
3		On Sothearith	Deputy Governor of Koh Kong Province, Cambodia
4		Ouch Touch	Director of Administration, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia
5		Heng Kimchan	Deputy Director of Administration, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia
6		Vin Sareth	Director of HRM Division, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia
7		Ouch Punlork	Director of Planning and Investment Division, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia
8		Phouthang Sereyvuthy	Mayor of Khemrak Phumin City, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia
9		Chea Chankanha	Governor of Sre Ambel District, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia
10		Krouch Boreyseyha	Governor of Botum Sakor District, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia
11		Hun Marady	Director of Environment Department, Cambodia
12		Sok Sotheavy	Director of Women Affair Department, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia
13		Khloem Koky	Director of Department, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia

No.	Member	Name	Affiliation and Title
14		Saychhun Singhaphan	Vice Chief of Chamber of Commerce, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia
15		Svay Sokunthea	Deputy Director of DEF, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia
16		Leng Bunthea	Deputy Director of Business Department, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia
17		Sam Vannvorleak Thyda	Koh Kong Governor's Assistant, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia
18	Preah Sihanouk Province	Prak Visal	Director, Division of Public Relations and International Cooperation, Preah Sihanouk Province, Cambodia
19		Moeung Sopheap	Acting Director, Provincial Department of Environment, Preah Sihanouk Province, Cambodia
20		Sreng Haysok	Chief, Prek Koang Kang Eco-tourism Community, Koh Rong City, Preah Sihanouk Province, Cambodia
China			
21	Xiamen City, China/PNLG Secretariat	LIN Huaiyuan	Level II Bureau Rank Official, Xiamen Municipal Bureau of Ocean Development, China; Executive Deputy Secretary-General of PNLG Secretariat
22		ZENG Haiyu	Staff, Xiamen Marine International Cooperation Center, China; Coordinator of PNLG Secretariat
Indonesia			
23	Gorontalo Province	Aryanto Husain	Head of Marine and Fisheries Office, Provincial Government of Gorontalo, Indonesia

No.	Member	Name	Affiliation and Title
24	Tangerang Regency	Prima Saras Puspa	Assistant for Government Affairs and Public Welfare, Tangerang Regency, Indonesia
25		Anton Soeharsono	Intermediate Planner at the Regional Development and planning Agency, Tangerang Regency, Indonesia
26		Agustin Hari Mahardika	Head of Waste, Waste and Hazardous and Toxic Materials Management Division Environmental and Sanitation Agency, Tangerang Regency, Indonesia
27		Fina Nuroctaviyana	Junior Policy Analyst, Cooperation Subdivision, Tangerang Regency, Indonesia
Philippines			
28	Bataan Province	Jose Enrique Garcia III	Governor, Provincial Government of Bataan, Philippines
29	Batangas Province	Marivic Esmas	Officer-In-Charge, Provincial Government Environment and Natural Resources Office, Batangas Province, Philippines
30		Fe Dimaandal Fernandez	Officer-In-Charge, Provincial Government Environment and Natural Resources Office, Batangas Province, Philippines
31		Beverly Faraon Balahibo	Supervising Environmental Management Specialist / Chief, Environmental Quality Management Division, Batangas Province, Philippines
32		Rochelle Panganiban Amboya	Supervising Environmental Management Specialist / Chief, Ecosystem Management and Planning Division, Batangas Province, Philippines
33		Pensri Sumalapao Farol	Environmental Management Specialist II / Chief, Management Services Section, Batangas Province, Philippines

No.	Member	Name	Affiliation and Title
34	Cavite Province	Anabelle Loyola Cayabyab	Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer, Cavite Province, Philippines
35	Guimaras Province	Ma. Lucille L. Nava	Governor, Provincial Government of Guimaras, Philippines; PNLG President
36		Leonard S. Pasiderio	Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer, Guimaras Province, Philippines
Republic of Korea			
37	Ansan City	BYEON Hee-ju	Team Leader, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Division / Marine Conservation Team, Ansan City, Republic of Korea
38		LEE Ju-min	Officer, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Division / Marine Conservation Team, Ansan City, Republic of Korea
39	Busan Metropolitan City	CHUN Jae-soo	Mayor, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
40		OH Seok-keun	Vice Mayor for Future Innovation, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
41		NAM Myung-sook	Vice Chairperson of the Maritime City and Safety Committee of the Busan Metropolitan Council, Republic of Korea
42		CHO Yeong-tae	Director General, Bureau of Maritime Affairs, Agriculture and Fisheries, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
43		CHO Jin-suk	Director of Maritime Capital Policy Division, Bureau of Maritime Affairs, Agriculture and Fisheries, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea

No.	Member	Name	Affiliation and Title
44		SONG Eun-jung	Head of Marine Environment Team, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Bureau of Maritime Affairs, Agriculture and Fisheries, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
45	Changwon City	TAE WOONG KIM	Team leader, Changwon City Hall
46		HO CHEOL WON	Team member, Changwon City Hall
Timor-Leste			
47	Atauro Island	Mateus Belo	President, Ataúro Administrative Authority, Timor-Leste
48		João Gomes	Director of Public Works, Transport, Water, Hygiene and Environment, Ataúro Administrative Authority, Timor-Leste
49		Jose Baptista	Advisor of the Good Governance, Ataúro Administrative Authority, Timor-Leste
50		Eliasefa Barreto	Third Secretary of the Ataúro Administrative Authority for Social Affairs and Community Organization, Timor-Leste
51		Maria Madalena do Carmo Gomes	Secretary of President, Ataúro Administrative Authority, Timor-Leste
52	Dili City	Francisco dos Santos	President, Dili Municipality Authority, Timor-Leste
53		Sebastiao do Rego Guterres.	Senior Corporate Service Adviser, Dili Municipality Authority, Timor-Leste
54	Manatuto City	Luis Inacio Henriques Fernandes	President, Authority of Manatuto Municipality, Timor-Leste
55		Sebastiao Soares PINTO	ICM -PEMSEA Coordinator, Authority of Manatuto Municipality, Timor-Leste
56		Duarte da Costa	ICM -PEMSEA Secretary, Authority of Manatuto Municipality, Timor-Leste

No.	Member	Name	Affiliation and Title
57		Faustino Manuel Lopes da Cruz	Director, Direction of Municipality Water, Sanitation and Environment, Authority of Manatuto Municipality, Timor-Leste
58		Sergio da Silva	Director, Direction of Municipality Social Action Services, Authority of Manatuto Municipality, Timor-Leste
Associate Members			
59	Coastal and Ocean Management Institute, Xiamen University	FANG Qinhua	Associate Director, Coastal and Ocean Management Institute (COMI) , Xiamen University; Deputy Secretary-General, PNLG Secretariat; Vice President, PNLC
60		KE Xiaolin	International Coordinator, Coastal and Ocean Management Institute (COMI) , Xiamen University
61	Dongying Huanhai Institute of Marine Conservation and Development	LIU Pei	Director, Dongying Huanhai Institute of Marine Conservation and Development
62		SU Ziwen	Staff of Dongying Huanhai Institute of Marine Conservation and Development
63		CHENG Kexin	Staff of Dongying Huanhai Institute of Marine Conservation and Development
64	First Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources of China	ZHAO Linlin	Professor of Marine Ecology Research Center, First Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources of China; Deputy Director of China-PEMSEA Sustainable Coastal Management Cooperation Center
65		ZHU Xiaotong	Program Manager of China-PEMSEA Sustainable Coastal Management Cooperation Center

No.	Member	Name	Affiliation and Title
Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries (MOF), Republic of Korea			
66	MOF	SEO Jeong-ho	Deputy Minister, Marine Policy Office, Preparatory Office for UNOC4
67		CHOI Jaeyong	Chief / Senior Deputy Director, Marine Climate and Environment Strategy Team
68		CHOI Jinsol	Deputy Director, Marine Climate and Environment Strategy Team
69		NAM Heechae	Assistant Director, Marine Climate and Environment Strategy Team
70		KIM Minchul	Driver, General Affairs Division
Invited Guests			
71	Invited Guests	Peter Thomson	UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean (Video Message)
72		Jonas Leones	Chair, EAS Partnership Council; Undersecretary, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippines (Video Message)
73		Yasmin Primavera-Tirol	Professor, Aklan State University – New Washington, Philippines
74		Young-Nam Kim	Department Head, Marine Protection and Restoration Department, Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM)
75		Jinwon Seo	Director, Nakdong Estuary Eco Center, Busan
76		Suk-Jae Kwon	Technical Session Chair, EAS Partnership Council; Principal Research Scientist, Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST)

No.	Member	Name	Affiliation and Title
77		Annaliza Gonzales-Kwan	Mayor, Municipality of Guiuan, Eastern Samar Province, Philippines
78		Kazumi Wakita	Technical Session Co-Chair, EAS Partnership Council; Professor, Tokai University, Japan
Observers			
79	Secretary of State of Fisheries, Timor-Leste	Rafael Pereira Goncalves	MALFF / Advisor, Secretary State of Fisheries Office, Timor-Leste
80	Rare Philippines	Leonardo Bautista	Project Implementation Manager
81	Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST)	LEE Tei	Global Cooperation Section, Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST)
82		KIM Ji-young	Global Cooperation Section, Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST)
83		Kyung-tae Kim	Principal Research Scientist, Marine Environment Research Department, Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST)
84		Jin young Choi	Principal Research Scientist, Marine Environment Research Department, Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST)
85		An Jieun	Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST)
86		Suhui Han	Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST)
87		Lee Ji Hee	Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST)
88		Joong Ho Moon	Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST)

No.	Member	Name	Affiliation and Title
89	Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM)	Chang Joon-young	General Manager, Climate and International Affairs Dept., Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM)
90		LEE Joo-won	Assistant Manager, Climate and International Affairs Dept., Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM)
91	Korea Maritime Institute (KMI)	Yeajin Jung	Associate Research Fellow, Marine Environment Research Dept., Korea Maritime Institute (KMI)
92		Jiun Ha	Research Assistant, Marine Environment Research Dept., Korea Maritime Institute (KMI)
93		Do Dajeong	Korea Maritime Institute (KMI)
94		Yelim Kim	Korea Maritime Institute (KMI)
95		Han Deuk Hoon	Korea Maritime Institute (KMI)
PEMSEA Resource Facility (PRF)			
96	PRF	Aimee Gonzales	PRF Executive Director
97		Nancy Amorada Bermas	PEMSEA Regional Project Manager - IRBM Project
98		April Ann Tigulo	PRF Secretariat Coordinator
99		Ma. Niña Yambao	PRF Secretariat Assistant
100		Kim Hunguen	PRF Senior Manager - Marine Plastic ODA
101		Maida Aguinaldo	PRF Special Projects Coordinator
102		Kristina Ticman	PRF Blue Carbon Specialist

No.	Member	Name	Affiliation and Title
PEMSEA Network of Learning Centers (PNLC)			
103	PNLC Secretariat	Yonvitner	President of PNLC; Director of Center for Coastal and Marine Resources Studies, IPB University
104		Isdahartati Ibnu Izhar	PNLC Secretariat Coordinator; Researcher of Center for Coastal and Marine Resources Studies, IPB University
105		Lusita Meilana	PNLC Secretariat Staff; Researcher Fellow of Center for Coastal and Marine Resources Studies, IPB University
Organizing Committee/Other Participants			
106		Chang Uk Shin	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
107		Yu-deok Seo	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
108		Minkyung Shin	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
109		Taeyong Jang	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
110		Chang won Choi	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
111		Hyun soo Kim	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
112		Chang soo Park	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
113		Min seok Kim	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
114		Moon sung Kim	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea

No.	Member	Name	Affiliation and Title
115		Seong han Kim	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
116		Seok Jin Ryu	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
117		Su Bin Hyeon	Officer, Maritime Afffairs & Urban Panning & Safety Committee, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
118		Park seo jin	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
119		Hyeok-gi Jo	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
120		Myung Wan Jung	Marine Natural History Museum, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
121		HWANG SO JIN	Technical Review Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
122		Yujae Mou	Convention Marketing Department, BEXCO
123		Yong Jun Cho	Environmental Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
124		Mi Kyeong Ye	Fisheries Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
125		Yu Jin Lee	Fisheries Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
126		Ji Yun Mun	Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
127		Hye Won Jeon	Officer, Fisheries Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
128		Younghwa Kim	Officer, Fisheries Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
129		Jeong Ah Park	Officer, Fisheries Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea

No.	Member	Name	Affiliation and Title
130		Hyeonjin Moon	Officer, Fisheries Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
131		Minhwa Kang	Team Leader, Fisheries Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
132		Lee, Seung Hwa	Fishing Village Settlement Consultant, Blue Ocean guide/Korea Fisheries Infrastructure Public Ageny, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
133		Changnyeung LEE	Officer, Environmental Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
134		Jongin Park	Officer, Environmental Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
135		Miyeon Kim	Team Leader, Fisheries Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
136		HYE JEONG SONG	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
137		Seo Kwanghyun	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
138		moon je hwan	Officer, Maritime Capital Policy Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
139		YONG-CHUN YOON	Team Leader, Carbon Neurtrality policy division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
140		Jouyoung YI	Assistant Manager, Resource Recirculation Division, Busan Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea
141		Lim Deok Han	Busan Fisheries Policy Forum
142		Park Yoon Seo	The K Blossom
143		Bae Jong Tae	Break News
144		A Young Son	The K Blossom

No.	Member	Name	Affiliation and Title
145		David Jang	Busan Development Institute
146		Kim Mi Young	Busan City Hall
147		Jung Sun Kim	Principal Investigator (PI), SJWATER
148		Kim Jin Ho	Busan City Hall
149		Wang Dong Won	Korea Ports & Harbours Association
150		Kim Na Ri	PSI STUDIO
151		Seong Miran	Busan City Hall
152		Han Mi Nyeo	Busan City Hall
153		Joo Ha Yoon	Busan City Hall
154		Kim Ye Joo	Busan City Hall
155		Park Sang Hyun	Busan City Hall
156		Joungsil Lee	President, Busan Tourism Organization (BTO)
157		Yugyeong Jeong	Director, Convention Bureau, Busan Tourism Organization (BTO)
158		Jihyun Ha	Manager, Convention Bureau, Busan Tourism Organization (BTO)
159		Eonyoung Park	Manager, Convention Bureau, Busan Tourism Organization (BTO)

ANNEX 3. PRESENTATIONS

Presentations

ANNEX 4. PHOTOS

OPENING CEREMONY of 2026 PNLG FORUM
September 8, 2026






2026 PNLG Annual Forum
PEMSEA
BUSAN
METROPOLITAN CITY
2026 PNLG Annual Forum
VIP1


BUSAN
METROPOLI
2026 PNLG Annual Forum
PEMSEA


2026 PNLG Annual Forum
PEMSEA
BUSAN
METROPOLITAN CITY
2026 PNLG Annual Forum
VIP1


2026 PNLG Annual Forum
PEMSEA
BUSAN
METROPOLITAN CITY
2026 PNLG Annual Forum
VIP1


2026 PNLG Annual Forum


2026 PNLG Annual Forum

PNLG-PNLC JOINT LEARNING FORUM
September 8, 2026






BUSAN
METROPOLITAN CITY
2026 PNLG Annual Forum
PEMSEA
BUSAN
METROPOLITAN CITY


PEMSEA
BUSAN
METROPOLITAN CITY
2026 PNLG Annual Forum

Panel Discussion 1
September 8, 2026






nnual Forum
BUSAN
METROPOLITAN CITY
Confluence
2026 PNLG Annual Forum


No systematic ecological surveys and long-term
2
Harmful Practices
Pollution from aquaculture medication,
nets, and damaging beachcombing
w Awareness
ecological awareness of
4
Weak Governanc
2026 PNLG Annual Forum


2026 PNLG Annual Forum
PEMSEA
BUSAN METROPOLITAN CITY
Tidal flat restoration projects procedures
Legal Basis
Act on the Sustainable Management and Restoration of Tidal Flats and Adjacent Areas
Act on Marine Ecosystems Conservation and Management
Outsourced Operation
Action Plan
Restoration Work
Monitoring
Public Fund 70% + Local Fund 30%
Local Fund 10%
• Construction
• Monitoring
Detailed Design
Establishment of Restoration Plans and Project Costs
PNLG


• Area: 131,927 m²
• Treatment method:
• Total storage
2026 PNLG Annual Forum
PEMSEA
BUSAN METROPOLITAN CITY

Panel Discussion 2
September 8, 2026






KEYNOTE SP
Financing the Blue
Local Blue Economy
Dr. Suk-Jae K
Technical Session
Principal Research
MODERATOR
Dr. Kazumi Wakita
2026 PNLG Annual Forum
PEMSEA
BUSAN METROPOLITAN CITY
Blue Partnerships:
Convergence in Bat
Hon. Jose En
Governor, Provinci
Philippines
Beyond Boundaries
Blue Economy Thro
Government Collab
Hon. Annaliz
Mayor, Municipali


2026 PEMSEA Network of Local Governments (PNLG) Forum
Empowering Coastal Cities for a Blue Future
Busan, Republic of Korea I 8-10 September 2026
Empowering Coastal Cities for a Blue Future
2026
PNLG
Annual Forum
Empowering Coastal Cities for a Blue Future
Keynote 2
Blue Future:
Blue Economy
2026 PNLG Annual Forum
Chair, EAS Partnership Council
Scientist, Korea Institute of
and Technology (KIOST)
PEMSEA
BUSAN METROPOLITAN CITY


III. Marine Resource Management
1. Marine Fisheries Management.
Establishing and expanding Marine Fisheries Management Areas (MFMAs) to safeguard spav
and enable fish stock recovery.
- Law on Fisheries
- Prakas No. 193 on the Creation of MFMA in Kep Province (dated April 14, 2018)
- Decision No. 010/24 on the Establishment of the MFMA Technical Working Group (TWG) (
2024)
LAW
ON
FISHERIES
2026 PNLG Annual Forum
2026 PEMSEA Network of Local Goverment (PNLG) Forum
Empowering Coastal Cities for a Blue Future
VIP4


2026 PEMSEA Network of Local Goverment (PNLG) Forum
Empowering Coastal Cities for a Blue Future
Busan, Republic of Korea I 8-10 September 2026
Empowering Coastal Cities for a Blue Future
Bataan's ICM Journey
2026 PNLG Annual Forum
Bataan Coastal Care Foundation, Inc.
DEMONSTRATION SITE (PARALLEL SITE)
BATAAN COASTAL CARE FOUNDATION INC. (BCCFI)
BATAAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
COASTAL LAND AND SEA USE ZONING PLAN
February 2000
July 2000
2006
2007
2026 PNLG Annual Forum
PEMSEA


2026 PNLG Annual Forum
PEMSEA
BUSAN METROPOLITAN CITY


2026 PNLG Annual Forum
PEMSEA
BUSAN METROPOLITAN CITY
SPEAKER

MAYOR'S WELCOME DINNER
September 8, 2026







PNLG GENERAL ASSEMBLY

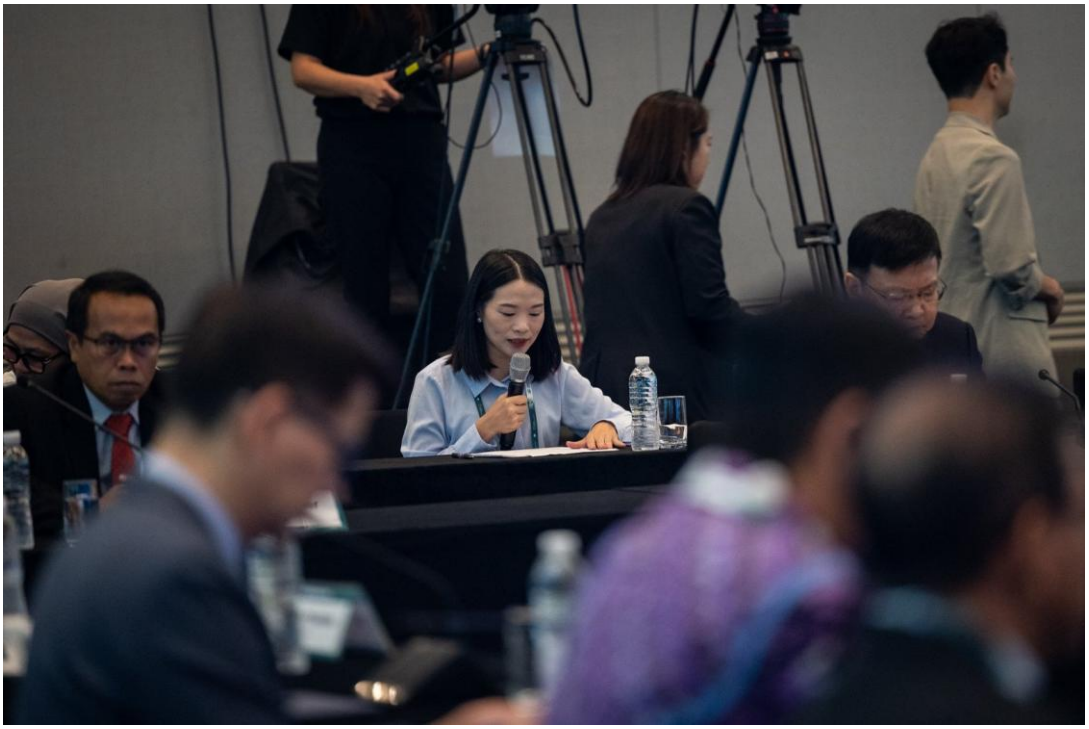
September 9, 2026






2026
PNLG
Annual Forum
Empowering Coastal Cities for a Blue Future
2026 PNLG Annual Forum


2026
PNLG
Annual Forum
Empowering Coastal Cities for a Blue Future
PEMSEA NETWORK
PEMSEA




Prof. FANG Qinhua
Saras Puspa

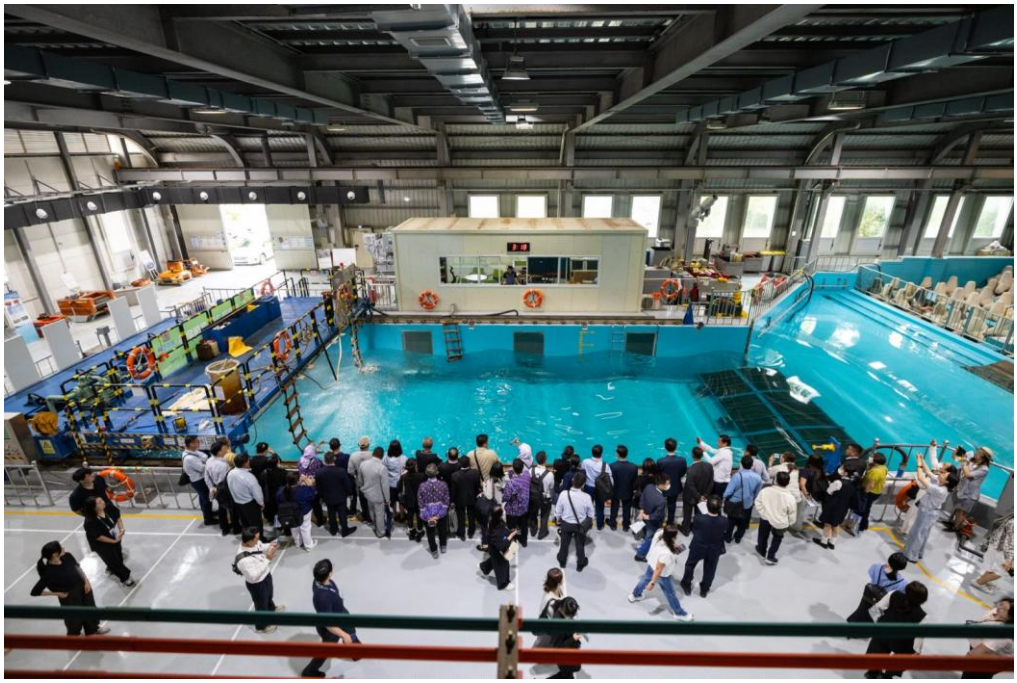
SITE VISIT TO KOREA MARINE ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION (KOEM)
September 9, 2026





SITE VISIT TO NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM OF KOREA
September 9, 2026





NETWORKING DINNER
September 9, 2026









SITE VISIT TO NAKDONG ESTUARY ECO CENTER- EXHIBITION HALL AND WILDLIFE MEDICAL CENTER
September 10, 2026







