



## **DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PNLC**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The seas of East Asia face a very dynamic future. The ocean and coasts of the region will be subject to diverse challenges and opportunities. Natural and manmade pressures such as climate change, marine pollution, overexploitation of marine biodiversity and fisheries resources, growth of trade and infrastructure, and pandemics are shaping a new way of working and a new generation of policies and innovations across constantly shifting socioeconomic landscapes. PEMSEA and its partners and networks of learning centers and local governments is no stranger to such change, having pursued integrated coastal management (ICM) over the last 29 years as a fundamental mechanism to steer coastal governance and partnerships in the East Asian Seas (EAS) region. This was made possible through the adoption and implementation of a shared regional strategy called the “Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA)” at the regional, national, and local levels. The new SDS-SEA Implementation Plan (IP) will be implemented in 2023 to 2027 to guide coastal and marine planning, scale up the implementation of ICM, and share lessons learned and best practices in the EAS region.
  
- 1.2 Since 1993, PEMSEA Learning Centers have been a key partner in pursuing such shared objectives. PEMSEA initially collaborated with various academic and research institutions through activity- or project-specific agreements or engagements to support capacity building and technical needs of its initial ICM demonstration sites. As the demand for ICM capacity building and technical support increased with the growing number of ICM sites, PEMSEA developed a more formal cooperation mechanism with key academic/scientific partners in the region through the designation of PEMSEA Learning Centers and Regional Centers of Excellence (RCOEs) in 2008. Considering the efforts to further scale up the implementation of the SDS-SEA, PEMSEA brought together the Learning Centers and RCOEs under one platform, known as the PNLC, in 2015.
  
- 1.3 On December 1, 2021, ten institutes have signed the PNLC Charter, which aims to recognize the network as a formal entity with its own governance mechanism and programs similar to the PEMSEA Network of Local Governments (PNLG). Since then, three more institutes have signed the Charter, four have approved the instrument, and four others are currently in the review process. PNLC will work closely with the PEMSEA Resource Facility (PRF) and PEMSEA

country- and non-country partners to implement the SDS-SEA IP 2023-2027 as well as assist PNLG to implement the PNLG Strategic Action Plan 2022-2030.

1.4 On 25 September 2022, IBP University of Indonesia agreed to host and serve as the PNLG Secretariat from 2024 onwards.

1.5 A six-year operational plan with measures for achieving financial sustainability of the network has been developed by the PNLG as mandated by the PNLG Charter.

## **2.0 Recommendations for achieving financial sustainability of the PNLG**

2.1 This section identifies ways for the PNLG to fund its activities under the SDS-SEA IP 2023-2027. The recommendations include fundraising activities that build on the ongoing and upcoming projects and plans of PEMSEA.

### **A. Fundraising (initial steps in 2023-2024)**

1. Identify activities and potential sources of funds, including cash and in-kind contributions, within PEMSEA:

- Country contributions with funds earmarked for targeted regional or national training and capacity development workshops that PNLG members can participate in either as trainers, facilitators, or trainees (e.g., training of RO Korea on seawater quality analysis to be funded through the cost-sharing agreement between RO Korea and PEMSEA Resource Facility [PRF])
- Activities of the State Key Laboratory of Marine Pollution (SKLMP) of City University of Hong Kong as an RCOE in marine pollution such as their Global Estuaries Monitoring (GEM) Programme and other capacity-building opportunities (see Annex 1)
- Joint PNLG-PNLG Learning Events co-sponsored by the PNLG and the Ministry of Natural Resources of China
- Sponsored training programs of the Fujian Institute for Sustainable Oceans, one of the associate members of the PNLG, and the Coastal and Ocean Management Institute of Xiamen University of China as an RCOE in sustainable coastal development (e.g., under the annual World Ocean Week in Xiamen)
- Targeted research, training, and capacity development components of PRF-managed projects (to be provided in 2023)
- In-kind contributions (i.e., staff time) for effective delivery of secretariat functions through PRF and IPB University

- Other training and capacity development programs of each PEMSEA Learning Center, RCOE, and non-country partners
2. Conduct a financial landscape assessment to identify trends and potential areas of cooperation beyond PEMSEA for potential joint fundraising activities, building on the training and capacity development needs of country partners that will be conducted by the PRF's Secretariat Coordinator (2023)
  3. Conduct a survey on the willingness of PNLC members to pay annual membership dues as part of their commitment to the Network (PNLG members pay USD 500/year as their annual membership dues, which partially support the organization of PNLG meetings) (2023)
  4. Establish a regional consortium of experts on coastal and marine resource development among PNLC members and willing non-country partners to enhance PEMSEA's offer of technical, monitoring, certification, project management, investment, and other services and establish a strong expertise on ocean governance, technology adaptation, and cooperation with local governments and private sector to further raise the credibility of PNLC as a consistent provider of solutions for sustainable coastal and marine areas and river basins (2024)
  5. Explore other funding opportunities with the Government of Indonesia, IPB University, and/or other potential sources for contribution as host of the PNLC Secretariat (2023).
  6. Form a partnership with the Regional Clean Seas Center of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Indonesia (2023)

**B. Strengthening and solidifying expertise to proactively respond to emerging issues post-2025 (2023)**

In order to gain more visibility and hence attention from potential funding sources, PNLC, with PRF, will support the Technical Sessions of the EAS Partnership Council to create a priority research and development (R&D) agenda based on the SDS-SEA IP 2023-2027 and the new and emerging trends where PEMSEA will focus its competency building, expertise enhancement, and/or service delivery. The R&D agenda will be grounded on the needs of PEMSEA country and local government partners as well as the interests of external partners and potential clients to ensure sufficient buy-in and resources to implement the R&D agenda. The PNLC members will play a role in reviewing, facilitating, evaluating, and updating this agenda based on the latest scientific research every two years or as needed. Another option is to review the possibility of reviving and/or recreating the regional/national task force of PEMSEA that was mobilized as technical and scientific support to help implement PEMSEA's past initiatives/projects.

Explore different approaches to recruit and engage experts (e.g., offering visiting fellowships through the PNLC and sourcing experts through non-country partners)

and develop new partnerships to leverage experts. PRF, with the help of PNLC, can maintain this active database of experts based on the R&D agenda and can build on item A.4 of this document.

To raise awareness of the PNLC's expertise in new or consolidated thematic areas, PEMSEA, through PNLC, will publish scientific articles or discussion papers on priority R&D agenda topics regularly across relevant scientific, policy, and business platforms. PEMSEA, through PNLC, will co-author, publish, and promote these thought pieces with visiting fellows and/or partner experts to leverage their knowledge, networks, and communication platforms. These knowledge products can range from short online articles, which can be promoted through social media and help build PEMSEA/PNLC's visibility, to more in-depth technical publications that can be housed and promoted on the Seas of East Asia Knowledge Bank (SEAKB).

**C. Funding needs**

1. PNLC Secretariat: One full-time coordinator and 50% (part-time) assistant
2. Office space, facilities, and equipment (e.g., tables, chairs, laptops, printer/scanner, internet connection, office supplies)
3. Travel budget (optional)

## Annex 1. List of other capacity-building activities of SKLMP for 2023-2027 as of June 2022.

Year	Event	Tentative Date
2023	SKLMP Annual Symposium 2023	April 2023
	Gordon Research Conference (GRC) on Urbanization, Water and Food Security held in Italy (see <a href="https://www.grc.org/urbanization-water-and-food-security-conference/2023/">https://www.grc.org/urbanization-water-and-food-security-conference/2023/</a> )	July 16-21, 2023
	Training Workshop on Scientific Diving	July 2023
	The 2 <sup>nd</sup> Capacity Building Workshop for the Global Estuaries Monitoring (GEM) Program	August/September 2023
	Training Workshop on Pollution Assessment and Management	November/December 2023
2024	The 10 <sup>th</sup> International Conference on Marine Pollution and Ecotoxicology (ICMPE-10) (See <a href="https://www.icmpe.hku.hk/">https://www.icmpe.hku.hk/</a> )	January 2024
	SKLMP Annual Symposium 2024	April 2024
	Training Workshop on Sampling, Isolation, Culturing, and Identification of Benthic Harmful Marine Dinoflagellate	July 2024
	The 3 <sup>rd</sup> Capacity Building Workshop for the Global Estuaries Monitoring (GEM) Program – Results Announcement and Stakeholder Engagement for Co-development of solutions	August/September 2024
	Training Workshop on Monitoring of Antibiotics and Antibiotic Resistant Genes, and Their Control	November/December 2024
2025	SKLMP Annual Symposium 2025	April 2025
	Training Workshop on Underwater Habitat Mapping	July 2025
	The 4 <sup>th</sup> Capacity Building Workshop for the Global Estuaries Monitoring (GEM) Program – Results Announcement and Stakeholder Engagement for Co-development of solutions	August/September 2025
	Training Workshop on Pollution Assessment and Management (under EAS Congress 2025)	November 2025
	The 2 <sup>nd</sup> Symposium on Recent Advances in Marine Environmental Research (under EAS Congress 2025)	November/December 2025

	East Asian Seas Congress 2025	December 2025
2026	The 3 <sup>rd</sup> International Conference on <u>B</u> iodiversity, <u>E</u> cology and <u>C</u> onservation of <u>M</u> arine <u>E</u> cosystems (BECOME-2026) – An Approved Activity under the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (see <a href="https://www.become2022.com/">https://www.become2022.com/</a> )	January 2026
	SKLMP Annual Symposium 2026	April 2026
	Training workshop on Identification of Reef Foraminifera	July 2026
	Training Workshop on Monitoring and Control of Chemical Contaminants of Emerging Concern	November/December 2026
2027	SKLMP Annual Symposium 2027	April 2027
	The 11 <sup>th</sup> International Conference on Marine Pollution and Ecotoxicology (ICMPE-11)	June 2027
	Training Workshop on Analytical Method and Bioassay for Lipophilic Algal Toxin Identification, Characterization, and Quantification	July 2027
	The 5 <sup>th</sup> Capacity Building Workshop for the Global Estuaries Monitoring (GEM) Program – Results Announcement and Stakeholder Engagement for Co-development of solutions	August/September 2027
	Training Workshop on Pollution Assessment and Management	November/December 2027

**Notes:**

1. The nature of the event is indicated by different colors:

International Conference

Training Workshop

SKLMP Annual Symposium

2. From 2023, SKLMP will annually provide funding to sponsor 2-3 people from East Asia to visit and work at SKLMP for up to 3 months, when they will receive hands-on training on analysis of chemicals of emerging concern or underwater ecological studies, and participate in select research projects.