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GEF/UNDP/IMO Regional Programme on  
Partnerships in Environmental Management  
for the Seas of East Asia

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# **Proceedings of the Senior Experts Dialogue on Coastal and Marine Policy**



13-14 July 2001  
Manila, Philippines

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
SENIOR EXPERTS DIALOGUE ON  
COASTAL AND MARINE POLICY**

*GEF/UNDP/IMO Regional Programme on Building Partnerships in Environmental  
Protection and Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA)  
RAS/98/G33/A/IG/19)*

**Manila, Philippines  
13 – 14 July 2001**

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE SENIOR EXPERTS DIALOGUE ON COASTAL AND MARINE POLICY

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**INTRODUCTION**

The Senior Experts Dialogue on Coastal and Marine Policy was organized by the GEF/UNDP/IMO Regional Programme for Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA).

The workshop was designed to provide some of the region's recognized experts in coastal and marine policy an opportunity to brainstorm on a host of issues facing the East Asian Seas region especially in light of the impacts of economic globalization on the coastal and marine environment and natural resources. The workshop programme and discussion points are attached as Annexes A and B, respectively.

Eleven participants from nine countries of the East Asian Seas region attended the workshop in their personal capacity. Annex C contains the list of workshop participants.

A list of materials, which were distributed during the workshop, is provided in Annex D.

Dr. Chua Thia-Eng, Regional Programme Director for PEMSEA, served as Workshop Chairman. He welcomed the workshop participants and invited them to introduce themselves. The participants gave brief statements on their professional activities and background.

Dr. Chua then discussed the Workshop Programme, emphasizing that the agenda was flexible. He pointed out the range of personalities present at the meeting and the pool of experience of the participants. He appealed to the participants to speak their minds and engage freely in the exchange of ideas.

**1.0 POLICY REFORMS REQUIRED FOR DEALING WITH NATIONAL AND TRANSBOUNDARY  
ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

**a) The Situation in the Region**

"The state of the world's seas and oceans is deteriorating. Most of the problems identified decades ago have not been resolved, and many are worsening. New

threats keep emerging. The traditional uses of the seas and coasts -- and the benefits that humanity gets from them -- have been widely undermined." *A Sea of Troubles* (GESAMP 2001)

Dr. Chua invited the participants to reflect on the above quoted statement and give their reaction to it.

The Meeting agreed with the statement and the general inability of countries in the region to arrest the deterioration of the coastal and marine environment, despite ongoing efforts at the national and regional levels. Millions of dollars are spent on identifying problems and these problems are not solved. For instance, the state of the world's biodiversity has deteriorated even with the numerous biodiversity programs and corresponding expenditures for these programs. The Meeting also noted the existence of clear provisions in domestic and international law (e.g., UNCLOS Articles 43, 122 to 125 and 192 to 197), which provide direction to countries to address the situation through cooperation with one another. However, governments in the region have not fully recognized their commitment under these provisions.

The Meeting emphasized that 18<sup>th</sup> century problems such as untreated sewage, uncontrolled garbage disposal and contaminated water supplies have not been mitigated in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It was also recognized that population pressure on coastal and marine resources is more evident today.

<b>Threat</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
Land-based sources of pollution	1
Over-exploitation	2
Destructive fishing and aquaculture practices	3
Habitat conversion	4
Resource use conflicts	5
Oil and chemical pollution	6
Erosion/siltation and sedimentation	7
Invasive species	8
Trade in endangered species	9
Sea level rise Climate change	10
Other uncontrolled development	11

**Table 1. Participants rank the threats to the marine environment of the Seas of East Asia by order of significance, beginning with the worst threat.**

The participants ranked environmental threats in an effort to indicate the relative importance of these threats to the region. Table 1 summarizes the findings of this informal survey.

The Meeting pointed out that the East Asian Seas region has the poorest record in terms of intergovernmental cooperation, with there being a total failure in establishing a regional convention on the environment. The Meeting also discussed the shortage in available funding for environmental initiatives and the inefficiency in the allocation and utilization of the limited available funds.

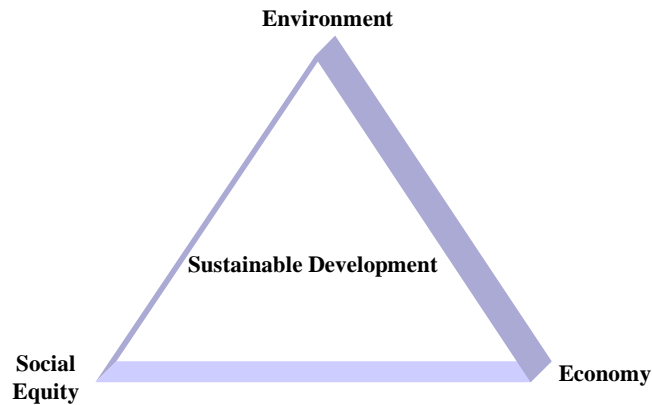
### **b) Obstacles to Successful Management of the Coastal and Marine Environment**

The Meeting identified the lack of the following: financial resources; public awareness; an effective management framework; case studies on sustainable development; and consistent approaches to monitoring and reporting -- as obstacles to successful management of the coastal and marine environment.

The perceived unwillingness of countries to effectively manage the coastal and marine environment, and of stakeholders, such as industry, to cooperate with government, was observed as a major obstacle. It was indicated that the behavior of people is the root cause of many environmental problems in the region, and efforts to change such behavior have not been successful. Exacerbating the problems is the tendency of environmental management programmes/projects to be science-dominated and donor-driven, resulting in piecemeal, sectoral approaches to environmental management which have proven to be ineffective and inefficient.

The Meeting concluded that policies for the management of the coastal and marine environment are in place but these policies are not being implemented. The countries have been complacent since the formulation of Agenda 21. Part of the reason is that governments are confronted with what they believe to be bigger problems such as financial/economic crises, low employment rates, poverty, population growth, peace and order. There is a clear lack of recognition of the interconnectivity between environmental degradation and economic and social stresses, which are increasingly evident throughout coastal areas of the region. (See Figure 1.) Governments appear to be reacting to the socio-economic issues without relating them to environmental issues. Hence, marine environmental problems rank low in the Government's priority list.

It appears that people are aware of the deteriorating environmental condition and the associated human activities that cause adverse impacts on coastal and marine resources. However, these activities continue. There is also a lack of zeal in implementing provisions of both national and international law. Despite the worsening situation, people are still complacent and assume that the environmental situation will get better. For example, in the fisheries sector, fishermen continue to use destructive and illegal fishing methods such as blast fishing, with capitalization provided by the market middlemen.



**Figure 1. The Sustainability Cycle.**

Industry is regarded mainly as a source of pollution, overlooking the fact that the sector can also be an effective partner in environmental management. The private sector's counterpart to international conventions are the policies of international chambers of commerce and large multinational companies. These can be utilized to get them involved in environmental management. It was recognized that voluntary early measures should be promoted in the private sector, and not just in the recognition of the principles but in actually taking action. An example of how the private sector can contribute to poverty eradication through carbon trading mechanisms was presented. (See Figure 2.)

The Meeting regarded the lack of a management framework as evident through the generally sectoral approach adopted by countries in dealing with problems in the coastal and marine environment. The marine environment is viewed as a sector rather than the final downstream indicator of environmental degradation.

It was felt that the international organizations have failed to monitor compliance with the obligations in international instruments. There is little validation of whether these agreements are actually being implemented. No one is tracking solutions and their effectiveness. The meeting concluded that an independent group should assess international conventions on their usefulness to the region. The ranking of threats as shown in Table 1 could provide a preliminary indication of what international agreements are most relevant to the region and thus deserve priority implementation.

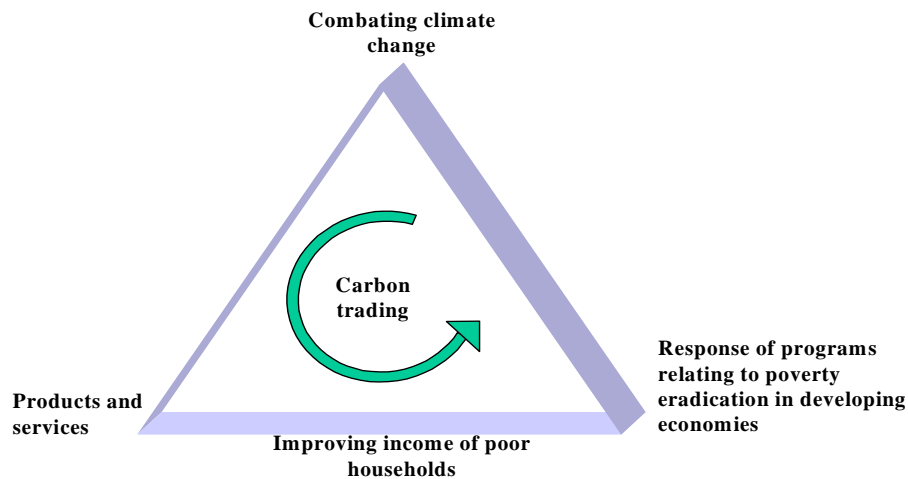
### **c) A Note of Optimism**

The environmental destruction, which has been going on for at least 40 years, and the obstacles that have led and contributed to these problems cause people to ask whether there is any hope. Is it possible for the situation to improve?

Despite the worsening situation, there has also been some improvement in the region's response to the environmental challenge. One concrete improvement is the



establishment of environmental agencies (i.e., departments or ministries) in the various countries. Another is the adoption of legislation that deals with problems in an integrated fashion, for instance, the Coastal Management Act of the Republic of Korea. There is, however, much more to be done. Hence, the need for new approaches.



**Figure 2. Climate change and poverty eradication.**

Given the emergence of human behavior as one of the leading obstacles to effective management of the coastal and marine environment, it is clear that a change in behavior is necessary for any efforts in environmental management to move forward. This change of attitude requires a clear strategy that involves education and capacity building. Such a program should include raising public awareness on the value of coastal and marine resources and a shift in the concept of progress, i.e., training people to take only what they need. In other words, environmental management requires human management.

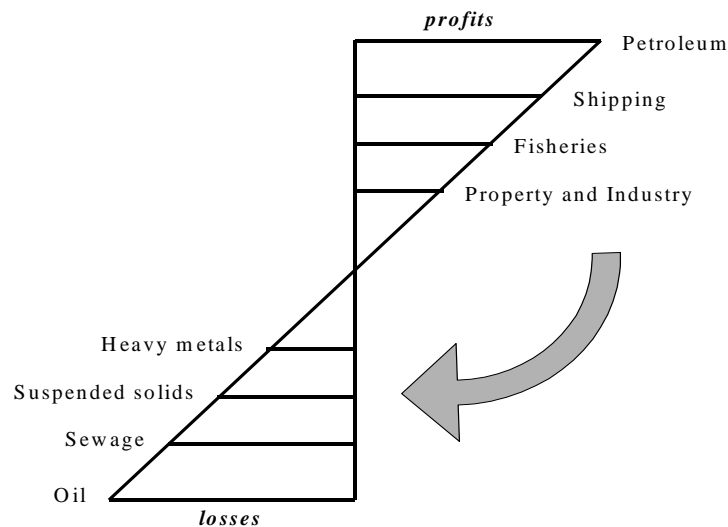
A multi-level approach is also necessary, i.e., one that requires reaching out to the local, national, regional and international levels. Of these, the local and regional levels are often ignored. Working at local government level was identified as an effective approach. There have even been cases where local action stimulated national action, as in the example of the Bohai Sea. A trend of devolution or decentralization of responsibility from national level to local government level has also been seen in the region over the last 10 years, with devolution occurring even in countries where it was not expected to take root. There is a need to review how proceeds from local efforts to protect the coastal and marine resources can be used for community development. It was, however, recognized that it is not sufficient to work only at this level, and that there should be networking among various local governments and linkages between various levels of government.

References were made to the value of the past, traditional, environment-friendly practices that have been abandoned for modern practices that take a greater toll on the environment. There was a call to re-examine these practices and revive the practices that

were less wasteful of resources, adapting them to the more challenging demands of the modern world.

The private sector can do its part in protecting the environment by, among others, ploughing back part of its income to help solve environmental problems. Proceeds from various industries could be used for environmental management. (See Figure 3.)

It was pointed out that this approach is already being applied in a limited sense in Bataan, Philippines, where local industries are leading the way in environmental management. The willingness of the private sector to help is recognized, and so is the fact that there is a need to reach out to the private sector, which is not apt to naturally form alliances outside its usual circle. Such an effort should include the creation of a policy environment that is conducive to private sector involvement, for instance, the creation of incentives.



**Figure 3. Giving back profits to the environment.**

Examples from particular countries on success stories or current efforts were cited, e.g., the introduction in China of rights-based legislation for marine area use. Up to the present, there is no system that deals with the competition and conflicts among the myriad uses of the coastal area in China and its resulting "enclosure". National legislation now being introduced institutes land and sea-use planning for the coastal area, and property rights and use fees among the users, to address these issues.

The Meeting spoke of the limited applicability of country-specific legislation to other countries that may have different constitutional and legal structures. It was, however, pointed out that certain new initiatives are breaking perceived constraints, e.g., the leadership of local government in the Bohai Sea area with the strong support of a traditionally centralized national Chinese government.

Implementing these policies will require government commitment in terms of human and financial resources. Partnerships will also be needed. The different sectors should support each other for effective environmental management. Initiatives for environmental management should cut across sectors.

## **2.0 THE ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY FOR THE SEAS OF EAST ASIA**

### **a) Introduction**

In light of consensus on the need for a different approach due to the failure of past and present initiatives to make a significant difference in the environment, the draft Environmental Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (the Strategy) was presented to the Meeting.

Dr. Jihyun Lee, PEMSEA Senior Programme Officer, introduced the rationale for formulating the Strategy. She explained that the three main objectives of the Strategy were to forge regional cooperation, strengthen regional action plan implementation, and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of implementation of international environmental instruments. Ms. Stella Regina Bernad, PEMSEA Legal Officer, reviewed the Strategy, highlighting its structure, main features, and the proposed process for its refinement and adoption.

Dr. Chua informed the Meeting that this was the second consultation on the Strategy. The first consultation was held during the Pilot Intersessional Consultative Group (ICG) Meeting in June where country representatives unanimously expressed their support for the Strategy. In addition, the Strategy has been presented to the World Bank and the UNDP, who have given favorable feedback. Dr. Chua further advised the Meeting that the ultimate goal of PEMSEA is to have the Strategy adopted as a document for the region, i.e., a regional framework. He acknowledged that there are many efforts in the region, but these are not united by an understanding of common objectives and actions. The Strategy presents a unique approach to environmental initiatives in the region.

It was clarified that the implementation of the Strategy will be the collective effort of regional, national and local entities, including PEMSEA.

It was further emphasized that the Strategy, being regional in scope, can only reach an overview level of specificity. National and local strategies, such as those being formulated for Manila Bay and the six national integrated coastal management (ICM) demonstration sites being implemented as part of PEMSEA, will be more specific with respect to issues and activities, but will be linked to the regional vision and framework of the Strategy.

### **b) Reaction to the Strategy**

The Meeting concluded that the draft Strategy is a good, comprehensive document that can be very helpful to the countries of the region. For example, the meeting was informed that in Thailand a national committee is preparing a national vision for the ocean, and the draft is quite similar to the Strategy.

Despite the encouraging response and show of support for the Strategy, it was recognized that much work still needs to be done to improve the Strategy. Participants were thus invited to provide comments on the May 2001 version of the document.

Some of the early comments included:

1) *Geographic coverage*

Suggestions on defining the geographical coverage of the Strategy, as well as justifications for its “regional” coverage, were given. Among the justifications were the socio-economic interdependence of countries in the region, and the oceanographic and meteorological links that define the uniqueness of the region. It was agreed, however, that the overriding consideration is the environmental links among the five large marine ecosystems (LMEs) of the Seas of East Asia.

2) *Definition of terms*

Certain terms need to be more clearly defined. For instance, the definition of the term “NGO” should refer to a non-profit organization that promotes public good and protects public interests. The term “sustainability” also needs to be defined.

3) *Organization of strategies*

The “Communicate” strategy is very important because it addresses behavioral change, the root of effective environmental management. It was suggested that “Communicate” be the first strategy and that it should be linked to Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, regarding the right of the public to have access to information.

It was suggested that a value be highlighted for each specific strategy, for example:

For “Sustain” - to ensure/preserve the quality of life

For “Preserve” - cooperation

For “Protect” - common interests of all the people of the region

For “Develop” - equity in development

For “Implement” - timeliness

For “Communicate” – transparency

4) *Miscellaneous*

In connection with the strategic action “Communicate”, the short-term action is to educate civil servants and officials in development planning rather than schoolchildren. However it was pointed out that economic planning officials are already educated regarding the need for environmental management, but they are still not ready to make commitments.

Under “Executing the Strategy”, the bullet on building capacity of the academe to contribute through training programs and formal education is key and should be emphasized.

Other suggestions may be found in Annex E.

### **c) Marketing the Strategy**

The meeting noted that a constituency should be developed to promote the Strategy. For example, champions, such as former heads of State and representatives from the private sector, should be invited to endorse the Strategy.

It was also emphasized that there is a need to highlight what is new about the Strategy. The Strategy should explain why a regional arrangement/legal instrument is needed and what is in the document that establishes the linkage between these elements and the arrangement.

The meeting emphasized the following as innovative aspects of the Strategy.

- The integration of ecological, economic and social issues into an environmental strategy.
- The linkage among international and regional instruments related to the environment, including for example, biodiversity, migratory species, particularly sensitive sea areas, and transboundary pollution.
- A regional focus on environmental issues and their implications, as opposed to a national or site specific focus.
- A framework for national, regional and local authorities to act and resolve issues.
- A partnership approach to environmental management, involving governments, private sector and non-governments organizations, each with an identified responsibility.

Three approaches for marketing the strategy were suggested, namely:

- *National*: Relaying the Strategy to national governments and requesting national consultations leading to consensus;
- *Regional*: Endorsement by ESCAP, the ASEAN Secretariat, UNEP Regional Seas and APEC; and
- *Global*: Endorsement at international fora, such as the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Rio + 10) to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa from 2 to 11 September 2002, as well as in the regional meetings relating thereto, such as the Regional Preparatory Committee meeting to be held in Siem Reap, Cambodia from 27 to 29 November 2001. In this connection, the appropriate principles of the Rio Declaration and those of Agenda 21 should be integrated or highlighted in the Strategy.

### **d) Implementing the Strategy**

The meeting noted the need to clarify the goal of the Strategy. Two options were identified regarding implementation, namely a regional treaty or an informal cooperative arrangement.

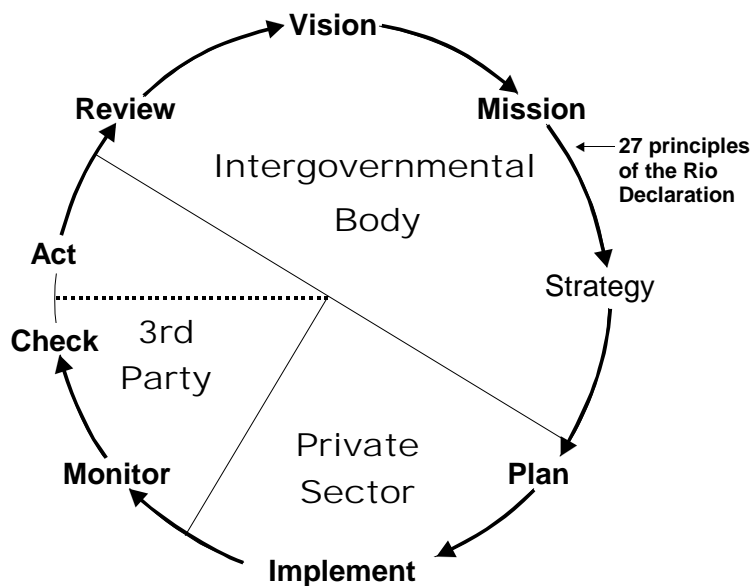
The treaty would be a formal arrangement between countries, focusing on obligations and responsibilities under international conventions on the environment, and the integrated regional approach to addressing these obligations, consistent with the Strategy. The other approach would be incremental in nature, moving from an informal cooperative arrangement to a formal mechanism. In both situations the implementation arrangements would concentrate on international conventions that are a priority and benefit to the region, thereby promoting the shared vision for the Seas of East Asia.

There is a need to address the lack of capacity for commitment to make the Strategy a real action document. Efforts should also be exerted to integrate the Strategy into the economic development plans of the countries involved.

**e) Monitoring the Strategy**

The meeting suggested that monitoring should include not only the progress of the Strategy’s implementation but also environmental monitoring. Each country should indicate targets and a corresponding timetable for more meaningful monitoring. Examples of objectively verifiable indicators of progress include length of coastline covered by coastal management within a specified number of years, and percentage of industries connected to central sewage systems within a definite numbers of years. ISO certification for local governments should be included among the progress indicators.

It was suggested that monitoring is a service that can be provided by third parties, e.g. NGOs and the private sector, and is recognized as an investment option. It was expressed that such an approach to monitoring would lead to credibility, transparency and accuracy. Figure 4 illustrates a cycle for implementing the Strategy as suggested by the meeting.



**Figure 4. Multi-sectoral implementation of the Strategy.**

### **3.0 THE ROLE OF PEMSEA IN FORGING REGIONAL COOPERATION**

#### **a) A Sustainable Regional Mechanism**

Mr. Stephen Adrian Ross, PEMSEA Senior Programme Officer, introduced the concept of a Sustainable Regional Mechanism. The Sustainable Regional Mechanism has three components:

- the Strategy;
- a regional implementing mechanism; and
- a Marine Environment Resource Facility.

The Strategy is considered a framework for coastal and marine management, as it combines various international conventions, regional programmes and other instruments into one management structure.

The arrangements for a regional implementing mechanism are expected to develop over time, through consultations, and may take any of the following forms:

- a technical cooperation arrangement among countries;
- adoption and implementation of the Strategy within existing regional programs; or
- a completely new mechanism under a regional convention.

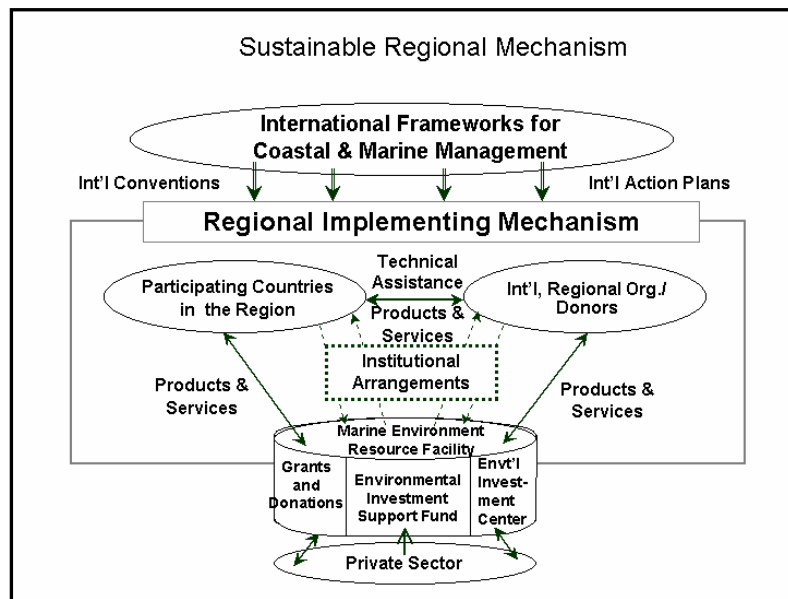
The regional implementing mechanism aims to strengthen the capacities of countries in the region to implement international conventions relating to the protection and management of coastal and marine areas. The idea of integrated implementation of international conventions was explained. The approach does not look at multilateral environmental instruments individually, but identifies crosscutting instruments that will allow the region to focus on central issues of protection and management of coastal and marine areas. The regional mechanism would attempt to enhance the use of operational instruments that respond to common criteria, objectives and obligations of international instruments.

The Marine Environment Resource Facility (MERF) was introduced as a means of achieving sustainability. MERF was described as a region-based organization to be developed and operationalized as an incorporated non-profit regional entity with a Board of Directors comprised of representatives from participating countries, donor agencies and other partners.

The financial make-up of MERF would have three components: grants and donations; an environmental investment fund; and an environmental investment center. The grants and donations component would entail technical assistance grants from donors and international agencies. The grants and donations would be used to establish the necessary policy environment to facilitate investment. The products and services component would center on assistance to local and national governments wishing to create investment packages that will attract the private sector. The environmental investment center would be an institution tasked with identifying the projects (i.e., investment opportunities), the partners and the partnerships for a joint venture. Participants in the public-private partnerships (PPP)

can then gain access to the environmental investment fund. A revolving fund would be established to help leverage partnerships between the public and private sectors, by providing contingent funding for investment in environmental facilities. Finding the financial institutions that will be willing to establish such a fund will be one of the challenges.

MERF operational activities would include forging partnerships, providing the products and services that facilitate investments, operating the environmental investment center, administering and managing the environmental investment fund, and channeling grants and donations to environmental projects.



**Figure 5. A Sustainable Regional Mechanism.**

**b) The Need for a Regional Mechanism**

There was consensus on the need for a Regional Mechanism. The relevance of a Regional Mechanism is clear because of the transboundary nature of environmental problems (e.g., pollution and migratory nature of endangered species). It was recognized that a mechanism was required to move the Strategy forward, and that a regional agreement to outline obligations and responsibilities of each participating country was desirable so that countries in the East Asian Seas region could share the responsibility in addressing the common issues and problems in the region and to narrow the difference between them. It was suggested that one of the unique features of the Regional Mechanism could be the participation of NGOs, i.e., that it is not just a governmental process.

The complexity of the proposed mechanism was identified as a potential obstacle to obtaining government acceptance of the concept (Figure 5). One of the challenges then will be to assist stakeholders in going beyond the apparent complexity of the concept. Another



major challenge will be convincing stakeholders that current environmental problems cannot be solved by present mechanisms and that there is a need for a new organization. Analysis of the shortcomings of present mechanisms will also assist in defining the Regional Mechanism, to assess other initiatives in this area and to learn from their lessons.

### **c) Approaches to Moving Forward**

Two approaches relating to the development of a Regional Mechanism were discussed, i.e., to work directly for a treaty or to begin with a quasi-formal approach. The think tank will play a crucial role in the development of a quasi-formal approach. Also discussed were the so-called Track 1 and Track 2 approaches used for the South China Sea workshops. Track 1 consists of the intergovernmental negotiation process, whereas Track 2 involves the participation of government representatives in their personal capacity and independent resource persons from the private sector, the NGOs and the academe/scientific community. The use of a combination of these two approaches was recommended (Track 1.5), for although the importance of intergovernmental linkages was recognized, it was also observed that a purely intergovernmental process might hamper developments in the concept of a regional mechanism. Ultimately, however, the legal instrument that establishes the Regional Mechanism must be adopted at a diplomatic conference.

An important component of moving forward is developing linkages with various groups, such as regional and intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, civil society groups, and the private sector. Strong linkages among these groups should reduce bureaucracy and interagency conflicts. Contact has, in fact, been made with several regional organizations, and there are plans to present the Strategy and the concept of the Sustainable Regional Mechanism to various fora such as the APEC Ocean-Related Ministers' Conference to be held in Seoul, Korea next year. The concept of the Sustainable Regional Mechanism should be given as much visibility as possible and be presented to a wide range of stakeholders.

The Regional Mechanism should also build, to the extent possible, on existing regional initiatives and tried and tested approaches. It should also try to capitalize on existing arrangements, such as the ties developed by countries through existing regional growth areas.

### **d) Implementation**

In summary, the relationship of each of the entities discussed during the meeting could be analogized as follows: MERF would be the engine, the Environmental Strategy the road map, the think tank the guide and the funding to be managed by MERF the fuel. The driver still has to be identified.

Through the Regional Mechanism, the action programs specified in the Strategy will be implemented in the region. Implementation will occur at various levels, i.e., regional, national, and local. Biodiversity conservation was identified as one of the areas in which there has been previous agreement to have multi-country implementation. Not all activities need to be implemented by all the stakeholders. One suggestion was to have a Board that

would decide on what projects the Regional Mechanism should promote, with stakeholders deciding to participate or not to participate on a case-to-case basis.

There was some preliminary discussion on the potential role of PEMSEA as the vehicle to get the Regional Mechanism moving.

#### **e) MERF and the Private Sector**

MERF will be the main vehicle for attracting the private sector, with the environmental investment fund as the entry point for private sector involvement in providing products and services to potential clients in the region. A basic assumption in the establishment of MERF is that public-private partnerships, while desirable, are not formed naturally, and therefore need to rely on a vehicle that will facilitate formation of such a partnership. While the private sector may attempt to provide these services directly to the potential clients, involvement in MERF will give the private sector instant access to a particular market that would not necessarily be available to the private sector if it worked on its own.

The types of services to be provided by MERF could center on the areas or concerns that cut across sectors.

To make MERF attractive to the private sector, the financial implications of its operations must be clearly laid out. The private sector may also be more comfortable in dealing with a private entity like itself rather than an intergovernmental structure.

The proposed environmental investment fund and the idea of contingent funding were noted. There is potential in this, as GEF and the World Bank are interested in the idea. However, these concepts need to be subjected to intensive study by financing experts.

#### **f) Some Basic Requirements**

Regardless of the form that MERF takes, it should acquire a legal personality and have the ability to receive funds for which the organization and its personnel can be held accountable. Its operations should also ensure transparency, for instance, through the conduct of audits and the establishment of a monitoring mechanism. It should have a governing body, such as a Board of Directors, and an advisory panel, to which other organizations in the region could be invited. The need for a regional implementing mechanism that is separate from MERF should also be justified.

#### **g) Models for MERF**

While the perceived structure for MERF may be a novel concept in the region, there are models that can be examined to assist in further defining the structure of MERF. One such model is the Harvard Conflict Management Project model, where two separate entities, Conflict Management, Inc. and the Harvard Conflict Management Group, provide identical services to the corporate sector and the governmental sector, respectively.

With regard to the planned multi-sectoral membership of MERF, the IUCN model, which allows both governments and NGOs to be members, would be worth examining.

### h) The Role of PEMSEA

In addition to the overall aim to establish a multi-country, multi-sectoral shared vision for the Seas of East Asia, along with supporting strategies and environmental action programs, PEMSEA's commitment to the development of a programmatic framework for regional cooperation would involve:

- Bringing partners together for an integrated approach in the environmental management of the Seas of East Asia;
- Collaborating and linking with concerned regional agencies/programmes such as ASEAN, APEC, ESCAP, UNEP/COBSEA, other UN programs;
- Mobilizing resources in recognition of the need for financial support from other sectors including the private sector;
- Networking with local and national governments;
- Promoting integrated implementation of conventions, which States have ratified; and
- Building national and regional capacity to implement coastal management programs.

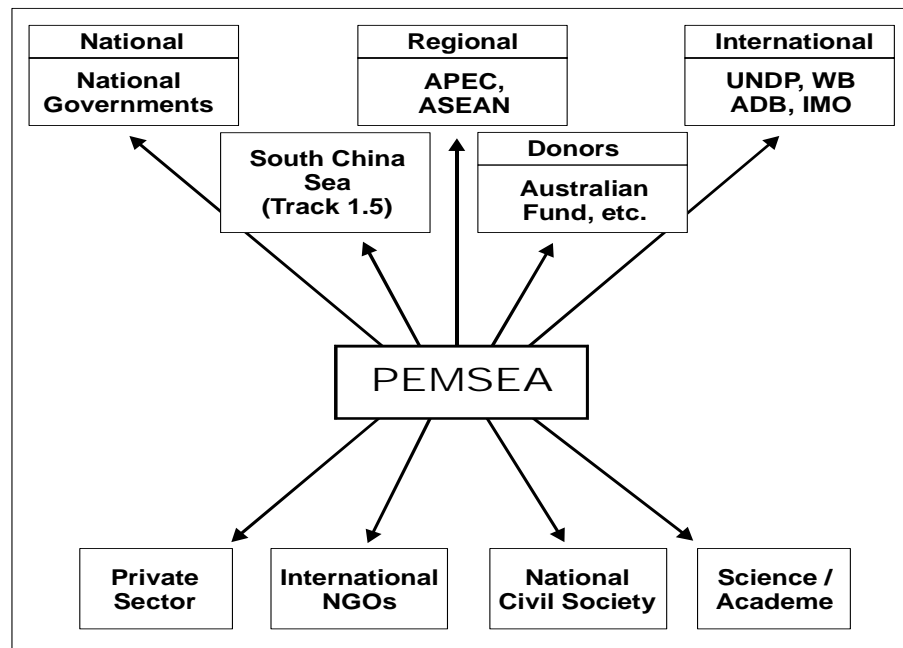


Figure 6. PEMSEA: bringing stakeholders together.

The meeting suggested ensuring continuity of the training and communication programs of PEMSEA, through, for example, the development of a common curriculum for training on integrated coastal management in partnership with universities -- which is

already being undertaken by PEMSEA -- more information being made available through PEMSEA's website, and the broadening of the readership base of *Tropical Coasts*, PEMSEA's biannual magazine.

#### **4.0 AN OCEAN THINK TANK**

##### **a) Need for a Think Tank**

There was consensus that a think tank should be established. The distinguishing characteristic of the think tank will be its regional emphasis. Its members will consider issues not only from the point of view of national interest, but also from the regional perspective. Moreover, adoption of this perspective will be promoted throughout the region by the think tank, which is envisioned to become a strong, credible voice in the region.

##### **b) Scope**

Environmental issues will be the main focus of the think tank. It was suggested that the think tank should look at broader issues. However, there was recognition that the environment is broad enough. Moreover, focusing on the environmental aspect offers the advantage of avoiding conflicts that could be created by focusing on other concerns.

In the area of environmental issues, the general area of sustainable use of the Seas of East Asia was suggested as a possible focus. Crosscutting issues or those whose impacts go beyond particular sectors was suggested as an area for examination by the think tank.

##### **c) Role**

Admittedly, the think tank will help drive the Strategy, but this will not be its only task. Ideally the think tank should adopt the Strategy as *its own* Strategy.

The role of the think tank was broadly outlined as follows:

- to think, discuss and find out what the main maritime issues are in the region;  
and
- brainstorm and discuss how to deal with these issues.

Given the prominence of discussions on the need for a change in attitude, the think tank should devote part of its efforts to ensuring that a change of attitude occurs in the region.

It should be able to project itself as a credible, independent and impartial advisory body for the region.

#### **d) Nature**

The think tank will be a non-profit organization. It shall retain the name “East Asian Seas Forum” that was first suggested in an informal gathering of potential think tank members in March 1999.

#### **e) Composition**

There was discussion on whether the think tank should have fixed or flexible membership. Concern for dynamism prompted the suggestion that the organization be fluid, with the group of persons involved at any given time depending on the focus of discussions during that period. It was finally decided that the think tank should have a multidisciplinary core group, which will ensure continuity, and a variable set of invited resource persons for particular issues. Fund managers, financial experts, IT experts and representatives from the maritime sector were some of the types of resource persons suggested. Regardless of the professional background and expertise of the members, they must be able to:

- communicate with their governments;
- relate to their community;
- engage the business community and industry; and
- engage regional organizations and the international community.

These persons should, in other words, not only possess technical expertise, but must also be communicators. Moreover, there should be a mix of young and senior experts. As part of their responsibility, members of the think tank should seek champions for the region such as former heads of states, diplomats, and representatives of the private sector, who truly understand the value of the environment.

The group brought together for the brainstorming session was cited as a model to be followed for the think tank, in terms of composition and set-up.

#### **f) Outputs**

It is important for the think tank’s discussions to be followed by outputs. The think tank will be responsible for producing policy proposals, which will be presented as outputs of the whole group. Although no specific topics for potential proposals were discussed, it was agreed that to make a difference, the group’s output must touch on issues with far-reaching implications. Through its outputs, the think tank must also slowly gain credibility throughout the region.

#### **g) Operational Requirements**

To function effectively, and for continuity, the think tank must have a strong coordinator and a host agency. Funding will be necessary to bring its members together for meetings. When viewed in relation to how much productivity can be generated by bringing the members together, the expenses for the think tank appear negligible. Admittedly, however, it is still difficult to raise funds for the think tank. Finding a common time for

members of the think tank will also be a challenge. Meetings will have to be short, i.e., one or two days at most.

The think tank will start small and will expand later once the concept is demonstrated to be workable. It was suggested that PEMSEA can initially host the think tank, which can be supported by the Regional Mechanism.

## 5.0 CLOSING

Dr. Chua gave a summary of steps to be taken with regard to the following matters:

- *The Strategy.* Comments and suggestions from the meeting would be incorporated into the Strategy, and an updated version of the Strategy will be released. Efforts will then be directed towards gaining acceptance for the Strategy.
- *The Regional Mechanism.* The concept of the Regional Mechanism will be further developed. Funds will be sought for studies on the MERF.
- *The Regional Think Tank.* Opinions on the regional think tank will be consolidated.

Dr. Chua thanked the participants for their time, enthusiasm and support, and for their valuable contributions. Ambassador Hasjim Djalal, on behalf of the participants, thanked Dr. Chua and his staff for organizing the meeting.

Annexes





**Senior Experts Dialogue on Coastal and Marine Policy  
Hyatt Regency Manila, Philippines  
13 to 14 July 2001**

**WORKSHOP PROGRAMME**

**12 July 2001 (Thursday)**

- 19:30            *Welcome Drinks (Calesa Bar, Hyatt Regency)*
- 20:00            *Dinner (Tempura Misono Japanese Restaurant, Hyatt Regency)*

**13 July 2001 (Friday)**

- 08:00            Registration (outside Ilang-Ilang function room, Penthouse)
- 08:30            Opening Remarks
- 09:00            Agenda Item 1.0: Policy Reforms Required for Dealing with National and  
Transboundary Environmental Issues
- 10:30            *Coffee Break*
- 11:00            Continuation of Agenda Item 1.0
- 12:30            *Lunch (Café Al Fresco)*
- 14:00            Brief Presentation on the Environmental Strategy for the Seas of East Asia
- 15:30            *Coffee Break*
- 16:00            Continuation of Discussions on the Strategy and Related Matters
- 19:00            *Dinner (Veranda)*

**14 July 2001 (Saturday)**

- 08:30            Agenda Item 2.0: The Role of PEMSEA in Forging Regional Cooperation
- 10:00            *Coffee Break*

10:30 Continuation of Agenda Item 2.0

12:30 *Lunch (Café Al Fresco)*

14:00 Agenda Item 3.0: An Ocean Think-Tank

15:30 *Coffee Break*

16:00 Continuation of Agenda Item 3.0

17:00 Closing

19:00 *Farewell Dinner (Glasshouse, Chateau 1771, M. Adriatico Street, Manila)*

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**DISCUSSION POINTS**

“The state of the world’s seas and oceans is deteriorating. Most of the problems identified decades ago have not been resolved, and many are worsening. New threats keep emerging. The traditional uses of the seas and coasts -- and the benefits that humanity gets from them -- have been widely undermined.” *A Sea of Troubles* (GESAMP 2001)

**1.0 Policy Reforms Required for Dealing with National and Transboundary Environmental Issues**

**13 July 2001, a.m.** - free wheeling discussion

- a. Situation in the region
  - problems regarding the environment
    - o What national environmental issues are common to the countries in the region?
    - o What issues that transcend national borders and are shared among countries are most prevalent?
  - comments on past practices to deal with the situation
    - o Are there any success stories that can be shared in this area?
    - o What have been the obstacles to successful management of coastal and marine environment?
  - Do we need coastal and marine policy?
- b. Link to economic trends
  - emerging economic trends, e.g., ASEAN + 3, links with the E.U. and the U.S.
  - impacts of technical and financial recession
  - relationship of environmental problems to new economic changes, globalization, changing consumption patterns
  - efforts required in growth areas: How do we ensure that environmental considerations form part of the plans for growth areas?
  - How do we safeguard against environmental issues being given low priority, in light of the slowdown in economic growth in the region?

- What are the investment opportunities relating to the management of the coastal and marine environment?
- c. Transboundary issues
- transboundary issues as issues of importance
  - the concept of collective responsibility, in light of disparate resources and capabilities
  - how transboundary issues have been addressed, e.g., in the case of haze
    - What government mechanisms are in place to address transboundary issues?
    - How realistic have the past efforts been in addressing transboundary issues?
- d. Working together
- on transboundary issues
  - Is it time for countries to work together?
  - How should they work together?
  - What are the advantages of looking North and looking South?
- e. Operational concerns
- Is there adequate capacity to implement the suggested reforms? (human resources – scientists, capacity of the local government)
  - Are there any fundamental paradigm shifts that must occur in order for the policy reforms to be accepted/to work?

**13 July 2001, p.m. to 14 July 2001, a.m.** - discussion on the Strategy

- Will the Strategy work?
- How?

**14 July 2001, p.m.**

## **2.0 *The Role of PEMSEA in Forging Regional Cooperation***

- Is PEMSEA useful?
- Are its concept and strategy right?
- What are its present shortcomings?
- What are the challenges to its sustainability?

## **3.0 *An Ocean Think-Tank***

a. Need for a think-tank

- What priority issues require in-depth, multidisciplinary analysis?
- What is the best vehicle/mechanism for ensuring that these issues are addressed?

b. Defining the role of the think-tank

- What will it do?
- How will the think-tank have impact?
- What linkages should be developed with policymakers to ensure that the think-tank's outputs are seriously considered?
- How will it operate (e.g., produce some papers)?
- What links will it have to the marine affairs institutions network and the legal network?
- What role will it have vis-à-vis the promotion of the required policy reforms, the advancement of the Strategy, and forging regional cooperation?

c. Operational concerns

- How should membership in the think-tank be determined?
- What is the magnitude of financial resources required?
- Aside from limited support from PEMSEA, what other sources of funding are there?

- end -



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**LIST OF MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED AT THE WORKSHOP**

1. *Tropical Coasts*, Vol. 7 No. 2 (December 2001). A Challenging Journey: Coastal and Marine Policy Making in East Asia
2. Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA): A Framework for Regional Cooperation
3. Environmental Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (initial draft, 25 May 2001)



**SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS RELATING TO THE STRATEGY  
from the Senior Experts Dialogue on Coastal and Marine Policy**

1. The Foreword (p. 5) should have a more detailed description of what the Strategy is. Specifically, its characterization as a sort of “Constitution” for the region providing principles and guidelines for action would be very useful.
2. Under values (pp. 11 and 31):
  - a) move “Oil and gas” to the “Development” subheading;
  - b) have a separate heading for “Resources” and put “Fisheries” and the other resources under it;
  - c) add “national unity and integration” as a value;
  - d) change “Historical and cultural value” to “Historical, political, educational and cultural value;” and
  - e) include the pharmaceuticals as a value.
3. Under “Executing the Strategy”:
  - a) Include research and development under the subheading “Academe” (p. 27)
  - b) it was noted that the pharmaceutical industry is a very important player and should be brought in as a specific partner.
4. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) certification recommendation can be related to carbon credits.
5. ISO 14000 certification for local governments should be included as a milestone target under operational indicators (p. 75).
6. Define the acronym “ISO” properly (p. 89)