



PEMSEA de facto Implementing Mechanism for SDS-SEA

XIAMEN, PR CHINA -- The 10th Programme Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting of the GEF/UNDP/IMO Regional Programme on Building Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia confirmed PEMSEA as the de facto implementing mechanism for the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA). The decision was made during the intergovernmental meeting, which was held on 25-29 October. PEMSEA is comprised of 12 participating countries of the East Asian region.

Government representatives attending the PSC also adopted a Programme of Activities for the implementation of the SDS-SEA, including the formation of a regional implementing mechanism.

The governments expressed their commitment to establish a regional mechanism, as an essential step towards country-driven SDS-SEA implementation. The regional mechanism will build on the partnership foundation of PEMSEA, which is based on intergovernmental and intersectoral cooperation and collaboration in managing coastal and marine resources.

In this regard, the PSC adopted a road map and timetable for the preparation of a PEMSEA Partnership Agreement 2006 and PEMSEA Partnership Operating Arrangements, for consideration by the 11th PSC Meeting to be held in July 2005, including:

- The transformation of PEMSEA's Programme Steering Committee (PSC) into a PEMSEA Partnership Council;
- The establishment of a PEMSEA Partnership Fund;
- The operationalization of a self-sustaining, service-providing PEMSEA Resource Facility (PRF); and

- The setting up and launching of a triannual regional congress patterned after the East Asian Seas Congress 2003.

The Meeting also decided to extend formal invitations to the countries of Timor Leste, Lao PDR and Myanmar to join PEMSEA in the implementation of the SDS-SEA. All three countries are within the watershed and sea area of the Seas of East Asia. Timor Leste is situated in the Indonesian Seas, one of the five large marine ecosystems within the Seas of East Asia. Lao PDR and Myanmar are within the Mekong River Watershed, a major tributary to the regional seas.

PSC meetings serve as a venue to review the progress of PEMSEA activities in the region and to make recommendations for their effective implementation. The State Oceanic Administration and the Xiamen Municipal Government hosted the 10th PSC Meeting, which was also attended by representatives from the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, the academe, and international/donor/financial institutions. Delegates from the governments of Myanmar, Timor Leste and Lao PDR joined the Meeting as observers.



PEMSEA Activities Gain Wide Interest in APEC Forum

EASTER ISLAND, CHILE -- PEMSEA participated in the Third Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Integrated Oceans Management Forum (IOM3), and shared its experiences and activities in the East Asian region, at the same time, gaining wide interest from participants. The forum was held in Easter Island, Chile from 18 – 20 October.

PEMSEA Technical Officer Maria Corazon Ebarvia-Bautista attended the forum and discussed PEMSEA's activities and experiences, including: a presentation on examples of on-the-ground activities in PEMSEA integrated coastal management (ICM) sites and pollution hotspots; the implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia; the Philippine experience on adjusting national income accounts through resource and environmental accounting; PEMSEA's work on the coastal and marine resource valuation in the Straits of Malacca; and the estimation of socioeconomic benefits of ICM in Xiamen, PR China.

Ms. Ebarvia-Bautista called attention to issues that require consideration, such as key business and trade-related matters, conservation, resource security, pollution management, transboundary issues, human capacity challenges, and oceans policy and governance gaps. Building on the elements that have been discussed and the lessons learned from across the PEMSEA sites, she pointed out the role and implications of integrated oceans and coastal management efforts in the region.

The forum participants agreed that PEMSEA's approach was very impressive and ambitious - although challenging to accurately assign dollar values to resources and services. It was noted that the project results have also been widely applied to attract investment in ecosystem protection and drive coastal policy.

Some participants also suggested that for the next phase of the APEC project on the economic valuation of the coastal and marine sector, the project proponent and the APEC Marine Resource Conservation Working Group (MRCWG) should consider working with PEMSEA, instead of just approaching each country. PEMSEA was seen to have the experience in conducting resource valuation, and has working institutional linkages with countries in the East Asian region.

IOM3 is the third in a series of fora sponsored by the MRCWG. This APEC forum intended to engage member economies' key institutions, opinion and business leaders in a discussion about the challenges and opportunities faced in delivering marine and coastal programming, business development, and oceans management. Results from the forum will be used, subject to MRCWG endorsement, to develop a proposed strategic approach for APEC Ocean and Coastal activities for consideration by economies within the APEC system.

Over 57 participants, including representatives from APEC countries, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the Permanent Council for the South Pacific (CPPS), as well as members of the Parliament and Elder Council of Rapa Nui attended the forum. IOM3 was organized by the MRCWG, and co-hosted by Australia, Canada and Chile.



Cavite Stakeholders Develop Capacity in ICM

CAVITE, PHILIPPINES -- Stakeholders in the PEMSEA integrated coastal management (ICM) parallel site in Cavite Province strengthened their capacity in implementing ICM through the successful conduct of an ICM training program held on 4-8 October in Naic, Cavite. Over 25 participants from various sectors and stakeholder groups in the province attended the training.

The training's resource speakers included staff from PEMSEA's Regional Programme Office and from PEMSEA's Batangas, Bataan and Manila Bay ICM sites. The expertise and experiences imparted by the resource speakers provided the participants new insights on the challenges of balancing development and resource conservation through the implementation of ICM. The participants learned how ICM's concepts, tools and case studies can be used for local application in Cavite.

The training resulted in the development of a refined ICM project work plan, an action plan for updating Cavite's coastal strategy, and an operational mechanism in implementing ICM at the municipal level. The operational mechanism allows for the multi-sectoral and participative approach in ICM, which is seen as one of the ways to sustain the ICM program in Cavite.

The training program was jointly organized by PEMSEA and the Cavite ICM Project in collaboration with the Municipal Government of Naic and Sabrina Fair, a beach resort along the Naic coast.

Cavite is one of PEMSEA's parallel sites in the Philippines. The project involves nine coastal municipalities with a population of less than one million. Cavite is also home to more than two thousand industries.



Cavite Joins International Coastal Clean-up Day

CAVITE, PHILIPPINES -- In observance of the International Coastal Cleanup Day, the Province of Cavite undertook a cleanup drive along Manila Bay and the province's major rivers on 18 September 2004. With the theme 'Ilog Buhayin, Dagat Sagipin' (Rehabilitate the Rivers, Save the Seas), the activity included the collection of garbage along coastal areas and river banks, and the planting of tree and mangrove species. More than 8,000 volunteers from the communities, government agencies, the business sector, the academe, civic organizations, nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and people's organizations participated in the cleanup.

The cleanup drive was lead by the Cavite Provincial Governor, Hon. Ayong Maliksi, along with mayors from the 13 municipalities and cities. In his speech during the culminating program, Governor Maliksi emphasized the value of partnerships in saving the environment and addressing the issues that confront coastal areas in the province. He stressed the signing of the memorandum of agreement among the municipalities and the province to collectively address these issues. Governor Maliksi emphasized the importance of the cleanup drive as a way to awaken the minds and hearts of the people of Cavite on the pressures they exert into the environment. He encouraged the stakeholders to participate in saving the coastal areas, and emphasized that the contribution of each individual counts. He also emphasized that cleanup drives should not only be done during celebrations but become a regular undertaking of the municipalities.

The ICM Cavite and Sagip Ilog (Save the Rivers) Council, an NGO, organized the cleanup drive in cooperation with national and local government agencies, the business sector, NGOs, the academe and people's organizations in the province.



PEMSEA Launches Coastalinks

XIAMEN, PR CHINA -- PEMSEA has launched Coastalinks, the linking of integrated coastal management (ICM) websites aimed at strengthening regional networking and parallel knowledge sharing between local governments implementing ICM in the East Asian Seas region. The launching ceremony was held on 28 October during PEMSEA's 10th Programme Steering Committee Meeting (see related article).

Coastalinks currently includes ICM websites from Bali, Indonesia (www.balicoastalink.or.id); Port Klang, Malaysia (<http://portklangcoastalink.net>); Batangas Bay, Philippines (<http://batangascoastalink.net>); and Danang, Vietnam (www.danangcoastalink.org.vn). Having established a presence on the Internet, these ICM sites now have a new means of sharing their lessons and experiences in environmental management to a much wider online audience.

Each Coastalink website provides a wide range of information - from principles and strategies on sustainable development and reports on the state of a specific coast in the East Asian Seas region, to investment opportunities, events and current environmental issues prevailing in each site.

Coastalinks is aimed at establishing a clearing house mechanism for ICM knowledge base in the region and constitute one part of PEMSEA's efforts in distilling lessons learned from various ICM sites and disseminating those lessons to pertinent national government agencies, local governments and stakeholders throughout the region. PEMSEA hopes that as ICM initiatives in the region continue to grow, Coastalinks would play an increasing role in organizing and sharing an accumulated wealth of ICM information and experience for interested stakeholders.



China to Host East Asian Seas Congress 2006

XIAMEN, PR CHINA -- The People's Republic of China will be hosting the East Asian Seas (EAS) Congress 2006. The decision was finalized during PEMSEA's 10th Programme Steering Committee Meeting where Chinese delegates confirmed the country's desire to serve as host for the 2006 event.

The first EAS Congress was held in 2003, and highlighted the signing of the Putrajaya Declaration of Regional Cooperation for the Sustainable Development of the Seas of East Asia by ministers from PEMSEA's twelve participating countries. The five-day event, held in Putrajaya, Malaysia, brought together various stakeholders from diverse disciplines to discuss the welfare of the East Asian Seas and to explore ways and means to ensure the sustainability of marine and coastal resources of the region.

The 2006 Congress will feature the Ministerial Forum on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia and the International Conference on Coastal and Ocean Governance: One Vision, Towards a Stronger Regional Alliance. The International Conference will hold workshops on several areas of interest such as:

- Port Safety, Security, Health and Environment;
- The Economic Contribution of the Marine Sector;
- Areas of Excellence and Scientific Support;
- The Effective Management of Marine Protected Areas;
- Community in Sustainable Development;
- Innovative Financing for Waste Reduction;
- Women and Youth in Environmental Management;
- Advocacy and Leadership in Coastal and Ocean Management; and

- Regime-building in Coastal and Ocean Governance.

A number of side events are also planned to be held during the 2006 Congress, these will include: the Meeting of the PEMSEA Partnership Council; the 5th Forum of the Regional Network of Local Governments Implementing Integrated Coastal Management; the Financial Advisory Board on Environmental Investments Meeting; the Meeting of Experts; the Media Forum on Partnerships in Environmental Communication; the Meeting of the Nippon Foundation Research Task Force on the Dynamics of Regional Cooperation on Ocean and Coasts; and the Launching of the Regional C2C (Coasts to Coasts) Network. It is estimated that the 2006 Congress will bring together 500 participants from the East Asian Seas region.

The EAS Congress 2006 will be organized in partnership with several international organizations, honorary advisors, international and local organizing committees, as well as sponsoring and supporting organizations. Organizations interested in being a partner for the EAS Congress can contact PEMSEA's Regional Programme Office at info@pemsea.org.



PEMSEA Welcomes New Staff

QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES -- PEMSEA welcomes Mr. Cesar Banzon as its Environmental Investment Technical Officer. He will work on the implementation of the GEF Medium-Sized Project on the Development and Implementation of Public-Private Partnerships in Environmental Investments.

Cesar has extensive experience in project administration, research, communication, and public relations. He worked as Commercial Officer for the Korean Embassy in Manila and Project Management Officer for KEPCO Ilijan Corporation, a project company of the Ilijan Natural Gas Energy Power Plant. He earned his Masters in Economics from the University of the Philippines.



PEMSEA Expertise to Serve Other Regions

QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES -- PEMSEA is now sharing its expertise in integrated coastal management (ICM) to other regional programmes outside of the East Asian region through an ICM training course to be held from 22 November to 10 December in Manila, Philippines and Xiamen, PR China. Participants to the training will be coming from Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Yemen (member-countries of the Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden or PERSGA), as well as from new PEMSEA sites in Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. The training course aims to develop leadership in planning, formulation and implementation of ICM programs.

Balancing economic development with environmental management to resolve marine pollution problems requires an integrated management approach and many countries at present are unable to adequately address their marine pollution problems. This is due not only to the lack of financial resources, but also, to a large extent, the lack of technical and management capabilities to plan, implement, and manage coastal and marine resource management programs.

The training course will enhance knowledge and skills essential in implementing ICM, an internationally accepted approach for achieving sustainable development of coasts and oceans. The course will cover a wide spectrum of subjects related to coastal and marine area management with practical exposure to the ICM concept, approaches and operational mechanisms.

Some of the topics that will be covered during the course include:

- ICM concept, principles and applications;
- Data-gathering and information management;
- Development and implementation of coastal strategy;
- Risk assessment and management;
- Environmental monitoring;

- Coastal-use zoning plan;
- Resource and environmental accounting;
- Institutional and legislative requirements;
- Economic analysis; and
- Marine legislation.



Victoria DSE and PEMSEA Forge Knowledge-Sharing Initiative

XIAMEN, PR CHINA -- PEMSEA and the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) of the State Government of Victoria, Australia recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for a collaborative partnership on sharing experiences and knowledge in the sustainable development of marine and coastal resources and in the governance of regional seas and oceans. The signing ceremony was held on 26 October and was one of the events of PEMSEA's 10th Programme Steering Committee Meeting (see related article).

This new knowledge-sharing partnership includes the exchange of information on the objectives, initiatives and impacts of DSE and PEMSEA programmes; the building of awareness and understanding in integrated coastal and marine planning and management, including the co-organization of conferences, workshops and site visits; the sharing of experiences and lessons learned among national and local government agencies within PEMSEA participating countries as well as within Victoria, Australia; and the development of initiatives to strengthen the capacities of PEMSEA participating countries in the sustainable use and management of marine and coastal areas, including opportunities for staff exchange.

The MOU was signed by PEMSEA Regional Programme Director Dr. Chua Thia-Eng and DSE Secretary Prof. Lyndsay Neilson, and shall take effect immediately.

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