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***Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends
in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand***

REPORT

Eighth Meeting of the Regional Working Group for the Wetland Sub-component

Shantou, China, 8th-11th May 2007

UNEP/GEF
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Cover Photo: Aquaculture Ponds of Sanyuwei of Shantou wetland demonstration site, in which are planned to restore mangroves. Photo by Mr. Sunny Yisheng Peng.

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Report of the Meeting

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

1.1 Welcome Address on behalf of UNEP

1.1.1 The PCU member, Mr. Kim Sour, opened the meeting at 0830 on 8th May 2007, and welcomed participants on behalf of the Executive Director of UNEP, Dr. Achim Steiner; the Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, and Officer-in-Charge of the UNEP Division of Global Environment Facility Co-ordination, Mr. Shafqat Kakakhel; and the Project Director, Dr. John C. Pernetta.

1.1.2 Mr. Sour noted that important business before the group included a review of the Total Economic Values for wetlands calculated by the Regional Task Force on Economic Valuation (RTF-E) and consideration of the cost benefit analysis that would be included in the next draft of the regional Strategic Action Programme. He noted further that the meeting would also need to consider plans at the national level to adopt the National Action Plans and to review the Strategic Action Programme.

1.1.3 Mr. Sour informed the meeting that another important item on the agenda was the consideration of a draft syllabus and programme for a regional training course on wetlands and plans for the conduct of national echo-seminars. He explained that since it was likely that some costs would be associated with support by the Specialised Executing Agencies to the conduct of these national echo seminars it would be necessary to revise the budgets and extend the MoUs.

1.1.4 Mr. Sour noted with pleasure the presence of Shantou Government officials in the meeting including the Administrative Vice-Mayor of Shantou Municipality, Mr. Luo Yangpeng, the Vice-Secretary General of Shantou Municipality, Mr. Tang Han Liang, and the Director of the Forestry Bureau of Shantou Municipality, Mr. Lin Weixiong. He invited Mr. Luo Yangpeng to address the meeting.

1.2 Opening Statement on behalf of the Shantou City Government

1.2.1 Mr. Luo welcomed participants to the meeting and to Shantou City. He expressed his thanks to the group for selecting Shantou as the location for the Eighth Meeting of the Regional Working Group on Wetlands and expressed his hope that the meeting would be a success.

1.2.2 Mr. Luo noted that Shantou Municipality is home to approximately 5 million people and covers an area of 2,064 km². He informed the meeting that there are 51,000 hectares of wetlands in Shantou, largely due to the municipality's sub-tropical monsoon climate. He highlighted that the Shantou wetlands are on the third route for migratory birds in China, with several hundred thousand migratory birds utilising the wetlands of the municipality each year.

1.2.3 Mr. Luo noted further that Shantou's wetlands are utilised by a range of significant species, including the Chinese Humpbacked Dolphin, the Black-faced Spoonbill, Normann's Greenshank, Saunders' Gull, and three species of sea turtles. He explained that, due to the rapid economic development and urbanisation of Shantou, the municipality's wetlands have been degraded by the effects of reclamation, aquaculture, and pollution.

1.2.4 Mr. Luo noted that Shantou Municipality has implemented a vast range of activities aimed at halting the loss and degradation of wetlands and their resources. These include the launch of an eco-economic zone as part of the municipality's urban planning programme, and the establishment of a wetland nature reserve, including funding of a management office for this site.

1.2.5 He explained that Shantou Municipality took great pride when the Shantou Wetland was selected as a demonstration site under the UNEP/GEF South China Sea Project. He noted that following this decision, the municipality had: established and operated a management committee for the Shantou Wetland Demonstration Site led by the Vice-Mayor of Shantou, Mr. Su Yaoguang; implemented activities for the development of the Medium-Sized Project Proposal; and instituted actions to improve the management of the site.

1.2.6 He expressed his hope that the Shantou Wetland Demonstration Site will receive the support required to complete the full suite of activities planned for the site. He noted that these activities include *inter alia*: the establishment and operation of a sustainable development model at the site; creation of alternative income generating activities for local communities; and establishment of a wetland education centre to enhance public awareness and education on wetland conservation.

1.3 Introduction of Participants

1.3.1 Mr. Sour informed the meeting that Mr. Dibjo Sartono had requested that Wetlands International no longer serve as the Focal Point for wetlands in Indonesia, and that the National Technical Focal Point for Indonesia had designated Ir. Antung Deddy Radiansyah, Assistant to the Deputy Minister for River and Lake Degradation Control of the Ministry of Environment, as a new Focal Point.

1.3.2 He informed the meeting further that: Ms. Marlynn Mendoza was on sick leave and would be represented by Ms. Joy Navarro; Mr. Koch Savath was also unwell and would be replaced in the meeting by Mr. Mean Suon. In addition Mr. Sour noted that Dr. Mai Trong Nhuan was unable to attend the meeting and that the PCU had made arrangements for Ms. Nguyen Thi Thu Ha to attend as his alternate. He noted with regret however, that Ms. Thu Ha had encountered difficulties obtaining a visa at very short notice and would most likely be unable to attend the meeting.

1.3.3 Mr. Sour noted that there were many new faces in the meeting and that this was also the first meeting of the Regional Working Group on Wetlands in which he had participated. He invited members to introduce themselves to the meeting. The list of participants is contained in Annex 1 of this report.

2. ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING

2.1 Election of Officers

2.1.1 Mr. Sour informed the participants that the Rules of Procedure state that, the Regional Working Group shall elect, from amongst the members, a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Rapporteur to serve for one year. He noted that the rules state further that, officers shall be eligible for re-election no more than once.

2.1.2 Mr. Sour reminded the meeting that, during its sixth meeting in Sihanoukville, Cambodia, 12th – 15th September 2005, Dr. Mai, Mr. Savath, and Mr. Narong Veeravaitaya were elected as Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Rapporteur respectively. He reminded the meeting further that during the seventh meeting in Manila, Philippines, 19th - 21st June 2006, Mr. Narong, Mr. Savath and Ms. Thu Ha were elected as Chairperson, Vice-chairperson and Rapporteur, respectively. He noted that Mr. Narong was present and eligible for re-election, and that since Ms. Thu Ha and Mr. Savath were not present they could not be re-elected.

2.1.3 Mr. Sour invited members to nominate individuals to serve as Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur for the Regional Working Group on Wetlands. Ms. Navarro nominated Mr. Narong, focal point for wetlands in Thailand as Chairperson, and this nomination was seconded by the regional expert on wetlands, Dr. Sansanee Choowaew. Mr. Narong nominated Professor Chen Guizhu as the Vice-Chairperson, and this nomination was seconded by Dr. Sansanee. Mr. Narong nominated Ms. Navarro as Rapporteur. Mr. Narong, Professor Chen, and Ms. Navarro were elected by acclamation.

2.2 Documentation and Administrative Arrangements

2.2.1 The Chairperson invited the Secretary, Mr. Christopher Paterson, to introduce the documentation available to the meeting and listed in document UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/Inf.2 Amend. 1. For the benefit of the new members and alternates, Mr. Paterson reviewed the organisation of the meeting documents and administrative arrangements for the meeting. Mr. Paterson introduced each document in detail and highlighted the main substantive items for consideration and decision by the working group, including the latest draft of the Strategic Action Programme, and documents relating to the Total Economic Values of wetlands as calculated by the RTF-E. He invited participants to table any additional materials and the list of documents is contained in Annex 2 of this report.

2.2.2 Mr. Paterson introduced the draft programme for the conduct of business contained in document UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/Inf.3. Members noted that as usual the meeting would be conducted in English and in plenary.

3. ADOPTION OF THE MEETING AGENDA

3.1 Mr. Narong, the Chairperson introduced the Provisional Agenda prepared by the Project Co-ordinating Unit (PCU) as document UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/1, and the Annotated Provisional Agenda, document UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/2, and invited members to consider the agenda, and propose any amendments or additional items for consideration.

3.2 The Secretary suggested that Agenda Item 4 be amended to include consideration of the 3rd Amendment to the Memoranda of Understanding. He also noted Agenda Item 6.1 should be changed from "Review of Materials produced for use in the Training Course" to "Review of a Draft Proposal for the Regional Training Course on Wetlands". The Chairperson suggested that consideration of the status of the wetland habitat demonstration sites be included as an additional agenda item under any other business. The meeting agreed with these proposed changes and there being no further proposals for amendment or addition the agenda was adopted as it appears in Annex 3 of this report.

4. STATUS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS AND THE MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING

4.1 Status of the Progress Reports; Expenditure Reports; and Audit Reports

4.1.1 The Chairperson invited Mr. Sour to introduce document UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/4, "*Current status of budgets and reports from the Specialised Executing Agencies in the participating countries*" and to draw to the attention of the meeting any outstanding issues or matters requiring the attention of the working group.

4.1.2 For the benefit of the new participants, Mr. Sour reminded the group that the Project Director approves cash advances to the Specialised Executing Agencies of the project on the basis of the receipt of: a six monthly progress report; an expenditure report for the preceding six month period; a cash advance request for the next period; and the substantive outputs received from the agency concerned. He noted that the financial and administrative reports are critical for review of the expenditures in relation to project activities and outputs and to evaluate the extent, to which, agreed government co-financing has been provided in cash and in kind by the SEA concerned.

4.1.3 Mr. Sour noted that all six-monthly administrative reports for the 2nd half-year of 2006 should have been sent to the PCU by 31st January 2007. With regard to the first half of 2006, progress and expenditure reports were received from all countries except Indonesia and Malaysia. He informed the meeting that the Malaysian Focal Point managed to submit draft progress reports for the whole of 2005 and 2006 in March 2007, and that these have been commented upon and revised to an acceptable standard, but signed originals have not been received nor have the expenditure reports for the period January 2005 to December 2006. In the case of Indonesia, he noted that administrative reports for the period July to December 2005 had been received however, the reported expenditures were different from those reported in the annual audit report and Wetlands International had been requested to provide clarification of this matter.

4.1.4 Mr. Sour informed the meeting that for the second half of 2006, original signed six-month progress and expenditure reports from China, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam had been received. He noted that original signed copies of the six-month progress and expenditure reports are required from Cambodia, Indonesia, and Malaysia for this period.

4.1.5 Mr. Sour reminded participants that in addition to the routine six monthly progress and expenditure reports, UNEP requires an annual audit of expenditures by a recognised firm of public accountants. He noted that these reports should be dispatched to UNEP by 31st March for the previous year. He noted that only China had submitted an audit report of expenditures for the year 2006.

4.1.6 In this connection, the Secretary noted that given the difficulties and costs associated with meeting the requirements for an independent audit, the Sixth Meeting of the Project Steering Committee held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, 20th – 22nd November 2006, recommended that: “*Where the anticipated costs of an annual audit are likely to exceed 5% of the total sum transferred or the sum transferred does not exceed 10,000 US\$ in any one year, the requirement for an annual audit be waived*”. He noted that SEAs from Cambodia, Thailand, and Viet Nam have requested permission to combine audits for two years.

4.1.7 Mr. Suon noted that in the case of Cambodia, six month progress and expenditure reports had been submitted for the period July – December 2006. Mr. Sour noted that he had reviewed and commented on these reports and was awaiting final signed versions to be sent to the PCU. Mr. Suon noted that he did not have the final documents on hand and would discuss this matter with Mr. Savath upon his return to Cambodia.

4.1.8 Mr. Antung Deddy noted that Mr. Dibjo had withdrawn from participation in the South China Sea Project. He noted that he had only just received prior to travelling to the meeting a file of materials produced by Wetlands International and that he was unfamiliar with the status of activities and reporting requirements. It was agreed that Mr. Antung Deddy would work with the PCU member overnight to identify outputs achieved to date by Wetland International and outstanding tasks. Mr. Antung Deddy noted that he would convene a meeting within one month after his return to Indonesia to finalise all progress and financial reports.

4.1.9 Mr. Zainuddin Ab. Shukor stated that he just recently been assigned responsibility for the wetland component activities in Malaysia. He noted that no funds were spent during 2006 since the last government audit of accounts. Mr. Sour reminded Mr. Zainuddin that draft progress and expenditure reports for 2005 and 2006 had been reviewed and revised to an acceptable standard, and that Mr. Zainuddin needs to send signed originals of these to the PCU as soon as possible. It was agreed that Mr. Zainuddin would work with the PCU overnight to clarify these reporting requirements.

4.2 Consideration of the Third Draft Amendment to the Memoranda of Understanding

4.2.1 The Chairperson invited Mr. Sour to introduce document UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/9 “*Proposed Third Amendment to the Memoranda of Understanding*”, which contained the proposed draft text for a third amendment to the Memoranda of Understanding (MoU).

4.2.2 Mr. Sour noted that the original MoUs ran until December 2003, and were extended till 30th June 2004 (first amendment), to allow time to complete the preparatory phase tasks, that had been delayed. He explained that a second amendment to extend the life of the MoUs to 30th June 2007 was drafted following approval by the Project Steering Committee of budgets for the remaining period of the project. He noted that all 2nd MoU amendments have been signed by UNEP and the SEAs for the wetland component, except for Malaysia, since the final signed expenditure reports have not been received and consequently no budget revision can be processed.

4.2.3 Mr. Sour explained further that in order that the SEAs may continue to spend funds allocated to them to date, and in accordance with the decisions of the Project Steering Committee to extend the project activities to 30th June 2008 it is proposed that a third amendment to the MoUs be executed with the sole purpose of extending the life of the Memoranda to 31st December 2008. The proposed draft text was considered and approved by the meeting. The Secretariat subsequently prepared draft MoU amendments for all Specialised Executing Agencies.

5. STATUS OF THE SUBSTANTIVE OUTPUTS

5.1 Publication of National Reports in National Languages and English

5.1.1 The Chairperson invited Mr. Sour to introduce document UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/5 “*Status of the Substantive Outputs from the Specialised Executing Agencies for the Wetland Sub-Component of the UNEP/GEF South China Sea Project*”, and to draw to the attention of the group any outstanding matters requiring the attention of the group.

5.1.2 Mr. Sour reminded participants that National reports on wetlands were supposed to have been published in National languages by the Focal Points for distribution in each country by October 2004. He noted that the reports from all countries, with the exception of Malaysia and Viet Nam, had been published in national languages. Mr. Zainuddin noted that the national language version of the National report on wetlands for Malaysia will be prepared for publication, and he envisaged that the final version will be available for dissemination by the end of August 2007. In response to a query from Professor Chen, it was noted that 5 copies of all published reports should be sent to the PCU.

5.1.3 It was noted that during the seventh meeting of the group, Ms. Thu Ha indicated that the National language report on wetlands for Viet Nam was with the printer. The Chairperson encouraged Mr. Sour to contact the Focal Point for Viet Nam immediately after the meeting in order to determine the status of this task.

5.1.4 Mr. Sour reminded participants that the PCU had now received copies of the final national reports in English, which had been edited and formatted for final publication and regional distribution by UNEP.

5.2 Status of Finalisation, Adoption and Implementation of the National Action Plans

5.2.1 The Chairperson introduced this agenda item by noting that a critical outcome for the wetlands component of the project was the adoption of National Action Plans on Wetlands. He noted that the group had discussed the finalisation of these plans in detail during the sixth and seventh meeting of the RWG-W. He noted further that members had agreed to revise their National Action Plans in light of the following:

- NAPs were still formulated more as policy statements and statements of principle rather than providing operational level guidance to managers in executing agreed activities;
- Such operational guidance required the inclusion of information regarding what should be done, where and when it should be done, and who would do it, together with the estimated costs;
- There was also a need to consider priority locations for implementation of the activities prioritised under the NAPs; and
- NAPs should focus on the South China Sea coastline.

5.2.2 Mr. Narong noted that following the seventh meeting of the RWG-W, revised National Action Plans had been received by the PCU from China and Thailand. He invited Focal Points to present any further revisions completed to date and to report in detail the situation with regard to the timetable for the finalisation, publication, and formal adoption of their National Action Plans.

5.2.3 Mr. Sour proceeded to present an analysis of areas of each NAP requiring revision. It was noted by Mr. Narong that this had in fact been considered in detail by the group during the sixth and seventh meetings and that it is critical that Focal Points report on progress to date and plans for formal adoption of the NAPs.

5.2.4 Professor Chen noted that in the case of China, the National Action Plan for Wetlands in China had been substantially revised following the seventh meeting and was approved by the 5th formal meeting of China's Inter-Ministry Committee in April 2007. Mr. Narong noted that Thailand's National Action Plan was finalised at the end of 2006 and submitted to Thailand's National Technical Focal Point. The plan was subsequently circulated amongst all members of the project partner network in Thailand for their review and comment.

5.2.5 Ms. Navarro tabled a final draft of the National Action Plan on Wetlands for the Philippines. She noted that the plan had been revised to specify the where, when, who, how, and cost of implementing actions under the plan. She highlighted that the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau was currently conducting a series of site-specific consultations on the National Action Plan and will convene a national consultation as soon as these have been completed. She noted that the revised Plan had not yet been reviewed by the National Wetlands Committee.

5.2.6 Mr. Antung Deddy noted that he didn't know the progress of what had been developed by Mr. Dibjo in this regard. He tabled a Wetlands International publication entitled "*National Strategy on Wetlands*" which had recently been delivered to him in a package of South China Sea Project related

materials from Wetlands International. Mr. Sour noted that it appeared that this document had not been developed in the context of the South China Sea Project and did not meet the minimum set of contents agreed during the fifth and sixth meetings of the group. Mr. Antung Deddy noted that he would work to revise the National Action Plan on Wetlands for Indonesia upon his return to Jakarta and anticipated that a revised version should be available by the end of July 2007. The Chairperson requested that the PCU member work closely with Mr. Antung Deddy to ensure that the minimum set of contents is met.

5.2.7 Mr. Zainuddin tabled a draft National Action Plan on Wetlands in Malaysia, and it was noted by Mr. Sour that this plan would required substantial revision in order to meet the minimum set of contents agreed by the group. Mr. Zainuddin noted that he planned to revise the NAP and anticipated that a final draft NAP would be available by the end of July 2007. The Chairperson requested that the PCU member work closely with Mr. Zainuddin and Mr. Antung Deddy to ensure that the minimum set of contents is met in their respective plans. Mr. Suon informed the meeting that Cambodia's plan should be finalised by the end of July 2007.

5.3 Update of the Regional GIS Database and Meta-database and Use of the Project Website

5.3.1 The Focal Points were reminded of their agreed responsibility to ensure that they present new wetland related GIS and metadata sets to the PCU as they become available at the national level, and their prior agreements to revise and up-date national data for inclusion in the regional databases on-line. The Chairperson directed the attention of the meeting to Table 2, on page 2 of document UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/5, noting that this contains information concerning when data were submitted to the GIS and meta- databases.

5.3.2 The Chairperson noted that according to Table 2 of the document only Cambodia and Indonesia had contributed to the meta-database following the seventh meeting. Mr. Paterson noted that he had conducted a review of the meta-data sent to the PCU by Mr. Dibjo and that there was a need for this to be revised prior to its inclusion in the database. He noted that he had written to Mr. Dibjo and other staff of Wetland International regarding this matter but had not yet received a reply. It was agreed that Mr. Antung Deddy could assist in the revision of this meta-data.

5.3.3 Professor Chen noted that she had e-mailed completed meta-data forms to Mr. Sour in the month prior to the meeting. Mr. Sour informed the meeting that he had no record of these arriving at the PCU, and Professor Chen agreed to re-send these forms to Mr. Sour and Mr. Paterson when she returns to her office.

5.3.4 Ms. Navarro informed the meeting that staff of her office had updated the meta-database on several occasions since the meeting. She noted that this had been done using the online interface at <<http://metadata.unepscs.org>>, and expressed her disappointment that these efforts where not reflected in Table 2 of document UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/5. Mr. Paterson noted that he had guided PAWB staff through the process of updating the meta-database online and was aware that the wetlands component in the Philippines had been active throughout the year in adding new entries and revising existing entries in the database.

5.3.5 Mr. Paterson proceeded to demonstrate the use of the South China Sea Project website and e-forum, the meta-database, GIS, and projects database. He noted that each of these tools had been designed for updating online by members of the project network. Mr. Paterson showed participants how to log into the project website, and how to contribute information to e-forum discussions and pages of the website.

5.3.6 There followed a discussion of the failure of the e-forum discussions that were set up following the seventh meeting of the group. It was noted that many participants were unfamiliar with the use of this technology, and often had insufficient time to visit the website and find the e-forum discussion. Dr. Sansanee noted that she had attempted to stimulate discussion regarding the development of the wetlands component of the Strategic Action Programme although based on the responses from other members she assumed that there was very little usage of the e-forum by the group.

5.3.7 In this connection, Mr. Paterson noted that he had recently set up an automated e-mailing system that sends an e-mail notification to members as soon as anything is posted in the wetlands e-forum. He explained that the notification e-mails contain a web link that members simply need to click on to launch the relevant page of the e-forum. He noted further that the PCU had set-up an SMS messaging system for use in notifying members of new posts in the e-forum.

5.3.8 The meeting agreed that the group should proceed with the use of the e-forum to stimulate inter-sessional discussion on development of an estuary monitoring system and the Regional Strategic Action Programme. Mr. Narong suggested, and the meeting agreed, that all alternates and new members should also be registered as users of the site, and that they would each share the responsibility for stimulating online discussions. Professor Chen noted that they had recently observed several rare species in the Shantou Wetland Demonstration Site and that she would like to post this information on the project website. Mr. Paterson agreed to provide this assistance to Professor Chen upon his return to Bangkok.

5.3.9 Regarding the updating of the regional databases, Mr. Narong suggested that Dr. Sansanee could provide some guidance to the group regarding the future development of the wetland component of the meta-database. It was agreed that Mr. Paterson would prepare a summary of each of the data sets for which meta-data has been added to the regional meta-database and send this to Dr. Sansanee for her review. Mr. Paterson also agreed to re-send detailed guidance to participants on updating the regional meta-database and GIS.

6. REVIEW OF THE WETLANDS TRAINING COURSE

6.1 Review of a Draft Proposal for a Regional Training Course on Wetlands

6.1.1 The Chairperson invited Mr. Sour to brief the meeting on the status of training activities planned in support of the wetlands sub-component and the proposed wetland demonstration sites. Mr. Sour reminded members that, during the seventh meeting of the RWG-W in June 2006, members had commented on the minimum content for a joint mangrove and wetland training course proposed by the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee. They had also identified potential implementing entities for the course.

6.1.2 Mr. Sour informed the meeting that the seventh meeting of the RSTC convened in Siem Reap, Cambodia during November 2006 had recommended that the proposed joint mangroves and wetlands course be split into two independent courses, one on mangroves and one on wetlands. The rationale for this decision was that the two weeks allocated to the joint training course was considered insufficient to adequately cover both mangroves and wetlands in depth. In this connection, Mr. Sour noted that a proposal for a "*Training Course on Sustainable Use of Wetland Ecosystems*" had been received by the PCU from Mahidol University, Thailand. Mr. Sour suggested that the working group could play an important role in reviewing the draft syllabus and programme for this training course contained in document UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/10 "*Draft Proposal for the Conduct of a Regional Training Course on Wetlands*".

6.1.3 The Chairperson invited Dr. Sansanee to introduce the proposed syllabus and programme to the meeting. Dr. Sansanee noted that the course is comprised of five components, including: Introduction to Wetlands; Wetland Biota and Biodiversity; Functions and Valuation of Wetlands; Wetland Threats and Root Cause Analysis; and Wetland Management Approaches. It was noted that participants would visit the Don Hoi Lot Tidal Mudflats of the Mae Khlong River Estuary, and review case studies on the management of peat swamp forests, lagoons, estuaries, and tidal mudflats.

6.1.4 Mr. Narong noted that this training course should concentrate on Southeast Asian wetland ecosystems. He urged members to carefully examine the training syllabus and programme and provide any comments.

6.1.5 Mr. Zainuddin noted that there is increasing pressure to establish wetland-based tourism activities in Malaysia, and suggested that eco-tourism could be added to the syllabus. Mr. Antung Deddy suggested that climate change and its impacts on wetland ecosystems could also be added. Dr. Sansanee noted that in her view both eco-tourism and climate change are cross-cutting issues that would likely be addressed as part of field activities, case studies, and individual country presentations.

6.1.6 Ms. Navarro noted that one of the key challenges for wetlands management in the Philippines is the development of alternative income generating activities for coastal communities. She suggested that the course developers may wish to consider including this in the syllabus. Mr. Narong suggested that participants should also be introduced to outputs from the South China Sea Project, including the National Reports on Wetlands, National Action Plans, and the project website and associated databases. The draft syllabus and programme as considered by the meeting is included as Annex 4 of this report.

6.2 Organisation of, and support to the National Echo-seminars

6.2.1 Mr. Sour reminded members that trainees in the regional training courses are expected to conduct "National Echo Seminars" over a 1 to 3 day period following the completion of the regional training course, and that the Specialised Executing Agencies and the Focal Points for the corresponding sub-component of the project are expected to provide support as required. In this connection, the Chairperson invited members to comment on their plans for the national echo seminars and indicate the likely timing of these national level training seminars. It was agreed that all seminars should be abridged versions of the regional training courses and conducted in National languages.

6.2.2 Mr. Suon noted that a national echo seminar on wetlands will be convened in Koh Kong Province, Cambodia from 18th – 20th December 2007. It is anticipated that 30 individuals from 4 Provinces will participate in the seminar. Mr. Suon noted that participants will be from line-agencies, the private sector, and NGOs.

6.2.3 Professor Chen noted that in the case of China, two seminars will be convened during December 2007. The first will be conducted in Guangzhou City with a target audience of approximately 50 students. The second seminar will be conducted in Shantou City with a target audience of approximately 200 students, local government officers, and representatives of coastal communities.

6.2.4 Mr. Antung Deddy noted that Indonesia's National Echo Seminar on Wetlands would be convened in Jambi Province during April 2008. A total of 45 individuals will participate in the seminar from Local Government (District and Provincial) and National Government departments and agencies. Mr. Antung Deddy proposed that participants spend one day visiting the wetlands of the Berbak National Park.

6.2.5 Ms. Navarro noted that the seminar in the Philippines would run for 3 days and 2 nights in early December 2007. Possible locations for the seminar are Manila, Antipolo City, or Tagaytay City, Cavite. Possible field trip sites include the Pansipit River Estuary in Batangas, Manila Bay Tidal Flats in Parañaque, or Cavite. Target participants include staff of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Local Government Units, and demonstration site managers and staff.

6.2.6 Mr. Narong suggested that Thailand's seminar should be convened in Bangkok and participated in by 2 individuals from each of Thailand's 10 Ramsar sites, and 2 individuals from each of the proposed Ramsar sites in Thailand. A detailed summary of the proposed seminars in each country is included in Annex 4 of this report.

7. FINALISATION OF THE REGIONAL STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME (SAP)

7.1 Finalisation of Inputs from the Regional Working Group on Wetlands to the Revised SAP

7.1.1 The Chairperson invited Mr. Sour to introduce this agenda item and the draft revision of the Strategic Action Programme presented in document UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/6. Mr. Sour advised members that this document had been modified on the basis of inputs from the seventh RSTC and sixth PSC meetings. He suggested that the working group should review the contents of this draft in the light of the inputs from other working groups in particular to consider whether or not the proposed actions and associated costs, are in conformity with those proposed by the remaining habitat working groups.

7.1.2 Mr. Sour noted that a major problem with the wetlands component of the Strategic Action Programme was that several target sites to be brought under management had not been characterised within the framework of the project. The meeting agreed that sites for which no information had been compiled should be excluded from the list of the target sites to be brought under management. The following amendments were subsequently made to the document:

- The Peam Krasop site in Cambodia was removed from Table 2, and the Koh Kapik site was changed from a tidal mudflat target site to an estuary target site,
- The Tapi site in Thailand was removed from Table 2, and the Thung Kha Bay – Savi Bay site was changed from an estuary site to a tidal flat site in Table 1,
- The Thai Thu, Nghia Hung, and U Minh Thuong sites in Viet Nam were removed from Table 2

7.1.3 The Chairperson advised the PCU Member to communicate with the Focal Point for Viet Nam regarding the removal of three target wetland sites and the possible addition of sites from Table 1. Dr. Sansanee suggested and the meeting agreed that the Khao Sam Roi Yot National Park non-peat swamp site should be added to the table of targets sites as this was a regionally significant wetland. She stressed that non-peat swamps are a regionally significant wetland type identified and targeted by the project.

7.1.4 The meeting then proceeded to amend the targets for the wetland component of the Strategic Action Programme, develop a sustainable management indicator matrix for wetlands, and the proposed regional actions for coastal wetland management and conservation. The wetlands component of the SAP as amended by the RWG-W is included as Annex 5 of this report.

7.2 National Workshops to consider the Revised SAP

7.2.1 The Chairperson invited Mr. Sour to introduce this agenda item. Mr. Sour informed members that National Workshops to consider the regional Strategic Action Programme are planned to be carried out during 2007. He requested members to advise the group of any plans they are aware of in their country to consider the revised Strategic Action Programme. Members did not know the status of plans to convene such workshops in their countries. Ms. Navarro noted that she is aware that the Philippines' National Technical Working Group is considering the convergence of plans for all components into a single document in order to avoid any unnecessary duplication or overlap.

8. CONSIDERATION OF THE TOTAL ECONOMIC VALUE FOR WETLAND ECOSYSTEMS AND THE COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF ACTIONS IN THE SAP AS DETERMINED BY THE REGIONAL TASK FORCE ON ECONOMIC VALUATION

8.1 The Chairperson invited Mr. Sour to introduce document UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/7 "*The Total Economic Values of Mangrove Habitats and Cost-Effectiveness of Actions Proposed in the Strategic Action Programme*". Mr. Sour informed the meeting that the work of the task force was critical to the implementation of the SAP in that it provides a basis for an analysis of the costs and benefits of action versus no action. He noted that the basis for the work of the RTF-E were data sets of the values of the goods and services of coastal habitats that had been assembled at the national level, and compiled into one regional dataset.

8.2 Mr. Sour proceeded to outline the procedure for the calculation of national and regional weighted values. He noted that the RTF-E had faced some major challenges in determining how data sets from different locations bordering the South China Sea and from different periods in time could be compiled into a single data set and that the first major challenge was developing a procedure for standardising national values.

8.3 It was noted that document UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/7 provided a clear explanation of how the task force addressed the problem of wide variation in prices within one country by weighting the data from each location and determining a "Weighted Mean National Value" that reflected both the prices for the same resource at each location and the "stock" of that resource at the same location. Mr. Sour advised the group that full details of this method are contained in the various reports of the regional task force.

8.4 Mr. Sour pointed out that determination of regionally weighted mean values was undertaken in a similar manner using data and information concerning the total stock (or area) in each country and the Weighted Mean National Values. Thus the weighted mean national value was multiplied by the stock for each country and the resultant values summed; then divided by the total stock (or area) of the habitat bordering the South China Sea.

8.5 The group then proceeded to review the Weighted Mean National and Regional Values calculated for the goods and services of mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass, and wetlands. It was noted that there are many goods and services in all habitats for which values are missing, although the situation is particularly bad in relation to wetlands as no data has been provided for 4 countries.

8.6 Mr. Sour reminded members that during the course of 2006 they had identified the actions required at the regional level to ensure co-ordination of national level actions and the exchange of expertise and experience in the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme. He noted that these costs had been estimated based upon experiences with the implementation of the South China Sea Project and did not include the costs of actions detailed in the supporting national action plans. He noted further that if the targets of the SAP are in fact achieved then various economic benefits might be expected to be gained in terms of the avoidance of economic losses consequent upon the loss and degradation of coastal habitats.

8.7 Mr. Sour informed the meeting that the RTF-E had used the economic value data and the costs of proposed regional actions under the SAP to derive cost-benefit ratios for each of the 4 habitat sub-components of the SAP. He noted that the value of the annual production of goods and services by wetland habitats bordering the South China Sea has been established as US\$295.15 per hectare, which is absurdly low. This results in a total value of US\$1.2 billion for the estimated 4,201,145 hectares of these habitats bordering the South China Sea. He noted further that the cost-benefit analysis conducted by the RTF-E suggests that an investment of US\$5,507,601 is required to yield US\$3,477,255 in benefits. This represents a negative total net benefit of US\$-2,030,346.

8.8 The Chairperson noted that the above conclusion is likely invalid resulting from the unreasonably low value of annual production per hectare estimated for wetland habitats. He suggested that it is critical that the group act quickly to provide more comprehensive economic value data for wetland goods and services to the RTF-E where possible.

8.9 The regional expert, Dr. Sansanee noted that in her opinion much of the required data may simply not be available for the wetland types dealt with by the working group. She noted that great attention has been devoted to mangrove research in the region over recent decades and as such there may be more estimates of the values of this habitat type than all the wetland types dealt with by the RWG-W group combined. She noted that there may be some information on the value of timber harvested from the Pekan-Pakan peat swamp forest in Malaysia. Mr. Zainuddin noted that he would try to find the required information upon his return to Malaysia. He suggested that similar information may be available for the peat swamp forests of Kuching, Sarawak.

8.10 Ms. Navarro noted that the Philippines' member of the RTF-E, Dr. Noel Padilla had been working on deriving economic values for the wetland goods and services of Malampaya Sound. She noted that she would liaise with Dr. Padilla upon her return to the Philippines in this regard. Mr. Narong noted that he would attempt to locate additional data upon his return to Thailand and forward this to the Thai members of the RTF-E and the PCU. It was noted that data could be contributed to the regional dataset from any South China Sea site. Dr. Sansanee encouraged members to contribute data to this dataset.

9. PREPARATION FOR THE THIRD REGIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE AND MAYOR'S ROUND TABLE

9.1 In introducing this agenda item the Chairperson advised the meeting that the 3rd Regional Scientific Conference will be convened from 14th to 16th November 2007, and that the 3rd Mayor's Round Table (MRT) will be convened in conjunction with it. He noted that the group might wish to consider topics related to the proposed demonstration sites that are worthy of presentation during the Mayor's Round Table, and topics related to wetlands in the South China Sea representing outcomes of the project that could be presented during the 3rd Regional Scientific Conference.

9.2 The following topics were considered by the meeting as being suitable for inclusion in the programme for the Regional Scientific Conference: the National Action Plans on Wetlands; the wetlands component of the Regional Strategic Action Programme; establishment of a regional estuary monitoring system; management of a multilateral and inter-governmental project such as the South China Sea Project; and the effects of climate change on vulnerable coastal wetlands bordering the South China Sea.

9.3 It was noted that where possible, demonstrate sites with a high probability of success such as the Shantou Wetland Demonstration Site should be showcased during the Mayors' Roundtable and Regional Science Conference.

10. WORK PLAN AND ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL WORKING GROUP ON WETLANDS

10.1 Work Plan for 2007-2008

10.1.1 The Chairperson invited Mr. Sour to introduce document UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/8 "*Draft Work Plan and Timetable for the Regional Working Group on Wetlands 2007 to 2008*". Mr. Sour presented the work plan revised to include decisions and agreements reached during the course of the meeting.

10.1.2 The revised work plan and timetable was considered, discussed and amended as it appears in Annex 6 of this report.

10.2 Maintenance of the Network and Project Benefits after June 2008

10.2.1 The Chairperson invited members to raise for discussion any plans that might be in hand to continue the work of the project beyond June 2008 at both national and regional levels in order to sustain any tangible benefits arising from participation in the project. All members noted that adoption and implementation of the National Action Plans will yield long term benefits for wetland management at the national level, however no member had planned activities to sustain benefits arising from the project.

10.2.2 Dr. Sansanee suggested that a good start had been made in developing an inventory and database of wetlands bordering the South China Sea and recommended that future actions should focus on improvement of this. She also noted that studies to determine the economic values of wetland goods and services should be an important regional priority.

10.2.3 Mr. Narong noted that in terms of sustaining the Regional Working Group on Wetlands, it may be possible for example that a Memorandum of Understanding be signed by each member's University or Government to cover on-going co-operation. In this connection, Dr. Sansanee pointed out that there has been a successful establishment of a University Network for wetlands of the Mekong River region. She noted that the network includes 11 universities and is funded by the universities and fund raising and could act as a useful model for any efforts to sustain the training aspects of the project.

11. DATE AND PLACE OF THE NINTH MEETING OF THE REGIONAL WORKING GROUP ON WETLANDS

11.1 The Chairperson invited members to consider whether or not a ninth meeting should be convened during the first half of 2008, or whether this meeting should be taken as the final meeting for this phase of the project. It was noted that two issues must be taken into consideration by the regional working group if they wish to make such a recommendation to the PSC. The first is the cost; and the second whether or not there will be any substantive matters that could usefully be considered during such a meeting.

11.2 The Chairperson reminded members that meetings of the RWG-W have been held successively in: Phuket, Thailand, April 2002; Shenzhen, China, September 2002; Bali, Indonesia, March 2003; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, December 2003; Ha Long City, Viet Nam, October 2004; Sihanoukville, Cambodia, September 2005; Manila, Philippines, June 2006; and in Shantou, China, 2007.

11.3 Professor Chen noted that organising a meeting is extremely time consuming for the focal point involved and this should be considered in planning an additional meeting. She noted that if the Medium-Sized Projects become operational during 2007 then there may be benefit in convening an additional meeting in order for the members to review progress and to provide oversight and guidance.

11.4 Mr. Antung Deddy noted that one purpose of holding an additional meeting would be to check progress in relation to the completion of outstanding wetland component activities in Indonesia and Malaysia. He also noted that an extra meeting of the group could be used to discuss how to maintain regional co-operation and create a permanent structure for the work of the group on wetlands. It was noted that the Regional Task Force on Legal Matters was working on modes for enhancing regional co-operation. It was noted that many of the topics introduced by the member from Indonesia could be dealt with in an e-forum discussion or during an *ad hoc* meeting of the group during the 3rd Regional Scientific Conference.

11.5 Mr. Narong suggested, and the meeting agreed, that the group plan to meet during the 3rd Regional Scientific Conference to discuss the completion of outstanding tasks and the success of the use of the e-forum. The group agreed that if there are any further outstanding matters or the MSP projects become operational during 2007 then there may be a need to convene a ninth meeting of the group in 2008.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 The Chairperson invited Mr. Sour to inform the meeting on the status of the MSP Proposals. Mr. Sour noted that he was pleased to be able to inform the meeting that following discussions between UNEP and the GEF Secretariat regarding the stalled pipeline of projects, the seven MSPs have now been re-pipelined for funding in GEF Phase IV (i.e. after July 1st 2006). He noted that for two sites, namely the East Bintan (seagrass) and Shantou (wetlands) sites, funds would hopefully be released during 2007.

12.2 He noted that Letters of Commitment for co-financing were required for both the Balat Estuary and Thale Noi demonstration sites. In relation to a query from Mr. Narong it was noted that the Letters of Commitment should outline the cash co-financing. He noted that the proposal for the Malampaya Sound Wetland Demonstration Site had not yet been completed. Ms. Navarro noted that in the case of the Malampaya Sound site, Ms. Mendoza had heard that the proposal would not be approved and as such had stopped working on it. It was noted that the PCU could write to Ms. Mendoza informing her that the projects had been repipelined if required.

13. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

13.1 Ms. Navarro, the Rapporteur presented the draft report of the meeting, which was considered, amended, and adopted as it appears in this document.

14. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

14.1 Mr. Sour thanked participants for their active participation in the meeting. He expressed special thanks on behalf of UNEP to Professor Chen, Mr. Peng Yi Sheng, and the local government officials for their excellent support to the meeting.

14.2 Members expressed their thanks to the local organisers, the Chinese wetland Focal Point the PCU and the local government for the excellent arrangements and support to the meeting. Professor Chen thanked everyone for their support in making the meeting a success.

14.3 The Chairperson formally closed the meeting at 18.35 on Friday 11th May 2007.

ANNEX 1**List of Participants****Focal Points****Cambodia**

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ANNEX 2

List of Documents

Discussion Documents

UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/1amend 1	Agenda.
UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/2	Annotated Agenda.
UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/3	Report of the Meeting.
UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/4	Status of the Administrative Reports for 2006: Progress Reports, Expenditure Reports and Audit Reports.
UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/5	Status of the Substantive Outputs from the Specialised Executing Agencies for the Wetland Sub-component of the UNEP/GEF South China Sea Project.
UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/6	Revised Draft Strategic Action Programme (draft 1).
UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/7	Total Economic Values of wetland habitats and cost-effectiveness of the actions proposed in the Strategic Action Programme.
UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/8	Draft Work Plan and Timetable for the Regional Working Group on Wetlands 2007 to 2008.
UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/9	Proposed Third Amendment to the Memoranda of Understanding.
UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/10	Draft Proposal for the Conduct of a Regional Training Course on Wetlands.

Information Documents

UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/Inf.1	List of Participants.
UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/Inf.2	List of Documents.
UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.8/Inf.3	Programme.
UNEP/GEF/SCS/RTF-E.6/3	Sixth Meeting of the Regional Task Force on Economic Valuation for the UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand". Report of the Meeting. Batam, Indonesia, 22 – 25 January 2007 UNEP/GEF/SCS/RTF-E.6/3.
UNEP/GEF/SCS/RTF-E.7/3	Seventh Meeting of the Regional Task Force on Economic Valuation for the UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand". Report of the Meeting. Beihai, China 12 – 15 March 2007 UNEP/GEF/SCS/RTF-E.7/3.
UNEP/GEF/SCS/PSC.6/3	Sixth Meeting of the Project Steering Committee for the UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand". Report of the Meeting. Siem Reap, Cambodia, 20 – 22 November 2006 UNEP/GEF/SCS/PSC.6/3.
UNEP/GEF/SCS/RSTC.7/3	Seventh Meeting of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee for the UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand". Report of the Meeting. Siem Reap, Cambodia, 14 – 17 November 2006 UNEP/GEF/SCS/RSTC.7/3.

UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-F.8/3 Eighth Meeting of the Regional Working Group on the Fisheries Component for the UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand". Report of the Meeting. Belitung, Indonesia, 1 – 4 November 2006 UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-F.8/3.

The following documents are supplied in published form.

UNEP/GEF/SCS/RTF-L.5/3 Fifth Meeting of the Regional Task Force on Legal Matters for the UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand". Report of the Meeting. Batam, Indonesia, 18 – 21 September 2006 UNEP/GEF/SCS/RTF-L.5/3.

UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-M.7/3 Seventh Meeting of the Regional Working Group on the Mangroves Sub-component for the UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand". Report of the Meeting. Pontianak, Batu Ampar, Indonesia, 4 – 8 September 2006 UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-M.7/3.

UNEP/GEF/SCS/RTF-E.5/3 Fifth Meeting of the Regional Task Force on Economic Valuation for the UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand". Report of the Meeting. Kota Kinabaru, Malaysia, 21 – 24 August 2006 UNEP/GEF/SCS/RTF-E.5/3.

UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-LbP.7/3 Seventh Meeting of the Regional Working Group on the Land-based Pollution Component for the UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand". Report of the Meeting. Sihanoukville, Cambodia, 7 – 10 August 2006 UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-LbP.7/3.

UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-SG.7/3 Seventh Meeting of the Regional Working Group on the Seagrass Sub-component for the UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand". Report of the Meeting. Beihai, China, 24 – 27 July 2006 UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-SG.7/3.

UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-CR.7/3 Seventh Meeting of the Regional Working Group on the Coral Reefs Sub-component for the UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand". Report of the Meeting. Sabah, Malaysia, 10 – 13 July 2006 UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-CR.7/3.

UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.7/3 Seventh Meeting of the Regional Working Group on the Wetland Sub-component for the UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand". Report of the Meeting. Manila, Philippines, 19 – 21 June 2006 UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.7/3.

UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-F.7/3 Seventh Meeting of the Regional Working Group on the Fisheries Component for the UNEP/GEF Project "Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand". Report of the Meeting. Bangkok, Thailand, 16 – 18 May 2006 UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-F.7/3.

Documents received during the meeting

Malaysia: A National Action Plan of Wetland in Malaysia (draft in hard copy).

Philippines: Progress Report and Expenditure Report (July to December 2006)
National Action Plan for Philippine Wetlands 2007-2012 (draft in both hard copy and electronic forms).

ANNEX 3

Agenda

- 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING**
 - 1.1 Welcome Address on behalf of UNEP**
 - 1.2 Opening Statement on behalf of the Shantou City Government**
 - 1.3 Introduction of Participants**
- 2. ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING**
 - 2.1 Election of Officers**
 - 2.2 Documentation and Administrative Arrangements**
- 3. ADOPTION OF THE MEETING AGENDA**
- 4. STATUS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS AND THE MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING**
 - 4.1 Status of the Progress Reports; Expenditure Reports; and Audit Reports**
 - 4.2 Consideration of the Third Draft Amendment to the Memoranda of Understanding**
- 5. STATUS OF THE SUBSTANTIVE OUTPUTS**
 - 5.1 Publication of National Reports in National Languages and English**
 - 5.2 Status of Finalisation, Adoption and Implementation of the National Action Plans**
 - 5.3 Update of the Regional GIS Database and Meta-database and Use of the Project Website**
- 6. REVIEW OF THE WETLAND TRAINING COURSE**
 - 6.1 Review of a Draft Proposal for the Regional Training Course on Wetlands**
 - 6.2 Organisation of, and support to the National Echo-seminars**
- 7. FINALISATION OF THE REGIONAL STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME (SAP)**
 - 7.1 Finalisation of Inputs from the Regional Working Group on Wetlands to the Revised SAP**
 - 7.2 National Workshop to consider the Revised SAP**
- 8. CONSIDERATION OF THE TOTAL ECONOMIC VALUE FOR WETLAND ECOSYSTEMS AND THE COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF ACTIONS IN THE SAP AS DETERMINED BY THE REGIONAL TASK FORCE ON ECONOMIC VALUATION**
- 9. PREPARATION FOR THE THIRD REGIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE AND MAYOR'S ROUND TABLE**
- 10. WORK PLAN AND ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL WORKING GROUP ON WETLANDS**
 - 10.1 Work Plan for 2007 - 2008**
 - 10.2 Maintenance of the Network and Project Benefits after June 2008**
- 11. DATE AND PLACE OF THE NINTH MEETING OF THE REGIONAL WORKING GROUP ON WETLANDS**
- 12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- 13. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING**
- 14. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

ANNEX 4

Logistic Arrangements for National Echo Seminars on “Sustainable Use and Management of Wetlands”

BACKGROUND

Members of the Regional Working Group on Wetlands were aware that the trainees attending the regional training courses are expected to conduct “National Echo seminars” over a 1 to 3 day period following the completion of the regional training course, and that the Specialised Executing Agencies and the Focal Points for the corresponding sub-component of the project are expected to provide logistic support as required.

It was noted that these national echo-seminars are expected to be conducted in the national language and that trainees would be responsible for translating materials from the regional training course for use in the national echo-seminar.

Members therefore prepared and presented their plans for the national echo seminars and indicated the proposed timing of these national level training seminars as detailed in Table 1 of this Annex.

The working group agreed that all seminars would be presented as abridged versions of the regional training course rather than focussing on only part of the course. The summaries of logistic arrangement including date, venue, and number of participants for the national echo seminars are listed in the table below.

Table 1 Proposed Logistic Arrangements for National Echo seminars on “Sustainable Use and Management of Wetlands”.

Country	Date	Venue	Participants	Remark
Cambodia	18-20 September 2007	Koh Kong City Hotel, Koh Kong Province.	30 from 4 coastal provinces, line-agencies, private sector and NGOs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People from MoE (3) • trainers from Phnom Penh (3) • People from 3 provinces (15) • Representatives from private sectors in Koh Kong (5) • Representatives from NGOs (4) 	
China	Mid-December 2007 (and Late December 2007)	Guang Zhou, (and Shantou)	Total 250 participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 students to be trained in Guang Zhou • 200 students, local officers, local communities; to be trained in Shantou. 	Two separated national echo-seminars in two locations.
Indonesia	April 2008 (3 days)	Jambi, Jambi Province	51 participants from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 districts of South Sumatera Province (6) • 2 districts of Jambi Province (9) • 2 districts of Riau Daratan Province (6) • 1 district of Riau Kepulauan (4) • 2 districts of West Kalimantan (6) • 2 districts of Central Kalimantan (6) • Jakarta (national Government) (4) • Local NGO (4) • 6 lecturers and/or organisers 	Field Study: After 3 days seminar, the participants will visit Berbak National Park
Malaysia	December 2007 (3 days)	A Training Centre	50 participants from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Resources and Environmental (NRE) Ministry (4) • Department of Wildlife and National Park (5) • Forestry Department (Federal, Sabah, and Sarawak) (3) • Fishery Department (1) • NRE-Marine Division (1) • Department of Environment (1) • Forestry Research Institute of Malaysia (1) • District Office (6) • Federal Economic Planning Unit (1) • State Economic Planning Unit (Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, Johore, Sabah, Sarawak) (6) • Department of Aborigines Affair (1) • Local Universities (7) • Non-government Agencies (6) • Local Communities Representatives (2) • Organizing Committee (Secretaries) (5) 	

Table 1 cont. Proposed Logistic Arrangements for National Echo seminars on “Sustainable Use and Management of Wetlands”.

Country	Date	Venue	Participants	Remark
Philippine	Early December 2007 (3 days 2 nights)	Manila or Antipolo City or Tagaytay City, Cavite	Total 55 Participants from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DENR staff (Protected Areas, Wildlife and Coastal Zone Management Section): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Level (2) - Regional Level (4) - PENRO Level (10) - CENRO Level (10) • Local Government Units "(Planning Officers/Agriculturists/Environment and Natural Resources Officers/Coastal Resource Management Coordinators / Integrated Fisheries and Management Council Chairs/Members)": <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provincial Level (10) - Municipal Level (12) • Demonstration Site Managers and staff (2) • Organisers/supporting staff (5) 	Possible field visit to Pansipit River Estuary in Batangas; Manila Bay Tidal Flats in Parañaque or Cavite.
Thailand	December 2007 (3 days)	Bangkok	Total 35 participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 persons from each of the 10 Ramsar sites • 2 persons from each of the 5 proposed Ramsar sites • 5 organizers and lecturers. 	2 days in Hotel, 1 day for site visit in Samut Prakan Province.
Viet Nam	August 2008 (3 days)	Xuan Thuy, Nam Dinh	Total 40 participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VEPA (Vietnam Environmental Protection Agency): 5 • VIF (Vietnam Institute of Forestry): 2 • VNU (Vietnam National University): 10 • IMER (Institute of Marine Environment and Resources) : 2 • XTNP (Xuan thuy National Park): 5 • THNR (Tien Hai Natural Reserve): 5 • MOFI (Ministry of Fishery): 4 • NGOs: 5 • MARD (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development): 2 	2 days in Hotel, 1 day for site visit in Xuan Thuy National Park

ANNEX 5

Revised Wetland Inputs to the regional Strategic Action Programme

The Management Status of Wetland Sites Bordering the South China Sea.

Under the UNEP/GEF South China Sea Project, activities in the wetland sub-component focus on five specific types of wetlands, namely intertidal mudflats, estuaries, lagoons, peat swamps and non-peat swamp, excluding mangroves, coral reefs and seagrass beds which are the subjects of separate sub-components. Table 1 summarises the legal and management status of major lagoons, estuaries, intertidal mudflats, peat swamps and non-peat swamps bordering the South China Sea. A total area of 4,201,145ha of the five specific types of wetland sites has been identified, specifically lagoons (34,921ha), estuaries (1,203,871 ha), inter-tidal flats (691,859ha), non-peat swamps (1,623,567 ha), peat swamps (646,927 ha).

Table 1 Legal and Management Status of some Inter-tidal Mudflats, Estuaries, Coastal Lagoons and Coastal Peat Swamps bordering the South China Sea.

Name of site	Area (ha)	Legal and Management Status		
		Protected – Non-use (Subsistence/commercial)	Sustainable use	Non- sustainable use
Estuaries				
Cambodia				
Koh Kapik Ramsar in Koh Kong Prov.	12,000	National Park and RAMSAR site	N.A.	N.A.
China				
Pearl river	12,783	Wetland Park (Area 30 ha)	N.A.	N.A.
Beilun river	1,083	National level nature reserve	N.A.	N.A.
Indonesia				
Bakau Selat Dumai	60,000	Yes		
Pulau Padang dan Tanjung Pandan	111,500	-		√
Muara Sungai Guntung	26,000	Small part		√
Delta Banyuasin	200,000	Yes		
Sembilang	387,500	Yes	-	-
Philippines				
Malampaya Sound	24,500	Protected seascape	N.A.	N.A.
Pansipit River Estuary	15	N.A.	N.A.	√
Thailand				
Pattani Bay	6,149	N.A.	N.A.	√
Ban Don Bay	49,459	N.A.	N.A.	√
Welu River Estuary	10,400	N.A.	N.A.	√
Pak Phanang Bay	13,597	N.A.	√	N.A.
Viet Nam				
Balat Estuary	26,397	National Park and National Nature Reserve	N.A.	N.A.
Tien River Estuary	100,691	Small part – Thanh Phu NR (Ben Tre Pro.)	N.A.	√
Dong Nai River Estuary	49,711	Partly – Can Gio Biosphere Reserve	N.A.	√
Van Uc Estuary	6,990	N.A.	N.A.	√
Bach Dang Estuary	80,358	N.A.	N.A.	√
Tien Yen Estuary	24,738	N.A.	N.A.	√
SUBTOTAL	1,203,871	692,184	38,097	328,511 [+137,500]
Peat Swamps				
Cambodia				
Prek Kampong bay in Kampot Prov.	16,250	National Park	N.A.	N.A.
Prek Kampong Som in Sihanoukville	10,800	National Park	N.A.	N.A.
Indonesia				
Berbak NP	162,700	Yes		
SM Terusan Dalam	74,750	Yes		
Way Kambas NP	130,000	Yes		
Sungai Merang	150,000	Yes		
Thailand				
Wetlands in Thale Noi Wildlife Non-hunting Area	45,700	Includes RAMSAR Site	N.A.	N.A.
Phru To Daeng Wildlife Sanctuary	20,120	Wildlife Sanctuary; RAMSAR site	N.A.	N.A.
Wetlands in Thale Sap Wildlife Non-hunting Area	36,467	Non-hunting Area		N.A.
Phru Kan Tulee	140	N.A.	√	N.A.
SUBTOTAL	646,927	564,620	82,307	0

Table 1 cont. Legal and Management Status of some Inter-tidal Mudflats, Estuaries, Coastal Lagoons and Coastal Peat Swamps bordering the South China Sea.

Name of site	Area (ha)	Legal and Management Status		
		Protected – Non-use (Subsistence/commercial)	Sustainable use	Non-sustainable use
Non-peat Swamps				
Cambodia				
Kampong Trach in Krong Kep	7,500	National Park	N.A.	N.A.
Prek Toek Sap	21,259	National Park	N.A.	N.A.
Indonesia				
Tulang Bawang	86,000	Partly		
Rawa-rawa Kubu Padang Tikar	1,499,000	-		
Thailand				
Khao Sam Roi Yot National Park	9,808	National Park	N.A.	N.A.
SUBTOTAL	1,623,567	38,567 [86000]	0	[1,499,00]
Lagoons				
Cambodia				
Beoung Ka Chang	4,503	National Park & RAMSAR site	N.A.	N.A.
China				
Wenchang	218	Provincial level nature reserve	N.A.	N.A.
Viet Nam				
Tam Giang-Cau Lagoon	21,600	N.A.	N.A.	√
Tra O Lagoon	2,000	N.A.	N.A.	√
Degi Lagoon (Binh Dinh Province)	1,600	N.A.	N.A.	√
Thi Nai lagoon (Binh Dinh Province)	5,000	N.A.	N.A.	√
SUBTOTAL	34,921	4,721	0	30,200
Inter-tidal flats				
Cambodia				
Ruer Sey Srock Toul Srvav Gnamin Krong Kep	4,890	National Park	N.A.	N.A.
China				
Shantou	1,435	Municipal level nature reserve	N.A.	N.A.
Hepu	3,951	Municipal level nature reserve	N.A.	N.A.
Zhanzhou	806	Provincial level nature reverse	N.A.	N.A.
Indonesia				
CA Pulau Burung	200	Yes		
Tanjung Datuk	25,000	-		
Tanjung Jabung	3,000	Yes		
Paloh	176,548	Yes		
Muara Kendawangan	150,000	Yes		
CA Pulau Dua	30	Yes		
Pualu Rambut	46	Yes		
Muara Angke	25	Yes		
CA Muara Gembong	10,481	Yes		
Philippines				
Balayan Bay Tidal flats	75,000	N.A.	√	N.A.
Manila Bay Tidal Flat	30,000	N.A.	√	N.A.
El Nido, Palawan mudflats	54,303	Protected Seascape	N.A.	N.A.
Thailand				
Don Hoi Lot	2,409	RAMSAR Site	N.A.	N.A.
Wetlands in Mu Koh Chang National Park	65,000	National Park	N.A.	N.A.
Wetlands in Mu Koh Ang Thong National Park	10,200	National Park and RAMSAR Site	N.A.	N.A.
Thung Kha Bay-Savi Bay	5,204	National Park	N.A.	N.A.
Viet Nam				
Ca Mau Southwest Tidal Flat	60,711	National Park	N.A.	N.A.
Kim Son Tidal Flat	12,620	N.A.	N.A.	√
SUBTOTAL	691,859	487,323	161,712	37620
TOTAL	4,201,145	1,787,415	282,116	[2,032,831]

THREATS

Population growth, and urbanisation of the coastal fringe, combined with rapid economic growth in this region places tremendous pressure on coastal wetland ecosystems. Major threats to the coastal wetlands bordering the South China Sea can be grouped as follows:

1) Loss of wetland areas through conversion for:

- Agriculture
- Aquaculture
- Port and harbour development
- Human settlement
- Tourist development
- Urbanization
- Industrialization

2) Degradation of wetland ecosystems as a result of:

- Over-exploitation of living resources
- Use of inappropriate fishing techniques and gear
- Pollution
- Deforestation in upland area
- Invasive species
- Global trends and natural episodic events such as sea level rise, typhoons and tsunami

GOAL

The ultimate goal of the SAP for wetland management and use is to:

Promote the sustainable use of coastal wetland resources by developing integrated management plans and enhancing conservation and restoration of coastal wetlands bordering the South China Sea and the Gulf of Thailand, specifically lagoons, estuaries, mudflats, peat swamps, and non-peat swamps.

TARGETS

The specific targets for wetland management are:

- *By the year 2012, to set up or update management plans for at least three lagoons, nine estuaries, five tidal flats, two peat swamps and one non-peat swamp in the South China Sea (See Table 2).*
- *By the year 2012, to increase the number of sites or specified wetland areas with protection status (i.e. non-hunting area, nature reserves, protected areas, Ramsar Sites, etc).*
- *By the year 2017, to have a regional estuary monitoring scheme implemented in the seven participating countries of the UNEP/GEF South China Sea Project.¹*

Table 2 List of sites specified in the targets. N = No existing Management Plan; U = existing but out-dated plans requiring amendment and up-dating.

	Lagoons	Estuaries	Tidal mudflats	Peat swamp	Non- Peat swamp
Cambodia		Koh Kapik-N			
China	Wenchang -N	Pearl river-N; Beilun river-U	Shantou-N; Hepu-N; Zhanzhou-N		
Indonesia		Sembilang NP-U		Berbak NP-U	
Philippines		Malampaya sound-U; Pansipit-N	Manila Bay-N		
Thailand				Thale Noi non hunting area - U	Khao Sam Roi Yot National Park-U
Viet Nam²	Tamgiang-Cauhai-N; Thi Nai-N	Tien river-U; Dong Nai river-U; Balat-U	Southwest Ca Mau-U		
Total	3	9	5	2	1

¹ UNEP, 2005. *Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand. Report of the Fifth Meeting of the Regional Working Group on Wetlands. UNEP/GEF/SCS/RWG-W.5/3.*

² These changes were provided by the Viet Nam's Focal Point on 29th May 2007 after the 8th meeting of the RWG-SG.

Table 3 Sustainable Management Indicator Matrix.

Management Indicators	Ecological/Environmental Indicators	Socio-Economic Indicators
MANAGEMENT CAPACITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal Management framework Trained Man-power (No./levels) Facilities and equipment Sustainable Financing Regional wetland information operational system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wetland area (ha) Water quality (nutrients, pH, turbidity, and hydrocarbons) Hydrological and sedimentary patterns Flora and fauna (vegetation, dominant species, availability of flagship species, exotic invasive species, endemic species, biodiversity index) 	FISHERIES (fish, crustaceans, molluscs etc) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catch per unit effort Total landing Catch composition Income
MANAGEMENT APPROACH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sectoral Integrated Community-based Multiple-use 		TOURISM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of visitors Number of tourism operators Income
		FORESTRY (Peat Swamp) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volume of timber Income
MANAGEMENT TOOLS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring system established Regulations and agreements (e.g. seasonal closures, zoning, licensing, and permits) 		OTHER ACTIVITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers of people involved <i>Per capita</i> income
		OVERALL LIVING STANDARD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population density Level of education Health of the community Cultural aspects

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

The proposed regional activities are designed to promote sustainable management and use of the wetland ecosystems are categorised into three main components; namely:

Component 1 – Capacity development to enhance sustainable wetland management

Component 2 – Legal aspects, Institutional arrangement and international collaboration

Component 3 – Participatory wetlands management and monitoring mechanism

There are in total 13 actions proposed and these are grouped into three components each of which contains specific objectives, and activities, while the approximate costs are presented in Table 4.

Component 1. Capacity development to enhance sustainable wetland management

The main objective of this component is to enhance and sustain the capacity of wetland management agencies and strengthen knowledge and public awareness on the wise use of wetlands in the region. This component is divided into two sub-components; the first of which focuses on the required regional mechanisms for human resource development through training programme including study tours and field visits for wetland managers, communities, students, and NGOs. The second sub-component outlines the organisation of the regional meetings, the production and dissemination of materials for public awareness materials on topics including good practices and traditional knowledge, and the conduction of, compilation and dissemination on studies of economic valuation of the estuaries, lagoons, tidal flats, peat swamps and non-peat swamp bordering the South China Sea.

Component 2. Legal aspects, Institutional arrangement and international collaboration

This component aims to improve the effectiveness of national policy, legal and institutional arrangements and co-ordination. It is divided into two sub-components. The first one addresses the maintenance and strengthening the Regional Working Group on Wetlands, and the development of regional awards and incentive mechanism. The second sub-component focuses on establishment of linkages among wetland management institutes or agencies in the region and on the maintenance of community benefits.

Component 3. Participatory wetlands management and monitoring mechanism

The objective of this component is to maintain and update the Regional Wetlands GIS database and meta-database including scientific baseline data for wetland conservation and sustainable use. Activities are grouped into two sub-components; the first of which involves developing regional handbooks/manuals, guidelines, maintaining regional GIS and meta-databases, developing and implementing the regional estuary monitoring scheme. The second sub-component outlines the conduction of a regional meeting among countries on the status of wetland management plan, and development of manuals/handbooks for sustainable use including restoration of estuaries, coastal lagoons, etc.

Table 4 Proposed Actions for Coastal Wetland Management and Conservation.

Components/Objectives	Sub-components	Regional Activities	Description	Cost
1. Capacity development to enhance sustainable wetland management.	1.1 Human Resource Development	1.1.1 Conduct regional training programme (including topics on monitoring and management planning). The programme may include study tours, and field visit for wetland managers, communities, students, and NGOs (management plan).	1 course/year, 5 years, 15days/course, 2 pers/country, 7 countries	325,500
<i>To enhance and sustain the capacity of wetland management agencies and strengthen knowledge and public awareness on wise use of wetland management in the region</i>	1.2 Communication, education and public awareness	1.2.1 Organize regional meetings to develop regional campaign on public awareness.	2 meetings, 1per/country/7 countries, 5 days	21,700
		1.2.2 Produce, disseminate and translate public awareness materials on topics including good practices and traditional knowledge.	(1 consultant, 5 months), (translation into 7 languages, \$12/page, 150pages), (US\$10/copy, 500 copies/country, 7 countries)	86,100
		1.2.3 Conduct, compile, and disseminate studies on economic valuation of the estuaries, lagoons, tidal flats, peat swamps and non-peat swamps in the South China Sea.	(1 consultant, 3 months), (2 meetings, 4 pers/country, 7 countries, 5 days), (300 copies, 10\$/copy)	112,900
2. Legal aspects ,institutional arrangement and international collaboration	2.1 Policy, Legal and institutional framework enhancement	2.1.1 Maintain and strengthen the Regional Working Group on Wetlands to provide policy and legal information, scientific and technical advice on coastal wetland management to the participating countries.	1 meeting/year, 5 years, 4 days/meeting, 1per/country, 7 countries	43,400
<i>To improve the effectiveness of national policy, legal and institutional arrangement and coordination</i>		2.2 Promotion of international cooperation	2.1.2 Develop regional awards and incentive mechanism models (e.g. eco-labelling) to recognize outstanding accomplishment of sustainable wetland use.	(1 consultant, 3 months), (2 meetings, 5 day/meeting, 1 per/country, 7 countries)
	2.2.1 Establish linkages among wetland management institutes or agencies in the region and maintain the communities (regular meetings, e-forum and website).		1 meeting, 1 per/country, 7 countries, 5 days	10,850

Table 4 cont. Proposed Actions for Coastal Wetland Management and Conservation.

Components/Objectives	Sub-components	Regional Activities	Description	Cost
3. Participatory wetlands management and monitoring mechanism	3.1 Develop, maintain information system and disseminate products	3.1.1 Develop a regional handbook/manual and regional guidelines for standardization of techniques for wetland resource assessment; and conduct of socio-economic valuation and cultural assessment.	(1 consultant, 4 months), (2 meetings, 1per/country, 7 countries, 5 days), (300 copies, 10\$/copy)	44,650
		3.1.2 Develop the guidelines on wetland classification and mapping for estuaries, mudflats and conduct mapping in peat-swamps, non-peat swamp and lagoon.	(1 consultant, 2 months), (2 meetings, 1per/country, 7 countries, 5 days), (300 copies, 10\$/copy)	40,100
		3.1.3 Maintain and update regional GIS and meta databases.	1 consultant, 3 months	23,100
		3.1.4 Develop and produce guideline; and implement a regional estuary monitoring scheme (eg. Climate change, etc.).	(1 consultant, 3 months), (2 meetings, 5 day/meeting, 1 per/country, 7 countries), (300 copies of the guideline, US\$10/copy)	47,800
	3.2 Wetland conservation and restoration	3.2.1 Conduct a regional meeting among the countries on status of the wetland management plan.	1 consultant, 6 months	46,200
		3.2.2 Develop manuals/handbooks for sustainable use, incl. restoration, of estuaries, coastal lagoons, inter-tidal mudflats, peat swamp forest, and non-peat swamp forest.	(1 consultant, 3 months), (translation into 7 languages, \$12/page, 80pages), (US\$10/copy, 500 copies/country, 7 countries)	64,820
Total Cost				911,920

To maintain and update Regional Wetlands GIS database and meta-database including scientific baseline for wetland conservation and sustainable use

ANNEX 6

Work Plan (2007-2008) and Schedule of Meetings for 2008

Table 1 Framework Work Plan and Time Table for Wetland Sub-component to December 31st 2008.

	2006				2007				2008			
	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q
National Wetlands Committee meetings												
National Technical Working Group meetings												
Meetings of RWG-W						x				X?		
Complete outstanding tasks of the original MoU												
Publication of national wetland reports in national languages							30Sep(Vie)	30 Nov(Mal)				
Publication of the full set of national reports (English)								31Dec				
Maintain and update GIS data and information						30Jun (Ind)	1 Jul (Mal)					
Maintain and update national and regional meta-databases							1 Jul (Mal)					
Finalisation and implementation of demonstration site proposals												
Revise and finalise the Malampaya Sound demonstration site proposal			15 July					30Nov				
Implementation of wetland demonstration site activities												
Adoption and implementation of national action plans												
Finalisation of national action plans (Cam., Ind., Phil., Mal., and Viet.)			31 st July				30 Sep					
Public and stakeholder meetings for the publicity of the national action plans												
Adoption of national action plans								30 Nov				
Implementation of national action plans												
Finalise Strategic Action Programme												
Draft revised SAP outline and E-forum				Dec								
Provision of data and information on economic value of coastal wetlands		1 st July					30Jul					
Additional Input from members to the PCU for the 1 st draft SAP			31 st July			11May						
The PCU edit and format the final draft for the consideration of the RSTC-8							30 Sep					
Implementation of the regional training programme												
Singing MoU with selected training institution							1Jul					
Finalisation of the syllabus and training materials by the training institution							30 Jul					
Nomination of trainees					28Feb							
Conduct the regional training course					Feb.07			15Nov				
Conduct the national echo seminars					Mar 07							
Presentations in 3rd Mayor's Round Table and RSC-3												
PCU to inform the topics and time to SEAs						Jun 30						
SEAs send the presentations to the PCU for Mayor's Round Table & RSC-3							30Sep					

