



**Building a Blue Economy: Strategy,  
Opportunities and Partnerships in the  
Seas of East Asia**  
**9-13 July**

**Special Meeting**  
**SGP – PEMSEA Meeting**



**The East Asian Seas Congress 2012**  
**“Building a Blue Economy: Strategy, Opportunities and**  
**Partnerships in the Seas of East Asia”**  
Changwon City, RO Korea, 9–13 July 2012

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE SGP-PEMSEA MEETING**

**A. INTRODUCTION**

- i. The Fourth East Asian Seas (EAS) Congress, co-organized by the Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA), the Ministry of Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs (MLTM) and the City Government of Changwon, was held at the Changwon Exhibition Convention Center in Changwon City, RO Korea, from 9 to 13 July 2012. Carrying the theme, “Building a Blue Economy: Strategy, Opportunities and Partnerships in the Seas of East Asia,” the EAS Congress 2012 addressed the new opportunities for the ocean economy of East Asia, the range of partnerships that have developed and are required to realize the full potential of a blue economy and the progress and achievements in governance of regional/subregional seas within the framework of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA).
- ii. The EAS Congress 2012 featured the Fourth Ministerial Forum, the International Conference on Sustainable Coastal and Ocean Development, the annual meeting of the PEMSEA Network of Local Governments (PNLGs) for Sustainable Coastal Development, an exhibition, the Third EAS Youth Forum and other activities. There were more than 1,200 stakeholders — policymakers, resource and economic managers, business professionals, scientists, members of the academe, local and international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), youth and community representatives and other members of civil society from within and outside the East Asian Seas region — who participated in the Congress.
- iii. Five major subthemes comprised the international conference. These themes were: (1) Nurturing Coastal and Ocean-based Blue Economies at the Local Level: Opportunities and Challenges; (2) Accelerating Blue Innovations in Support of an Ocean-based Blue Economy; (3) Securing Ecosystem Services through Integrated Coastal Management (ICM); (4) Good Governance, Good Business; and (5) Meeting Institutional and Individual Skills and Capacities for Integrated Coastal and Ocean Governance.
- iv. Special meetings were held to provide a venue among partners to discuss implementation activities and how these can be further strengthened. This meeting of the Small Grants Programme (SGP) and PEMSEA focal points is a follow-up to the two previous meetings held in 2006 and 2009 to share experiences in implementation and to discuss concerns and challenges in the implementation of the Joint Communique. The meeting aimed to:
  - Share experiences on projects and programs implemented by the SGP;

- Provide updates on existing programs and projects under the SGP-PEMSEA Joint Communiqué; and
- Discuss the direction of the partnership for the next five years for inclusion in the next phase of PEMSEA and in the five-year implementation plans of the countries.

Expected output of the session included:

- Community-based experiences disseminated through the SGP-PEMSEA website;
  - Recommendations for the draft five-year plan of the SGP-PEMSEA Joint Communiqué; and
  - Documentation of the meeting for dissemination among partners.
- v. The discussion was facilitated by Ms. Poonsin Sreesangkom, National Coordinator, UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, Thailand.

## **B. DISCUSSION PROPER**

Participants were given the chance to introduce themselves, including their affiliation/s. The list of the meeting's participants is included as **Annex 1**.

### **1.0 PRESENTATIONS**

#### **Improving Coastal Communities Adaptation and Resilience through Sustainable Coastal Resource Management and Livelihood Development — Ms. Ngin Navirak, National Coordinator, UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, Cambodia**

- 1.1 Ms. Ngin Navirak, National Coordinator of UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, Cambodia, presented the different programs and initiatives supported by SGP Cambodia and their results and lessons learned. She began her presentation by giving an overview of Cambodia's Areas of Work Portfolio and the locations of the GEF Small Grants Programme funded projects in Cambodia. She explained the different tools that SGP Cambodia utilizes in assisting programs and initiatives under the International Waters Portfolio.
- 1.2 She stressed the importance of SGP Cambodia's integrated approach as it facilitates deeper understanding and community participation that can lead to long-term change and benefits for both the communities and their surrounding ecosystems. She then enumerated the key integrated adaptation activities that SGP Cambodia utilizes as well as its other decisions and activities that work toward its integrated approach.
- 1.3 Ms. Navirak shared the key results of SGP Cambodia's initiatives. Because of the support and assistance granted by SGP Cambodia, biodiversity and coastal ecosystems were improved and rehabilitated, conflicting use among stakeholders decreased, communities empowered and partnerships were established and strengthened. These positive outcomes have maintained SGP's reputation as a fast delivery mechanism by donors.

- 1.4 Ms. Navirak concluded that while integrated community-based adaptation (CBA) initiatives are not new in Cambodia, its success rests largely on the support from national and local government and external bodies. She stressed that because the impacts of environmental threats are largely local, it is important that solutions must come from the local communities. She reported that there is an increasing trend of integrated community-based adaptation planning, particularly dealing with climate change impacts.

**Community Participation for Enhanced Coastal Management: the Cases from SGP China — Ms. Li Yu, National Coordinator, UNDF GEF Small Grants Programme, China**

- 1.5 Ms. Liu Yi, National Coordinator of UNDF GEF Small Grants Programme, China, presented the achievements and outcomes of the projects supported by SGP China under the International Waters Portfolio of SGP China that consists of six projects with a total of specific cultural project (SCP) grant of US\$ 270,208. She presented a summary of five of those six projects.
- 1.6 The first case she shared was the Dalian Coastal Marine Litter Survey and Control. She explained that this project aims to address land-based pollution and has resulted in high participation from the community, publication and dissemination of a guidebook, establishment of an online database and an increased public awareness.
- 1.7 The second SGP project is the Demonstration Project on Promotion of the Ecological Aquaculture Mode to Reduce Land-based Pollution. She detailed the problems linked to the aquaculture industry in the Leizhou Peninsula, such as pests, diseases, pollution, red tide and biodiversity loss. She also identified the proposed solutions that the project will implement that aim to decrease land-based pollution by tons and increase awareness through education by the thousands.
- 1.8 The third case is on the Demonstration of Eco-restoration and Eco-aquaculture in Mangrove Forest in the North Bay of Guangxi. She added that this bay, which is included in the ICM site of Fangchenggang, has experienced mangrove deforestation and water pollution caused by the aquaculture industry. She shared that this project targets the establishment of 2 ha of aquaculture sites that utilizes a new eco-aquaculture system, replanting of nearly a thousand mangrove trees that will be protected under sustainable mangrove management system and increase in the awareness and necessary skills of the community.
- 1.9 The fourth project she discussed was the Demonstration Project on the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Coastal Wetland at Techeng Island. She explained that the island deals with ecosystem degradation as a result of the destructive activities and operations of marine industries. The project aims to initiate ecosystem protection, trainings, ecotourism development and an integrated mangrove-aquaculture management system. The Community Participatory Sustainable Development Demonstration at

Seagrass Special Protected Area in Lingshui Xincun and Li'an Harbor Project address that range from water pollution, seagrass bed degradation and the overexploitation of fishery resources. The project's objective is to restore and protect seagrass beds and develop a sustainable ecotourism in the area.

**Community-based Sustainable Coastal Management and Livelihood — Ms. Catharina Dwiastarini, National Coordinator, UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, Indonesia**

- 1.10 Ms. Catharina Dwiastarini, National Coordinator of UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, Indonesia, presented the SGP supported community-based sustainable coastal management and livelihood programs in Indonesia through an audiovisual (AV) presentation.
- 1.11 The presentation highlighted the significance of mangroves to Indonesia and the region. The AV also explained the importance of marine and coastal development in Indonesia's national development strategy as it creates employment, stimulates foreign exchange and increases economic growth of surrounding communities. It further cautioned that developing this sector can also contribute to the degradation of the environment, which is why the government formulated a new strategy of development that included the aspect of sustainability.
- 1.12 The presentation further explained that because integrated development of coastal and marine resources needs collaboration from coastal and marine communities, SGP Indonesia provides assistance to coastal communities and civil society organizations through small grants, proposal development and training technical assistance. An overview of these projects supported by SGP Indonesia, such as coral restoration in Bali, mangrove conservation in Muara Tanjung, Nagalawan, sea turtle conservation in Belitung Island, renewable wind energy investment in Yogyakarta and mangrove replanting and development of a more durable rice variety initiative of the Indonesian Integrated Pest Management Farmer's Alliance, were presented.

**Strengthening Local Adaptive Capacity: Lessons Learned from Community-based Adaptation Projects under GEF SGP Vietnam — Ms. Nguyen Thi Kim Anh, National Coordinator, UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, Vietnam**

- 1.13 Ms. Nguyen Thi Kim Anh, National Coordinator of UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, Vietnam, presented the lessons learned from the Community Building Adaptation Projects under SGP Vietnam. SGP Vietnam started in 1999 and has since then supported a total of 165 projects in different issues and areas in the country. She explained that because Vietnam is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, adaptation is a strategic top priority for the national government and external donors. She added that there are 12 community-based adaptation projects that address the issue of strengthening local capacity to address the critical issues associated with climate change. She then discussed the implementation and results of two of these CBA projects both in the context of climate change, namely the testing of flood and

salinity-tolerant rice varieties and the addressing of droughts and saline water intrusion for sustainable red onion cultivation.

- 1.14 Ms. Nguyen then shared some of the lessons learned from these CBA projects, including: (1) the importance of obtaining and including common community definition of climate change adaptation and their expectations in the program and (2) effective adaptation requiring priority of the capacity development for local communities that includes addressing the short-term and long-term impacts of climate change on both the community and the environment. She expressed that these adaptation measures must be flexible enough to consider the local cultural, environmental and natural resources so that the program would still be appropriate for a specific community. She further added that adaptation strategies must be based on environmentally-friendly technologies and methods that will promote conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. To be considered effective, these adaptation strategies must benefit the poor communities that are the most vulnerable to climate change.
- 1.15 Ms. Nguyen identified some challenges that need to be addressed, such as overlapping development projects, the lack of climate change technical expertise and data, need for a CBA project evaluation methodology with a focus on climate change adaptation and the difficulty in communicating climate change issues to the local communities and people.
- 1.16 Ms. Nguyen concluded that the national government of Vietnam has recognized the seriousness of the issue of climate change as it has included it in their national and even local agendas. She added that capacity development for vulnerable communities is essential for effective community adaptation. She also mentioned that the SGP Vietnam has been an effective and efficient mechanism to deliver funding and will continue to focus on climate change adaptation in the coming years.

**SGP-PEMSEA Joint Communiqué: Progress, Achievements and Challenges  
— Ms. Belyn Rafael, Country Programme Manager, PEMSEA**

- 1.17 Ms. Belyn Rafael, Country Programme Manager, PEMSEA Resource Facility, presented the progress, achievements and challenges of the SGP-PEMSEA Joint Communiqué. She gave a brief overview of PEMSEA's regional sustainable development framework for national coastal and marine policy development in the form of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA). She explained that this strategy is a collaborative platform for implementing existing international commitments through its framework for sustainable development of coastal areas through integrated coastal management.
- 1.18 Ms. Rafael shared that the SGP-PEMSEA Joint Communiqué was signed in 2003 and as of July 2012 has completed five subjects: two in Cambodia, one in the Philippines, one in Thailand and one in Vietnam. She then enumerated the current projects and activities in these four countries that focused on the development of sustainable coastal resources management and restoration

and protection of ecosystems. She then explained that the SGP-PEMSEA Joint Communiqué has enabled linkage between local governments and NGOs, people's organizations (POs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) as it built confidence and capacity between and among partners. The Joint Communiqué was also able to demonstrate the practical benefits of ICM, which was able to address immediate concerns of communities. She identified some challenges that needed to be faced like improving coordination, further strengthening of capacity needs and providing more avenues for sharing experiences. She concluded that the way forward for the SGP-PEMSEA Joint Communiqué is to scale up community ICM through the guidance of PEMSEA's Five-Year SDS-SEA Implementation Plan.

1.19 Ms. Rafael raised the following points for the discussion and open forum:

- Strategies and approaches to strengthening partnership
- Key activities for the next five years for regional and country-specific activities
- Development of a regional report for completed projects and discuss sustainability options
- Programmatic approach to development of proposals
  - What are the capacity development needs for implementation?
  - How do we further facilitate dialogue and collaboration between and among local governments, CBOs, POs and NGOs?

## **2.0 OPEN FORUM ON STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES TO STRENGTHENING THE PARTNERSHIP**

### **Proposal preparation, approval and management**

2.1 Ms. Chen expressed concern on the limited number of projects under the Joint Communiqué. She provided several strategies to further strengthen the partnership including the need to build understanding and capacity among the members of the SGP's National Steering Committee as they are in charge of the review and approval of proposals. Capacity development for the NSC members can be done by involving them in national, regional and international events such as the EAS Congress.

2.2 Ms. Chen of the SGP emphasized the importance of getting support from the members of the NSC, particularly in the review and approval of proposals. She expressed that NSC members should be exposed to regional and international conferences for them to gain a better understanding on the importance of the partnership and their role on the process.

2.3 Ms. Rafael also shared that in many cases, the low number of approved projects is due to the inability of many community-based organizations that cannot fulfill several requirements of the SGP. In the case of the Philippines, the transition of staff and inconsistent policies and recommendations of the SGP added to the delay in the review and approval of the proposals.

- 2.4 For instance, in the case of Cavite, Ms. Anabel Cayabyab said that the delay in proposal and review resulted in many conflicting instructions by previous SGP Coordinators. By the time the proposal was approved, the set of leaders and members of the organization has changed. This led to several confusion on the project, including the guidelines on financial management for the project.
- 2.5 In the case of Lao PDR, a proposal was also sent in 2011, but there has been no response from the SGP on the status of the proposal. There is a need to follow up on the national coordinators of these countries to determine the status of proposals submitted by the organizations and to provide the necessary support in the refinement, if necessary.

**Building a more trusting relationship among the partners through closer collaboration in the planning process for projects**

- 2.6 Ms. Chen reiterated the importance of having a more trusting relationship to facilitate effective project review and approval. She said that this can be done by facilitating joint activities for SGP counterparts and PEMSEA/PMO focal points/staff.

**Need to strengthen coordination and communication process at the local level**

- 2.7 Ms. Navirak expressed that in the case of Cambodia, the Project Management Office and the SGP should closely collaborate at the project preparation stage. Through this process, all partners are made aware of the roles and responsibilities. In the case of Cambodia, the people's organization (PO) reports to the PMO and the PMO also provides guidance to the PO. They assist the organization in the implementation, reporting and management of the project since the community-based organization does not have these capacities yet.

**A more holistic approach in joint planning and funding of community projects and the possibility of a regional approach to project development**

- 2.8 This includes the possibility of developing a regional proposal that will cover ICM sites in SGP and PEMSEA participating countries. Ms. Chen has expressed that PEMSEA may wish to consider channeling funds (for instance USD 1 Million) to SGP to fund these projects, and SGP will provide the necessary counterpart as well as the mechanism for the fund management and project implementation. This will also enable the partners (i.e., PEMSEA and SGP) to develop a simpler process for grant application based on the SGP process and criteria and avoid problems as in the case of the Philippines.
- 2.9 Further discussion is needed to be done separately if this arrangement is possible in the next phase of PEMSEA.



**Involvement of SGP national coordinators in the planning/development of the five-year plans and to consider the SAP developed by the SGP in the process to harmonize partnership activities**

2.10 Ms. Nguyen and Ms. Poonsin expressed that the SGP can be invited in the country-level consultations of the SDS-SEA planning and in developing the next phase of PEMSEA's implementation to harmonize the planning process.

2.11 Ms. Nguyen, in pointing out the framework, said that these are in line with the SGP focus and the differences may just be in the wording.

**Evaluation and monitoring of the project**

2.12 Ms. Lorie Sollestre of Batangas corrected the impression by Ms. Chen that PEMSEA is claiming credit for the joint projects. She expressed that this was never the case and that PEMSEA has always attributed SGP for the projects and programs under the SGP joint communiqué as in the case of Batangas. She expressed concern in the types of NGOs being tapped in the process as the Batangas grantee and the municipal government had problems improving their relationships.

**Development of a regional report of joint projects**

2.13 Ms. Rafael proposed that the documentation of the projects can be done by summarizing the reports submitted by grantees. A draft outline can be developed by PEMSEA and circulated among the SGP national coordinators for approval before the writing process.

**C. CLOSING**

The meeting adjourned at 17:30 with the reminder that follow-up discussions and linkages among the countries be done through the country focal points/managers and SGP national coordinators.