

PEMSEA'S TRANSFORMATION... WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

1. What is the function of PEMSEA in the sustainable development of the Seas of East Asia?

PEMSEA is a product of the collective efforts and commitments of countries bordering the Seas of East Asia, various stakeholder organizations, as well as the Global Environment Facility (GEF). It started as a GEF-supported regional project on marine pollution prevention and management in 1993. In 2009, countries recognized the international legal personality of PEMSEA, launching it as a regional coordinating mechanism for coastal and ocean governance in the Seas of East Asia.

PEMSEA adds value to the sustainable development of the Seas of East Asia by:

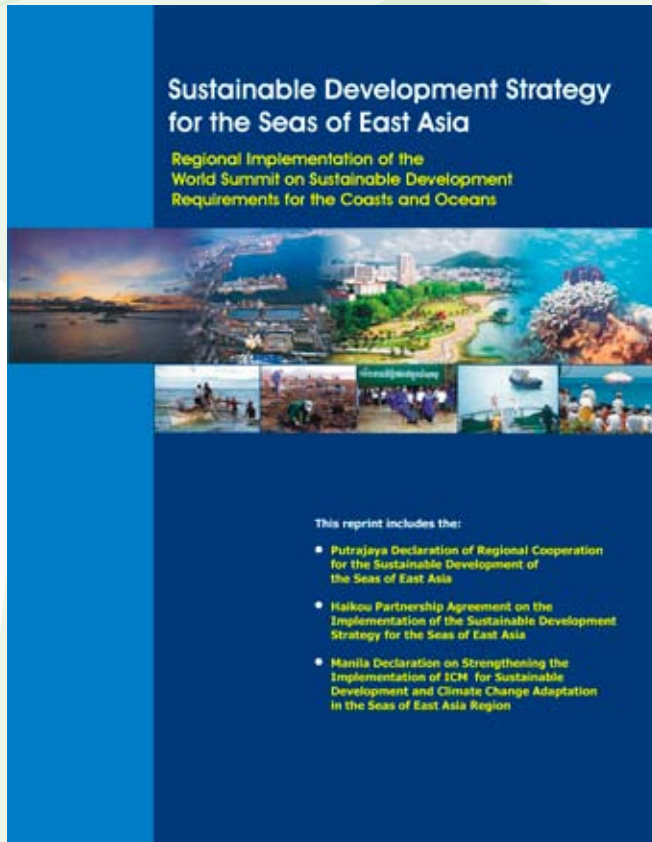
- Preparing pragmatic programs of action for improved integrated governance, strengthened institutional arrangements, and close coordination, integration and coherence at all levels of government;
- Motivating and assisting countries to contribute to sustainable development of coasts and oceans through the implementation of agreed action programs; and
- Forging intergovernmental and multisectoral partnerships, which are essential to resolve conflicting uses of coastal and ocean ecosystems and reduce the vulnerabilities of natural resources and communities from natural and manmade hazards at the regional, national and local levels.

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2. What is the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA)?

The SDS-SEA was crafted by PEMSEA countries in 2003, with the participation of GEF, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Maritime Organization (IMO), the World Bank and 14 other regional organizations. The SDS-SEA:

- Embodies a shared vision for sustainable development of coasts and oceans, and a mission to implement the strategy through partnerships;
- Provides a governance framework and integrates objectives and provisions of key ocean and environment-related international conventions and agreements into 6 sustainable development strategies, 50 objectives and 227 action programmes;
- Serves as a platform for cooperation at the regional, national and local levels through integrated planning and implementation, in collaboration with non-government partners, international organizations, the business community and donors; and
- Can be implemented at different government levels with synergistic impacts, resulting in effective execution of national and local policies and legislation, and enhanced *in situ* capacity development of institutions and individuals especially at the local level.



International Conventions and Agreements in an Integrated Framework

Taken all together, international conventions provide an overall framework for the protection and sustainable development of coasts and oceans. However, the objectives and commitments under these agreements are often tackled individually at the national and regional levels, rather than holistically and in an integrated fashion. The SDS-SEA provides an integrated framework, and promotes the use of integrative processes, including ICM, ecosystem-based management and marine spatial planning for facilitating regional, national and local contributions to global targets, including:

- Chapter 17 of Agenda 21;
- The UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
- The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development;
- The Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA);
- The UN Convention on Biodiversity and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets;
- The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- The FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries;
- The Manado Ocean Declaration;
- The Bali Plan of Action of the APEC Ocean-related Ministerial Meeting; as well as
- Other IMO and UN international agreements.

3. What is ICM and why is it useful?

Through PEMSEA's efforts, the concept and practice of ICM has been largely strengthened as an indispensable and effective tool for governance and management of a multitude of environmental, social and economic development issues at the local level.

Over the last 40 years, the practice of ICM has evolved in such a way that it can now be applied as an integrated coastal management system with a tested and proven approach for use in different coastal and marine areas in developing and developed countries. ICM application covers a wide range of challenges, including natural and manmade

hazards, biodiversity conservation, food security, poverty alleviation, pollution reduction and so on.

ICM is now acknowledged in various international ocean and environment-related instruments as a valuable tool for achieving sustainable development, biodiversity and climate change adaptation targets in coastal seas and Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs).

PEMSEA has partnered with local governments in 31 locations in 11 countries of the region to successfully demonstrate the viability and effectiveness of ICM practices.

PEMSEA ICM Sites Across the Region.



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4. Why is national implementation of SDS-SEA important?

There has been considerable progress made by participating countries, local governments and a host of other collaborating programs and projects since 2003 toward the objectives of the SDS-SEA. The region appears to be on track to achieving the key targets that were spelled out in the Haikou Partnership Agreement (2006) and further elaborated in the Manila Declaration (2009).

At the same time, the innovative, non-binding, participatory approach adopted by countries for

implementation of the regional strategy has been receiving recognition regionally and globally. The partnership approach has demonstrated broad coverage of international conventions and agreements, flexibility and dynamism in working across political and sectoral boundaries, and resiliency to different political, socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.

The bad news is that coastal and marine ecosystems of the region are experiencing increasing threats to the services that they provide humanity. Marine pollution from land-based sources continues to be a serious problem, as evidenced by the expansion of hypoxic (dead) zones from increasing nutrient input from sewage and agriculture. International commitments made regarding biodiversity and marine protected areas have fallen short of expectations. Depletion of marine waters through overfishing and use of destructive fishing gear/fishing practices continues. On top of it all, the multiple risks and impacts related to climate change and extreme weather events are becoming more evident.

National implementation of SDS-SEA will demonstrate the internalization, ownership and partnership of countries in realizing the national and regional goals of sustainable development, as enshrined in the UNCED, WSSD and other international instruments. The five-year national SDS-SEA Implementation Plans, which have been prepared in Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam, show the linkages and synergies between the respective medium-term development plans and the SDS-SEA targets, actions and priority locations in each country. This presents a solid foundation for building an ocean-based blue economy, while achieving sustainable development objectives and targets.



Targets Adopted by Countries for SDS-SEA Implementation

Putrajaya Declaration (2003) formally adopted the SDS-SEA as a regional strategy for achieving sustainable development of the Seas of East Asia.

Haikou Partnership Agreement (2006) established the coordinating and operating mechanisms for implementing the SDS-SEA. The annex to the Agreement (i.e., the Partnership Operating Arrangements) spells out the roles and responsibilities of the Country and non-Country Partners, as well as the make up and functions of the different components of the regional mechanism. The Agreement also sets two targets for SDS-SEA implementation by 2015, namely: (1) national policies

and action plans for sustainable coastal and ocean development in at least 70 percent of the participating countries; and (2) implementation of ICM programs in at least 20 percent of the region's coasts.

Manila Declaration (2009) reaffirmed participating countries' commitments to the national coastal and ocean policy target, and emphasized the commitment to strengthen and accelerate the implementation of ICM for sustainable development and climate change adaptation. In addition, the countries agreed to report on the progress of their ICM programs every three years, including measures taken for climate change adaptation.

5. How do country and non-country partners support PEMSEA?

Over the past 18 years, participating countries have made significant contributions to the implementation of the SDS-SEA at the national and local levels, including allocation of human resources, facilities and equipment, operating costs and hosting of workshops, conferences and other knowledge transfer/information sharing events. Total co-financing has been more than US\$ 82 million by participating countries.

The different means that countries are employing to support PEMSEA include:

- Since 2007, three countries, China, Japan and RO Korea, have been committing approximately US\$ 350,000 per year toward the annual operating costs of the Secretariat Services, including the salaries for two mid-level international professional posts and five national posts.
- Also in 2007, the Government of the Philippines constructed the PEMSEA Office Building. A 10-year agreement was signed, providing PEMSEA the use of the building and its amenities. The agreement includes utilities (water, sanitation and electricity), security, and building cleaning and maintenance for the duration, with an equivalent value of US\$ 42,000 per year.
- In 2009, Timor-Leste confirmed its contribution of US\$ 100,000 per year to PEMSEA. The funds are earmarked for SDS-SEA-related capacity

development and knowledge-sharing activities undertaken on a cost-sharing basis by the PEMSEA Resource Facility and Timor-Leste.

- National governments are taking turns to host the triennial East Asian Seas (EAS) Congress. Thus far, Malaysia (2003), China (2006), Philippines (2009) and RO Korea (2012) have hosted and helped organize the Congress, as well as sharing a large part of the costs by providing the conference venue, meeting facilities, support staff and local operating costs.
- Local governments belonging to the PEMSEA Network of Local Governments for Sustainable Coastal Development (PNLG) take turns to host and organize the annual PNLG Forum and workshop on ICM implementation, thereby facilitating sharing of ICM knowledge, experience and good practices.
- Nineteen Non-Country Partners of PEMSEA are providing national and local governments with access to the region's rich intellectual capital and manpower resource for special skills training and technical assistance covering issues including: oil spill contingency planning, preparedness and response; land and sea use zoning; vulnerability/ environmental risk assessment; sensitivity mapping; and total allowable pollutant load. Working in various areas of the region, the PEMSEA Non-Country Partners have made significant contributions to the objectives and targets of the SDS-SEA locally, nationally and regionally.

Non-Country Partners' initiatives in the EAS Region.

	Country Partners	Non-Country Partners
Northeast Asia	China, Japan, DPR Korea, RO Korea	EMECS, NOWPAP, YSLME, KEI, KMI, KORDI, OPRF, PNLG, GPA
South China Area	Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam	PNLG, GPA, SGP, PML, Oil Spill Response, IOI
Indochina Area	Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Singapore, Vietnam	IOC/WESTPAC, IUCN-ARO, Oil Spill Response, PNLG, SENSEA, GPA, PML, SGP
Center of Biodiversity	Indonesia, Philippines, Timor-Leste	ACB, CMC, CI Philippines, PNLG, SENSEA, GPA, PML, SGP

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6. How do donors regard the SDS-SEA framework and PEMSEA?

GEF has been a major sponsor of PEMSEA since its inception, providing more than US\$ 34 million in grants. In 2010, an assessment of all GEF-supported regional and subregional projects in the East Asian Seas region concluded that PEMSEA and the SDS-SEA, respectively, provide a regional governance mechanism and a framework for: integrated and collaborative planning; coordination and monitoring and reporting of outputs and impacts of regional, subregional and national projects for sustainable management; and facilitation of knowledge management and transfer of associated good practices. PEMSEA, given its broad mandate, was seen as the strongest regional mechanism for coastal and marine management in the East Asian Seas region.

This conclusion was reinforced in 2011 when the World Bank and UNDP developed their respective medium-term investment programs for the East Asian Seas region. Both agencies incorporated the SDS-SEA framework and PEMSEA partnership mechanism into their GEF-supported program framework documents (PFDs), based on the commitments made by countries to implement the SDS-SEA and to institutionalize PEMSEA as a self-sustaining regional coordinating mechanism for SDS-SEA implementation. The two PFDs, if approved, can bring in combined resources of more than US\$ 1.164 billion into the region.

Likewise, the UNDP Small Grants Programme, UNEP GPA, International Maritime Organization, the German International Cooperation (GIZ) and the Yeosu Project Fund have recognized the benefits of working within the established SDS-SEA framework and the partnership network of PEMSEA. Agreements have been signed with these organizations, and a series of projects aimed at restoring and sustaining coastal and marine ecosystem services have been initiated.



7. What is the new role of PEMSEA after gaining its international legal personality?

PEMSEA is transforming into a self-reliant and dynamic international organization that is relevant, effective and responsive to regional and national priorities and needs. PEMSEA is presently implementing its approved re-engineering, financing and communication plans, as approved by the East Asian Seas Partnership Council in 2011.

As an international organization, PEMSEA will focus on the implementation of its mandate, i.e. the implementation of the SDS-SEA, especially the promotion of five-year national SDS-SEA Implementation Plans, capacity development and knowledge management.

PEMSEA is ready to take on the new economic challenges and opportunities of the Rio+20 towards a green economy by taking advantage of the policy and management fundamentals established through the implementation of the SDS-SEA and ICM programs. PEMSEA will continue its partnership approach in order to mobilize Country and Non-Country Partners, as well as donors and financial institutions, to invest in the sustainable “blue economy” of the Seas of East Asia and as a showcase of successful regional ocean governance.

PEMSEA will continue to work closely with educational institutions, Regional Centers of Excellence and ICM Learning Centers to build a critical mass of broad-based, trained and educated coastal and ocean managers to undertake the enormous tasks in the region.

8. How can PEMSEA be further strengthened?

In a partnership, a basic principle is “shared cost-shared benefit.” Therefore all partners who find benefit from PEMSEA may consider voluntary contributions to PEMSEA, within their respective means and capacities, including cost-sharing agreed programs, projects and capacity-development initiatives.

In the short-term, countries can further demonstrate their ownership of PEMSEA through the approval and adoption of SDS-SEA Implementation Plans at the national and regional levels and the allocation of adequate financial resources to support the plans.

In the medium-term, by incorporating SDS-SEA objectives and targets into national development and investment plans, the coordination, partnerships, knowledge sharing, skills and capacity building and recognition that have been gained locally, nationally and internationally in coastal and ocean governance and management through the development and nurturing of PEMSEA will be enhanced. This translates into increased effectiveness of SDS-SEA implementation — at a time when international organizations and donors, including the GEF, World Bank and UNDP, are recognizing the important roles of PEMSEA, the SDS-SEA framework

and ICM for scaling up investments in rehabilitating and sustaining coastal and marine ecosystem services and partnerships in building an ocean-based blue economy.

In the longer term, the strengthening of PEMSEA will ensure that Country Partners and their stakeholders have continuing access to services and support mechanisms to meet their commitments under SDS-SEA and other regional strategic action programmes (SAPs) and action plans, as well as obligations under relevant international conventions and agreements. The consequence is continuing improvement in benefits derived from coastal and marine ecosystem services, with increased resiliency of coastal resources and communities, including food and livelihood security for the coastal poor. At the national and regional levels, the ultimate expectation is achievement of the “shared vision” of the SDS-SEA, and a sustainable ocean-based blue economy.

The World Bank/GEF and UNDP/GEF PFDs provide opportunities for PEMSEA and PEMSEA participating countries to develop and implement on-the ground projects and to



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leverage investments from external sources for the implementation of the five-year SDS-SEA implementation plans. In addition, the two regional programs open up new avenues of funding for ICM scaling up and investment projects among other donors and regional projects.

By endorsing the PFDs and actively pursuing the development and approval of the projects identified in the two PFDs, countries will be able to access additional support for SDS-SEA implementation, while at the same time facilitating PEMSEA's transformation and strengthening PEMSEA as a regional coordinating mechanism.

Finally, PEMSEA can be strengthened through inclusion of all countries of the region, as well as organizations that share PEMSEA's vision, mission and goals, as Partners.

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INTERESTED IN JOINING PEMSEA?

Countries in the East Asian Seas region may join PEMSEA by signing the Haikou Partnership Agreement.

Other stakeholders interested in participating in the SDS-SEA and becoming a PEMSEA Partner may request information from the Executive Director of the PEMSEA Resource Facility.



Partnerships in Environmental Management
for the Seas of East Asia

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