



**EAS** XIAMEN, CHINA  
6-8 NOVEMBER  
**CONGRESS2024**

**Blue Synergy for a Shared Future:  
One Sustainable and Resilient Ocean**

6-8 NOVEMBER 2024 • XIAMEN CITY, CHINA

# 16<sup>TH</sup> EAST ASIAN SEAS PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL MEETING

PROCEEDINGS

23-24 JULY 2024

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY, PALAWAN, PHILIPPINES

ORGANIZERS:



## 16th East Asian Seas Partnership Council Meeting

23 July 2024, 9:30 AM - 8:00 PM (UTC+8)

24 July 2024, 9:00 AM - 3:40 PM (UTC+8)

Costa Palawan Resort, Puerto Princesa, Palawan, Philippines and Zoom

### PROCEEDINGS

#### INTRODUCTION

- I. The 16th EAS PC Meeting was held on 23-24 July 2024 at the Costa Palawan Resort in Puerto Princesa, Palawan in the Philippines (UTC+8). Onsite participants of the meeting included the EAS PC Chair; the Intergovernmental Session Chair and Co-Chair; the Technical Session Co-Chair, the Executive Director of the PEMSEA Resource Facility (PRF); country partners from Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Philippines, Timor Leste and Vietnam; non-country partners from the ASEAN Center for Biodiversity (ACB), Oil Spill Response Ltd. (OSRL), PEMSEA Network of Local Governments (PNLG). Online participants included the Council Co-chair, Technical Session Chair, country partners from RO Korea and Singapore; non country partners from the International Environmental Management of Enclosed Coastal Seas Center (EMECS), International Union for Conservation of Nature - Asia Regional Office (IUCN-ARO), Korea Institute for Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST), Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM), Ocean Policy Research Institute of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation (OPRI-SPF), Ipieca and the National Marine Hazard Mitigation Service (NMHMS). The meeting was also participated by onsite observers from the PEMSEA Network of Learning Centers (PNLC), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the Provincial Government of Palawan.
- II. Supporting documents may be found in the Annexes:
  - A. Annex 1: Agenda of the meeting;
  - B. Annex 2: Links to the meeting documents, presentations, and photos; and
  - C. Annex 3: List of Participants

## **COUNCIL SESSION (JULY 23, 2024 | 9:30-11:00 AM)**

### **1.0 OPENING OF THE 16th EAS PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL (PC) MEETING**

- 1.1 The meeting commenced at 9:00 AM (UTC+8). Dr. Vann Monyneath, East Asian Seas (EAS) Partnership Council (PC) Chair, welcomed the participants and thanked the Philippine Government, through the DENR, and PRF for hosting and organizing the meeting.
- 1.2 Dr. Monyneath emphasized the meeting's focus on advancing the implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA), particularly in addressing key issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. The PC Chair highlighted the need to discuss strategies to foster resilience and means to achieving agreed targets while focusing on strengthening regional cooperation and addressing transboundary issues.
- 1.3 He also highlighted the upcoming East Asian Seas Congress in Xiamen, China, in November 2024 and urged partners to actively participate in developing strategic policy directions through the Ministerial Declaration, underscoring the importance of collaborative efforts among governments, organizations, communities, and all stakeholders to protect shared resources.
- 1.4 Dr. Monyneath encouraged active engagement in discussions and officially called the meeting to order.

### **2.0 ADOPTION OF THE MEETING AGENDA (PC/16/DOC/02)**

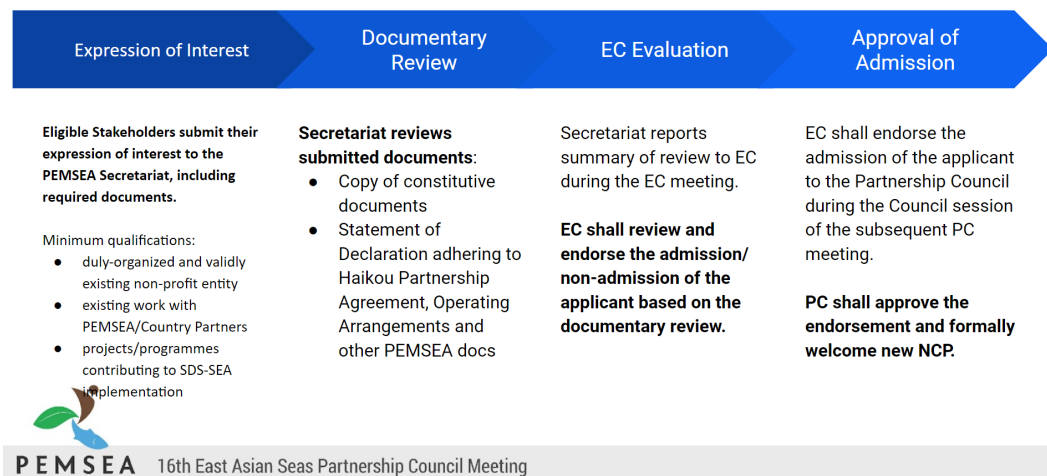
- 2.1 Ms. Abi Cruzada, PRF Secretariat Coordinator, presented the agenda for the Council Session for the Council's comments and subsequent adoption.
- 2.2 **Decision:** The agenda was adopted.

### 3.0 ADMISSION OF NATIONAL MARINE HAZARD MITIGATION SERVICE AS PEMSEA NON-COUNTRY PARTNER (PC/16/DOC/03)

3.1 Ms. Cruzada presented the agenda and summarized the Secretariat’s documentary review and EC’s evaluation of the application of the National Marine Hazard Mitigation Service (NMHMS) as PEMSEA Non-Country Partner.

3.2 The Secretariat Coordinator outlined the procedure for admitting Non-Country Partners, as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. Procedure of Admission for PEMSEA Non-country partners**



3.3 The NMHMS is a non-profit research and academic institution which serves as the operational arm of the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) of PR of China to undertake bilateral and regional projects in the area of marine disaster mitigation and ecological warning and monitoring measures. The NMHMS submitted its formal expression of interest and relevant supporting documents in March 2023 to the PRF Secretariat.

3.4 Upon review of the submitted documents, the PRF Secretariat identified several areas of potential collaboration with NMHMS's existing initiatives:

- a. The development of the national marine disaster risk inventory on vulnerability to

storm surges, waves, tsunamis, sea ice and sea level rise;

- b. Preparation of marine disaster-related standards;
- c. Establishment of a preliminary index system on ecology, environmental resources, and health; Coastal Zone Status Surveys; and
- d. Supporting the development of technical regulations on blue carbon assessment in China.

3.5 Likewise, the NMHMS has had existing collaborations with PEMSEA, either through China or select non-country partners, such as IUCN and the PNLG. These include the:

1. Launch of the International Applications of Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction in Coastal Areas with IUCN and MNR
2. Discussion on applying Eco-Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) to Address Multiple Societal Challenges at Local Levels: Selected Case Studies of PNLG Members in China;
3. Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and Eco-DRR: Global Experience Sharing with IUCN at the session on climate change adaptation and marine disaster prevention and mitigation of the International Island Forum held in Pingtan, Fujian.

3.6 The EC unanimously recommended the admission of NMHMS during the 31st EC Meeting in October 2023, subject to the approval of the Partnership Council.

3.7 **Discussion Highlights:**

Ms. Chen Danhong, on behalf of China, confirmed the endorsement of the EC and expressed their hope for future cooperation in areas of mutual interest under the overall framework of the SDS-SEA Implementation Plan (IP) 2023-2027.

3.8 The EAS PC Co-Chair, Undersecretary Jonas Leones, noted that NMHMS's admission would enhance PEMSEA's technical capability in resolving complex ocean governmental issues and concerns.

3.9 Ms. Jeslina Gorospe of the Philippines moved to approve the NMHMS's admission, with

no objections from the Council.

3.10 **Conclusion:** The PC agreed with the endorsement of the EC on accepting the application of NMHMS as an NCP, considering their technical capability to assist PEMSEA in resolving complex ocean governance issues and concerns and collaborate on initiatives in marine disaster prevention and mitigation, ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction, blue carbon monitoring, updating regional state of coasts reports, and other areas of mutual interest.

3.11 **Recommendation:**

The EAS PC Co-chair recommended that partners and PRF explore areas of cooperation with NMHMS in hazard mitigation and/or blue carbon training and capacity development.

3.12 **Decision:** The EAS PC approved the admission of NMHMS as PEMSEA NCP.

#### **4.0 Report of the Executive Committee (EAS PC) Chair (PC/16/DOC/04)**

4.1 The EAS PC Chair presented actions taken with regards to major conclusions, recommendations, and decisions made by the Council during the 15th PC Meeting and the 30th and 31st Executive Committee meetings, which were held respectively in July 2023, March 2023, October 2023.

4.2 **On Policies:**

4.3 *Development and Approval of the SDS-SEA Implementation Plan 2023-2027 M&E Plan.*

The EC approved the development of a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan to track the progress of the SDS-SEA implementation for 2023-2027, during its 30th Meeting. An ad-hoc working group, composed of nominated representatives from country and non-country partners, refined the plan together with PRF. The M&E Plan was approved by the Partnership Council in their 15th Meeting. The reporting templates are now being used for the first time for the January-December 2023 period.

4.4 **On other program initiatives:**

4.5 *Approval of the Development of the PEMSEA Blue Carbon Program.* The PC welcomed the exploration of PEMSEA as a hub for blue carbon certification and accounting and its opportunities for investment, with recommendations for a comprehensive review of PEMSEA's role, capacity, and sustainability requirements, as well as consultations with various stakeholders. To support the program, the PRF Secretariat developed a Blue Carbon Roadmap, which was endorsed by the EC during its 31st meeting. Subsequently, the PRF commissioned studies on blue carbon accounting methodologies and supply-demand assessments as part of the initial activities of the roadmap. The results of these studies were scheduled to be presented during the Technical Session of the 16th PC Meeting.

4.6 *Recommendations on strengthening the PEMSEA Sustainability Plan.* The EC reaffirmed their support for the recommendations to the Sustainability Plan, encouraging efforts to raise operational funds and considering inviting non-formal Country Partners (e.g. Thailand and Malaysia) to join PEMSEA.

4.7 **On partnerships:**

4.8 The Chair reported on several recommendations and decisions related to partnership and project development, with subsequent actions taken by PRF:

- PRF was instructed to regularly update on current projects to the EC, EAS PC, PNLC, and PNLG, exploring collaborations with COBSEA on marine plastics pollution, and engaging the scientific community to strengthen the Partnership's knowledge base. To this recommendation, the PRF engaged PNLC members in the Blue Carbon Program and is supporting a cooperation agreement between PNLG and PNLC for enhanced capacity-building and knowledge sharing.
- To increase PEMSEA's visibility in the global arena, PC has made several recommendations including participating in regional activities, sharing Partner

activities through PRF, convening country partners on key issues like plastic pollution and climate change, and coordinating increased engagement in United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and blue economy discussions. Currently, PRF has coordinated sessions for the EAS Congress 2024, facilitating discussions on future collaborations.

- On Evaluation of Non-Country Partner Applicants for CY 2023, the Council endorsed the National Marine Hazard Mitigation Service for admission as a Non-Country Partner and proposed the Dongying Huanhai Institute of Marine Conservation and Development as an associate member of the PNLG.

**4.9 On the 2023-2024 Work Plan and Budget of the PRF:**

4.10 The EC approved the 2023-2024 Work Plan and Budget of the PRF, with additional recommendations to explore approaches other than voluntary contributions and multilateral/bilateral grants to ensure the long-term sustainability of PEMSEA.

**4.11 On matters of officers and management bodies:**

4.12 The EC endorsed the extension of Ms. Aimee Gonzales's term as PRF Executive Director for 2024-2026, recognizing her contributions and the need for steady leadership.

**4.13 On the Development of mechanism to improve Technical Session:**

4.14 The PC proposed mechanisms for Partners to raise agenda items and optimize discussions through ad hoc working groups or online platforms. The Council welcomed exploring alternative formats for the Technical Session and emphasized the need for mutual understanding among Partners, suggesting pre-meetings or workshops on priority themes. The council also identified common topics of interest and emerging issues in the region one of which is to include ocean acidification as a theme for



discussion, as a critical emerging issue that will pose a bigger risk to the region in the coming years.

4.15 **Conclusion:** The PC noted with appreciation the summary of key agreements and recommendations made by the EC during the 30th and 31st EC meetings and the 15th EAS PC meeting.

4.16 **Decision:** The report of the EAS PC Chair was accepted.

## **5.0 Report of the Executive Director (PC/16/DOC/05)**

5.1 Ms. Gonzales delivered her report on PEMSEA Resource Facility's key accomplishments, challenges, and outlook for FY 2023-2024 on accelerating actions to fulfill its mission of fostering healthy and resilient coasts, ocean, people and economies in the EAS region.

### **5.2 Operationalization of Year 1 (2023) of the SDS SEA Implementation Plan 2023-2027.**

During the Technical Session of the 15th EAS PC Meeting in July 2023, the PRF facilitated the reporting of country and non country partners on their respective implementation of current policies and developments of new ocean policies, long-term strategies, and legislations. This then formed the initial baseline of country and non-country partner initiatives which was reported in Chapter 2 of [PEMSEA's 2023 Annual Report](#). PEMSEA country partners continue to implement existing and adopt new ocean policies, long-term strategies, medium-term plans, and legislations with the required institutional and coordinating arrangements to facilitate their implementation, which falls within the duration of the SDS-SEA IP. PEMSEA's non-country partners, on the other hand, play a crucial role in supporting implementation by bringing diverse expertise, resources, and networks to the table, enabling a more comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to addressing the complex challenges facing the region's coasts and oceans.

### **5.3 Launch of major regional projects.**

The Executive Director shared some updates on two multi-year regional projects recently

launched by PRF:

- a. UNDP/GEF/ASEAN Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) Project, which is guided by the principle of 'source-to-sea' system and aims to establish functional mechanisms of IRBM in selected priority river basins to reduce pollution and sustain freshwater environmental flows and adapt to the impacts of the climate crisis.
- b. Republic of Korea/PEMSEA Marine Plastics Pollution Project, which aims to reduce marine plastics in the Philippines and Timor-Leste through enhanced governance and management and demonstration of best practices to offer innovative solutions to the plastic pollution issues, and to increase community awareness and involvement in this project.

5.4 *Development and application of new tools and methodologies to help strengthen data transparency and analytics and improve governance.*

Through its projects, the PRF developed new tools and methodologies to monitor the status of rivers and coasts such as the IRBM State of the River Basin Reporting, Beach plastics monitoring tool, plastics analysis and classification systems (PACS), and Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) plan.

5.5 *Completion of the Arafura Timor Seas Strategic Action Plan (ATS SAP).* The ATS SAP, which was recently completed after an extensive series of country consultations, was recently completed. The SAP will guide and demonstrate coastal and marine development in the region in the next ten years. Participating countries Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea, and Australia are expected to approve the Regional SAP through a Ministerial Declaration to be signed in September 2024.

5.6 The *Regional Strategy and Action Plan in Biofouling Management* in the EAS Region, which serves as the region's response to the issues and challenges brought by biofouling to the economy and also to the environment was recently completed with the support of the PRF and the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The strategy was endorsed

to the ASEAN Working Group on Maritime Transport for its review and adoption.

- 5.7 *Technical Advisory Services to the World Bank/UNOPs/ASEAN South East Asia Regional Program in Combating Marine Plastics (SEA-MaP)*. The PRF is currently providing technical advice in developing the regional baseline assessment guides, toolkits and innovation and investment platforms on marine plastics in ASEAN for the SEA-MaP project.
- 5.8 *Reinvigoration of the PEMSEA Blue Carbon (BC) Initiative*. An informal BC Working Group was created with core members coming from the several PNLC members, including the University of the Philippines - Marine Science Institute (UP-MSI), Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB), Xiamen University, and Zhejiang University, among others. Initial steps include collating, discussing and reviewing the various accounting methodologies for blue carbon ecosystems for potential harmonization and looking at the management, supply of and demand for blue carbon ecosystems in the region.
- 5.9 While the PRF has made significant strides in maintaining PEMSEA's relevance in the region, Ms. Gonzales pointed out that PEMSEA's continued evolution, amidst persistent and emerging challenges in the oceans and coasts, is necessary to adapt to current and anticipating emerging trends and issues and donor requirements, while adhering to its core mission of fostering Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) through targeted initiatives and regional cooperation. This approach involves developing and implementing science-based programs that address complex coastal issues, facilitating multi-stakeholder partnerships, and coordinating efforts across the East Asian Seas region.
- 5.10 In order to maintain and strengthen its competitive edge and ensure visibility and demonstrate meaningful and impactful progress in the EAS region and globally:
- Organization of EASC 2024
  - Anticipated approval of IMO and PEMSEA 5-year Blue Solutions Project
  - Formal turnover of PNLC secretariat to IPB University to create secretariat

centers in Manila with PRF, Xiamen with PNLG and Bogor with PNLC

- Memorandum of Agreement between PNLC and PNLG to forge stronger and aligned work program and capitalize resources of the networks of learning centers and local governments and scale up actions and impacts
- Creation of Arafura Timor Seas Program with the signing of a Ministerial Declaration and approval of 10 year strategic action plan
- Joint work with ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity on UNDP/GEF Ecological Network of Marine Protected Areas in Large Marine Ecoregions (ENMAPs) to contribute to 30x30 targets

5.11 On opportunities for growth and strengthened collaboration, Ms. Gonzales pointed out several actions:

- Enhancing Regional Engagement through EAS Partnership Council Meetings: Recognizing the importance of face-to-face meetings in promoting collaboration and engagement, Country partners are encouraged to consider hosting the annual governance meeting from 2025 onwards to foster deeper regional cooperation and learning exchange.
- Ensuring Continuity in Leadership: In preparation for the next cycle of EAS PC leadership, the Secretariat shall initiate the process for electing new Chairs and Co-chairs beginning in 2025.
- Nurturing Talent and Expertise within PRF: The PRF is exploring various strategies to develop the capacity and expertise of its staff, including:
  - Developing comprehensive training programs for current PRF staff
  - Identifying and recruiting promising new talent
  - Exploring opportunities for secondment of technical, financial, and marketing professionals from country partners and networks.

5.12 **Discussion Highlights**

- Japan reiterated their continued commitment to support the PC leadership beyond 2024, thereby contributing to a smooth transition and turnover of EC Members.
- Vietnam requested that the PRF should share more detailed information on the updates of their ongoing projects and initiatives, to which the Executive Director responded that the comprehensive updates may be found in PEMSEA’s 2023 Annual Report.

5.13 **Conclusion:** The PC noted with appreciation the accomplishments made by PRF for FY 2023-2024.

5.14 **Recommendation:**

- China recommended that PC continue to strengthen cooperation and exchange of experience between partners and PRF managed projects in the future, while also supporting in-depth collaboration with PNLG and PNLG.

## 6.0 **OPENING OF THE 16th EAS PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL (PC) TECHNICAL SESSION (PC/16/DOC/06)**

6.1 The meeting reconvened at 11:00. The EAS PC Chair, turned over the chairmanship of the meeting to Dr. Keita Furukawa, Technical Session Chair, to open the Technical session.

6.2 Dr. Furukawa opened the session and called on the Secretariat Coordinator to present the agenda for adoption.

6.3 **Decision:** The agenda was adopted.

## 7.0 **EAS Congress 2024 (PC/16/DOC/07)**

- 7.1 Dr. Furukawa highlighted the importance of the East Asian Seas Congress (EASC) 2024 in strengthening existing partnerships and scaling up synergistic actions for coastal and ocean sustainable development. He then requested Ms. Cruzada to provide updates on the preparations for the EAS Congress 2024.
- 7.2 Ms. Cruzada shared that the EAS Congress 2024 will be co-hosted by PEMSEA together with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) of PR China and the Xiamen Municipal People's Government in collaboration with the World Ocean Week in Xiamen on 6-8 November 2024 at the Xiamen International Conference Center Hotel, Xiamen, PR China.
- 7.3 This historic collaboration commemorates 30 years of initiatives and partnerships fostered by PEMSEA. Notably, Xiamen served as one of the two pilot sites of PEMSEA when it was still a regional marine pollution project titled 'Prevention and Management of Marine Pollution in the East Asian Seas'. It continues to serve as a leading example of the successful and progressive application of Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) in support of the goals of the SDS-SEA. This collaboration is expected to provide an expanded platform for knowledge exchange, partnership building, and future direction setting for sustainable and resilient East Asian Seas.
- 7.4 The World Ocean Week (WOW) in Xiamen, established in 2005, is a platform linking global ocean policies, technology, decision-making, and action which aims to provide a cooperation and exchange platform for the governments of coastal cities, marine science and technology circles, international and intergovernmental organizations, maritime-related enterprises, and institutions around the world.
- 7.5 The usual four-day Congress will be scaled down to three days in line with the collaboration with WOW, with events such as the EAS Youth Forum, and Special EAS Partnership Council (PC) Meeting conducted as pre-Congress events. Furthermore, the EASC 2024 and WOW will have a joint opening ceremony, and will include the presentation and signing of the 8th Ministerial Declaration. Thus, the Ministerial Forum, which used to be the culminating activity of the Congress will instead be conducted on the

first day (November 6).

7.6 With the theme “Blue Synergy for a Shared Future: One Sustainable and Resilient Ocean”, the EAS Congress 2024 aims to:

- Showcase positive results and outcomes for replication and scaling up integrated coastal management (ICM) across the region;
- Facilitate knowledge exchange between multiple stakeholders
- Quantify and consolidate the progress achieved over the past 3 years of implementing SDS-SEA in line with the indicator framework outlined in the 2023-2027 Implementation Plan- while also pinpointing specific actions to be elevated moving forward to fine-tune plans of action under the 2030 Roadmap.

7.7 The Congress will assess progress made and challenges faced in actualizing regional targets and global commitments, as it looks ahead at pathways for building greater collective action through cooperation, coordination and knowledge exchange amongst various stakeholder groups to secure a sustainable and resilient ocean for a shared future. Its expected outcomes and outputs include:

- Validated and/or novel best practice models and locally optimized solutions for sustaining the ocean while enabling prosperity, with such innovations amplified through regional knowledge sharing;
- Expanded connections between innovators across borders to accelerate the development application of technologies and approaches that drive “triple wins” - environment, social, and economic gains; and
- Renewed momentum and mobilization of partnerships and resources to fulfill the collectively endorsed SDS-SEA vision, with progress gaps overcome through the recalibration of plans and programs based on lessons learned and good practices, and directions outlined through the 8th Ministerial Declaration and other Congress commitments.

7.8 Ms. Cruzada presented the EAS Congress 2024 framework program outlined in Annex 1 of this document (PC/16/DOC/07a).

7.9 Key events of the EASC 2024 include:

7.10 *Pre-Congress Event: EAS Youth Forum 2024*

The EAS Youth Forum 2024 was conducted from 16-18 April 2024 in Uljin, RO Korea in collaboration with the Korea National Ocean Science Museum (KOSM), supported by the Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST) and the Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation (KOEM), and funded by the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of RO Korea. Nineteen (19) young leaders from 10 countries in the East Asian Seas region convened at the East Asian Seas Congress Youth Forum for a week of learning exchange and regional cooperation on the roles of youth in the sustainable development of coastal and marine areas in the region.

7.11 The youth delegates learned from experts from the government and select organizations of the Republic of Korea on various topics such as the use of big data in marine conservation, existing business models that mainstream upcycling of marine plastics, advanced technology that promote sustainable use of marine resources, and marine mammal field rescue.

7.12 The main output of the Forum was the development of a Youth Call to Action, which highlights the youth's commitment to pursuing sustainable ocean and coastal development and the call for governments and other stakeholders to take action in ensuring ocean health. The Call to Action is currently being developed into a video which will be presented during the SGOM and Congress proper.

7.13 *EAS Congress 2024 and WOW Joint Opening Ceremony*

The Opening Ceremony shall set the tone for the 3-day Congress and will feature messages from key individuals from China and the International arena. Furthermore, it will feature the:



- Signing of the 8th Ministerial Declaration which will be open to the public for the first time;
- Keynote presentation on Xiamen’s 30 years of experience in utilizing integrated coastal management (ICM) in its development as a coastal city;
- Launch of the National Bulletin on Ecological Restoration of PR China;

Additionally, Mr. Vidar Helgesen, Executive Secretary of IOC-UNESCO, is confirmed to be one of the high level representatives delivering the opening addresses of the event.

Currently, China is also in the process of securing the attendance of their Vice Premier and key officials from the local governments to join the ceremony.

#### 7.14 Ministerial Forum (proper)

The East Asian Seas (EAS) Ministerial Forum (MF) is the highest platform for strategic direction within the PEMSEA mechanism and provides policy directions and commitments for improving and strengthening the implementation of the Strategic Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA).

7.15 Unlike previous EAS Ministerial Forums, the 8th MF, including the signing of the Ministerial Declaration will be undertaken as part of the Opening Ceremony and Day 1 of the EAS Congress 2024. This program design aims to highlight the significant commitments to be made by the EAS countries and set the overarching tone for the ensuing International Conference of the EAS Congress.

7.16 This MF is by invitation only, with an expected 100-120 participants composed of the Ministers or Heads of Delegation (at least Vice Minister level) from PEMSEA’s 11 Country Partners and observers from the PEMSEA Executive Committee Members, 1-2 Senior Government Officials from PEMSEA Country Partners, Heads of PEMSEA Non-Country Partners, Executive Committee members and heads of delegation from PEMSEA Network of Local Government and PEMSEA Network of Learning Centers, development partners, and other key collaborators.

7.17 A detailed discussion on the Ministerial Forum is outlined in Agenda 12 of the proceedings.

7.18 International Conference

The International Conference (IC) shall be conducted from November 6 in the afternoon to November 8 in the morning and will build around four key subthemes that showcase various enabling conditions in which synergies can be established, maintained, or strengthened to ensure a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient ocean for the region:

- *Ocean science, policy and practice*
- *Global challenges, local solutions*
- *Innovation and Digitizing Ocean Action*
- *Blue Financing and Investments*

7.19 The IC shall have two features:

- **Plenary Session.** These are PEMSEA-led sessions that will set the overarching perspective on concrete measures to deliver commitments outlined in the Ministerial Declaration, relating to promoting innovative solutions and technologies, bridging the science-policy gap, enhancing access to financial streams and utilizing local solutions to meet global targets such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, Paris Agreement and other international commitments.
- **Parallel Sessions.** These are sessions organized by PEMSEA Non-Country partners, international collaborators and other NGOs/IGOs. They may be conducted as panel discussions, roundtable dialogues, workshops, film-showing, or TED-talk presentations, among others. Session topics conform with the subthemes of the International Conference.

7.20 EASC Exhibition

The EASC exhibition will run for the duration of the Congress proper. It showcases innovative solutions, approaches, and good practices contributing to the sustainable development of seas and coasts within the region and globally. A maximum of 50 booths

will be set up and is open to PEMSEA partners and all collaborators. Potential exhibitors may either secure a sponsorship package or pay a registration fee to avail a booth slot of 2x3 meters.

#### 7.22 Partnership Night

The Partnership Night is a networking event of the EAS Congress that provides the partners and all participants of the EAS Congress an opportunity to get together in an informal setting and celebrate the accomplishments of the collaborations established in line with the implementation of the SDS-SEA. This year's partnership night will host the recognition of the Humans of EAS, an initiative launched last year as part of PEMSEA's 30th Anniversary celebrations. The Humans of EAS honors 30 outstanding individuals who have made a mark in coastal management and development through their work or engagement with PEMSEA in the past 30 years.

#### 7.23 Field Visits

The Coastal Discovery Expedition will showcase successful examples of Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) in action, highlighting innovative approaches to habitat restoration, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development in Xiamen.

#### 7.24 PEMSEA Network of Local Governments General Assembly

The PNLG Annual Forum gathers members to discuss network governance and operations, and to share experiences, best practices, and innovative solutions for addressing challenges in local coastal and marine management and development. This year the Forum will be divided into two parts. The Technical Workshop will be conducted as a joint endeavor with the PNLC on November 7, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm as a side event to the International Conference. The General Assembly shall be conducted on November 8, after the closing of the International Conference.

#### 7.25 PEMSEA Network of Learning Centers General Assembly

The PEMSEA Network of Learning Centers (PNLC) will hold its general assembly as a simultaneous event with the PNLG General assembly. It shall be conducted on November

8, after the closing of the International Conference.

7.26 The full program of the EASC 2024 proper may be viewed [here](#).

7.27 The Secretariat Coordinator shared the following key updates:

- The PRF, MNR and Xiamen have allocated respective budgets to cover the requirements on logistics, manpower, promotions, and other concerns to successfully conduct the EAS Congress. Budget requirements covered by the PRF shall initially be charged to the EAS Congress Trust Fund and will be recovered through the collection of registration fees and partnership package fees collected from Congress participants, convenors, and exhibitors to ensure the continuity of conducting the Congress every three years;
- The online registration for the EAS Congress 2024 is open from 28 February 2024 to 15 October 2024. Regular participants will have a fee of USD400 (early bird)/USD450 (regular), while PNLG and PNLC Members will have discounted rates of USD200, and Students at USD150 (Early bird) and USD200 (Regular), respectively. In consideration of the expenses covered by the host country, registration of participants from PR China shall be waived;
- The Secretariat received a total of 26 Expressions of Interest (EOIs) from 24 convenors. Convenors range from PEMSEA projects, MNR-led organizations, NCPs and other international organizations (i.e., Rare, UNEP/COBSEA, High Seas Alliance, Blue Nature Alliance, etc.)
- The Congress Secretariat secured the venue, field visit sites and potential hotel recommendations for the Congress;
- The SGOM and Ministerial Forum programmes have been developed, subject to the approval of the Country partners;
- The Secretariat has commenced securing the speakers and moderators for the Opening Ceremony, International Conference, and Ministerial Forum, with the goal to confirm their participation by mid-August;
- The EAS Congress Exhibition guidelines have been developed and was released to the

partners and the public last June 30;

- The EAS Congress website has been launched, with the results of the EAS Youth Forum 2024 and the Congress Program already published. The Secretariat is aiming to update the website with detailed programs of each parallel session between August and September;
- Promotions and marketing for the EAS Congress have been initiated and articles on EAS Congress have been featured in various social media channels at the national and international level; and
- First Information Bulletin covering key details on logistical arrangements was released during the second week of July.

#### 7.29 **Next Steps:**

#### 7.30 ***On the Opening Ceremony and Ministerial Forum:***

- Secure the confirmation of International Speaker and National leader of China for the opening ceremony;
- Confirm the moderator for the Opening ceremony and Ministerial Forum
- Secure confirmation of attendance of Country Ministers;
- Continue consultations and revision of the Ministerial Declaration with Country partners;
- Confirm dates of SGOM with PEMSEA country partner focal points and confirm their attendance;

#### 7.31 ***On the International Conference:***

- Upload the consolidated programme in the EAS Congress website
- Coordinate with parallel session conveners in finalizing their respective session programs and securing their target speakers, panelists, etc.;
- Finalize and confirm participation of speakers and moderators for the PEMSEA-led plenary sessions;

7.32 **On the Exhibition:**

- Monitor and Collect applications for exhibitors;
- Design and produce the Exhibition centerpiece in consultation with MNR and Xiamen;

7.33 **On Promotions and Marketing of the EAS Congress 2024:**

- PEMSEA Partners were encouraged to assist PRF
  - a) in promoting the EAS Congress through respective websites and by linking the PRF to respective communications units within the Ministry or Organiza
  - b) in identifying other possible sponsors that can be tapped to support participation of delegates from the developing countries in the region.

7.34 **Discussion Highlights**

- Mr. Yasushi Mochizuki of Japan sought clarification on the purpose of presenting the summary of conclusions and recommendations during the last day of the IC.
- The PRF Executive Director explained that the summary of conclusions and recommendations during the last day of the IC is more a collation of the key recommendations from the plenary and parallel sessions, which could serve as the initial steps to implement the strategic directions outlined by the 8th Ministerial Declaration. The theme of the Ministerial Forum is from 'Declaration to Delivery' so the International Conference is structured to provide concrete actions and solutions to operationalize the Ministerial Declaration.

7.35 **Conclusion:** The PC noted the updates provided by PRF and China on the preparations for the EAS Congress, expressing their interest in the sessions lined up. On the suggestion to consider a hybrid format for the meeting, China clarified that they will consider conducting some parts of the Congress in hybrid, such as the Opening Ceremony.

7.36 **Recommendations:**

- The Philippines proposed that the Council maximize participation by making the EAS Congress a hybrid event, thereby encouraging more participants to join.

- China requested the CPs to confirm the attendance of their ministers at the EAS Congress. They also informed that they would be glad to arrange visits to institutions in Xiamen for all MF delegations so as to promote marine synergy and blue partnership in the region.

## **8.0 Progress Report on SDS-SEA Implementation 2023-2027 (PC/16/DOC/08)**

- 8.1 Dr. Furukawa called on the Secretariat coordinator, Ms. Cruzada, to present the summary of Partners' reports submitted ahead of 16th EAS PC.
- 8.2 Ms. Cruzada began her presentation with a brief overview of the SDS-SEA Implementation Framework, covering the SDS-SEA IP 2023-2027 Monitoring & Evaluation Timeline, roles and responsibilities in SDS-SEA IP M&E reporting, and the timeline for submitting the SDS-SEA IP progress report.
- 8.3 From the submissions received from both Country Partners and Non-Country Partners, the Secretariat compiled a consolidated report summarizing the submissions. Her presentation was divided into four parts: Effective Governance, Healthy Oceans, Healthy People, and Healthy Economies.
- 8.4 On effective governance, Ms. Cruzada discussed five subtopics: Regional Mechanisms, National Ocean and Coastal Policies, Legislations, and Institutional Arrangements, Capacity Development, Knowledge Management, and Gender equality Mainstreaming.
- 8.5 She covered key updates in regional mechanisms, including the adoption of the SDS-SEA IP 2023-2027 and the development and approval of the SDS-SEA IP 2023-2027 M&E Plan. She highlighted sustained voluntary contributions from CHN, JPN, ROK, SG, and TL, the in kind support of PHL as host of PRF and new voluntary contributions from VN and IDN.

- 8.6 2023 non-country partner agreements were also reported, such as the collaborations with KMI for a Learning Exchange Workshop on Good Practices in Implementing Biodiversity, Conservation-Focused Ecosystem, and Area-Based Management Approaches, the MOA with KOSM for organizing the EAS Youth Forum, and the MOA with KIOST on activities to support awareness raising and drafting the regional strategy on biofouling management. Additionally, the development of collaborative projects with global and regional organizations, including the GEF/UNDP/ASEAN IRBM Project, the WB/UNOPS SEA-MaP, and the ROK ODA Marine Plastics Project was likewise reported.
- 8.7 Under regional mechanisms, PRF spearheaded the development of RSOC template with GESI inclusion and the R/NSOC reports shared with UN DOALOS and ASEAN to help inform the development of the World Ocean Assessment report, ASEAN State of Environment report, Our Ocean Conference, OECD, Global Ocean Forum and other relevant fora and organizations.
- 8.8 On National Ocean and Coastal Policies, Legislations, and Institutional Arrangements under Effective Governance, and focusing on the Blue Economy, the Secretariat Coordinator detailed ongoing efforts to update existing policies and establish new ones related to the blue economy and sustainable ocean development from 6 out of 11 country partners, including China, Japan, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam.
- 8.9 Actions and contributions of non-country partners in advancing the blue economy were also highlighted. Notable among these are IUCN, OPRI, ACB, and PML, which have been actively involved in supporting and implementing blue economy initiatives through policy research, mainstreaming blue economy in their respective projects, and discussing blue economy in other global partnerships.
- 8.10 Under National Ocean and Coastal Policies, Legislations, and Institutional Arrangements, Ms. Cruzada addressed the mainstreaming of Integrated Coastal Management (ICM). She noted that several countries, including China, Japan, the Philippines, Singapore, and



Vietnam, are actively integrating ICM into their development and operational plans. Additionally, the non-country partner ACB has been involved in these efforts.

- 8.11 She proceeded to discuss capacity development under effective governance including, among others, regional exchanges on rights-based fisheries management and sea turtle conservation through the ATSEA-2 project, Ocean Governance Training Programs organized by China, and longstanding online training programmes of the International Ocean Institute (IOI) such as the Training Programme on Ocean Governance for WESTPAC (in partnership with CHN), IOI Ocean Academy Programme and Online Update Courses in Ocean Governance.
- 8.12 Furthermore, the PRF has also conducted several training courses under its regional projects, including:
- Training courses in ICM and specialized skills conducted with projects (e.g. IWRM/IRBM/ICM training in IRBM project sites; PACS and Marine Environment Protectors workshop with Marine Plastics ODA project;
  - Training of Trainers on SORB, Beach Monitoring;
  - Tangerang study tour in Philippines;
  - Internship program partnership with Ateneo de Manila University; and,
  - Engagement with PNLC through projects and Blue Carbon program
- 8.13 On Knowledge Management, she highlighted PRF's efforts in upgrading PEMSEA's online data platform, the SEA Knowledge Bank (SEAKB), the completion of the PEMSEA Communications Plan, and the development of the Marine Plastics Data Center. Furthermore, the PRF also spearheaded the Regional Blue Carbon Forum, an online learning exchange conducted as part of World Ocean Day Celebrations. Country and Non-Country Partners such as China, PML and KMI have also reported respective efforts in increasing awareness on blue economy, ecosystem restoration, and microplastic pollution, among others.

- 8.14 Lastly, under Gender Equality Mainstreaming, China, Lao PDR, and the Philippines reported existing gender mainstreaming policies that align with key policies and projects related to climate change, biodiversity, and fisheries. She also mentioned non-country partners IUCN, OPRI, ACB, and PML for their efforts in advancing GESI related initiatives.
- 8.15 On Healthy Oceans, progress on ICM Scaling Up, Biodiversity Conservation and Fisheries Management, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, and Pollution Reduction, Waste Management and Water use Management was reported.
- 8.16 The Secretariat Coordinator noted ongoing efforts on ICM/ICM-related projects and programs that support national goals for biodiversity conservation, marine pollution management, and fisheries management, including, among others the conduct of ICM workshops and forums (PRF and Lao PDR), as well as application of marine spatial planning in marine zoning and utilizing big data in marine and fisheries use (KMI).
- 8.17 On Biodiversity Conservation and Fisheries Management, the Secretariat reported progress in updating and implementing National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) for six out of eleven country partners: China, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Singapore, and Timor-Leste. Additionally, non-country partners such as KMI, EMECS, IUCN, OPRI-SPF, ACB, and PML are also actively engaged in these efforts through technical support to policy development/enhancement, capacity building programs and observing in regional fora on KMGBF.
- 8.18 On Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, there is noted progress in the updating of climate strategies, enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) that incorporate blue carbon, and an increased focus on Nature-based Solutions (NbS). She highlighted that six country partners—China, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Singapore, and Timor-Leste—and three non-country partners—ACB, OPRI-SPF, and PML—are actively engaged in these efforts.
- 8.19 On Pollution Reduction, Waste Management, and Water Use Management, efforts to

enhance and update policies, promote Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), and engage in collaborative monitoring were reported by China, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Singapore, and Timor-Leste, as well as three non-country partners—IUCN, OSRL, and PML.

- 8.20 On Healthy People, efforts to promote sustainable livelihood are present, but are not extensively reported. These include alternative livelihoods for those affected by ecological restoration efforts (China), promotion of biodiversity-friendly enterprises in Protected Areas (PAs) (Philippines), funding mechanisms to promote circular economy (Singapore), as well as programs to support coastal communities (KMI, OPRI-SPF).
- 8.21 On Healthy Economies, the Secretariat Coordinator highlighted the presence of policies and initiatives that advance sustainable blue economy efforts, such as development of emerging marine industries (China, KMI), promotion of blue carbon, infrastructure and initiatives (Japan), and blue economy investment projects (ACB), among others.
- 8.22 Notably, the consolidation of reports resulted in the following takeaways:
- **Governance progress:** New and updated policies on blue economy and coastal management across multiple countries.
  - **Capacity development:** Training programs, workshops, and knowledge sharing initiatives on topics like ICM, marine spatial planning, and ocean governance are being conducted by various organizations across the region while country-led capacity building initiatives were not reported extensively.
  - **Biodiversity conservation:** Many countries have updated their NBSAPs and are implementing programs for MPAs, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable fisheries management at various levels.
  - **Climate change adaptation:** Reports indicate increased efforts on developing climate strategies for the oceans and coasts, updating Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and incorporating nature-based solutions and blue carbon initiatives into climate action plans.

- **Pollution reduction:** Efforts to combat marine pollution, especially plastic waste, are underway through national action plans, extended producer responsibility laws, and regional cooperation initiatives on monitoring and assessment methodologies.
- **Sustainable livelihoods:** There is a growing focus on promoting sustainable economic opportunities in coastal communities, including biodiversity-friendly enterprises, blue economy initiatives, and projects aimed at balancing ecosystem conservation with local economic development.

8.22 Dr. Furukawa thanked Ms. Cruzada for her comprehensive report and asked her to present the instructions for the workshop proper where the Session will be divided into groups.

8.23 The objectives of the workshop are to:

- To share and expound on the partners’ respective efforts in meeting the targets outlined by the SDS-SEA Implementation Plan 2023-2027.
- To identify common challenges and opportunities faced in meeting these targets.
- To explore ways in which the PEMSEA Resource Facility or National Country partners and PEMSEA Network of Learning Centre members can support our countries and organizations in addressing these challenges.

8.24 The participants of the meeting were divided into four groups, and were assigned a facilitator from the PRF Secretariat and the Technical Session Chair and Co-Chairs. The groups are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Breakout Groups

Group	Members	Facilitators
1 (onsite)	Cambodia, China, Vietnam, Timor-Leste, PNLG, OSRL	Dr. Sukjae Kwon Ms. Maida Aguinaldo Ms. Isdahartati

2 (onsite)	Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Philippines, ACB PNLC	Ms. Shinji Kim Ms. Abi Cruzada Dr. Surya Gentha Akmal
3 (online)	RO Korea, KMI, KIOST, KOEM, NMHMS	Ms. Aimee Gonzales
4 (online)	Singapore, EMECS, Ipieca, OPRI-SPF	Dr. Keita Furukawa

The Breakout session involved two parts:

- a. Part 1: Sharing Experiences, where each group member would briefly present their key national/organizational/project plans aligning with SDS-SEA IP components of Effective Governance, Healthy Ocean, Healthy Peoples, Healthy Economies; the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place, and their Experience/policies in Incorporating of gender equality, social inclusion, and environmental/social safeguards
- b. Part 2: Group Discussion , where each group will collectively discuss the following:
  - i. What challenges do they face in implementing the SDS-SEA IP 2023-2027?
  - ii. What opportunities were identified that can be used as leverage to enhance SDS-SEA implementation?
  - iii. How can the PEMSEA Resource Facility (PRF) or Non Country Partners support us in addressing these challenges?
  - iv. What specific capacity-building activities or programs can PEMSEA conduct to help overcome identified challenges?
  - v. Feedback on the reporting template and how it can be improved to get more robust information

8.25 The groups processed to work during the rest of the afternoon session on July 23. The

Technical Session reconvened the following morning with rapporteurs from each group presenting their key findings and recommendations.

8.26 Detailed discussions on the key initiatives in relation to SDS-SEA IP components, M&E mechanisms and GESI are outlined in Annex 2-C.

The Secretariat collated key findings recommendations from the group presentations and synthesized them into 5 key findings: a) Challenges to SDS-SEA/National ocean policy implementation; b) Opportunities to enhance/leverage implementation; c) PEMSEA support to address challenges; d) Potential Capacity building initiatives; and e) suggestions for Improvements to the reporting template.

The Key findings are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Key Findings from the Breakout sessions

<p><b>Challenges to SDS-SEA/National ocean policy implementation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Limited information sharing and capacity for effective implementation of strategies and action plans</li> <li>● Insufficient funds for implementing strategies and enforcing regulations</li> <li>● Turnover of personnel working on related activities</li> <li>● Cross-sectoral policy and inter-agency coordination issues</li> <li>● Fragmented governance requiring cooperation among many departments</li> <li>● Balancing economic interests with environmental protection</li> <li>● Limited private sector engagement</li> <li>● Need for human and institutional capacity building</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities to</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Existing policies, regulations, and strategies</li> </ul>

**leverage/enhance SDS-SEA Implementation**

- related to Green, Clean, and Circular Economy
- Good infrastructure allowing easier access to coastal areas
- Tourism sites including marine protected areas boosting local economy
- Opportunities for development of agriculture and SME products/services
- Sharing information, experiences, and knowledge among partners
- Leveraging technical innovation to compensate for decreasing workforce
- Establishing minimum indicators/baseline data to help monitor progress

**PEMSEA support to address challenges**

- Capacity building and knowledge sharing through hybrid training courses
- Exploring more resource mobilization opportunities (e.g., GEF, ODA)
- Technical support in data consolidation and monitoring
- Fund-raising efforts by PEMSEA to enable more practical actions
- Awareness-raising activities to increase convergence of actions
- Marine Spatial Planning exercises to manage multi-functional infrastructure/areas
- Providing science and data to support policy positions

**Potential Capacity building initiatives**

- Joint training workshops on ICM/IRBM/Blue Carbon
- Experience sharing workshops on best practices
- Continuous training programs for local managers
- Secondment of technical officers for learning exchange
- Conducting case studies and providing success/enabling factors
- Developing mentors to help stakeholders tackle

real problems

**Suggestions to improve the M&E Reporting template**

- Questions are too detailed and sometimes hard to fit all parts; template may be revised to only highlight key achievements that partners wish to showcase
- Update attached website or provide alternative links for the documents linked in the reporting template
- Simplify the reporting template and provide examples on the level of details needed
- Quantify inputs where possible
- Improve language barriers by simplifying language
- Consider an online repository for progress reporting, but ensure security of supporting documents
- Consider including the monitoring of how initial challenges identified have been addressed; this could be included as an additional document to the reporting template

8.27 The Technical Session Co-chair thanked the Technical Session for their participation in the group discussions and for providing useful information and insightful recommendations on how to improve progress reporting, issues that need to be addressed by the Partnership and potential collaborative efforts. Dr. Kwon then requested the Secretariat to capture the findings from the discussions and to make the necessary revisions to the reporting template as well as identify mechanisms to address the challenges outlined and report to the next Technical Session.

8.28 **Conclusion:** The PC shared their key programs/policies/plans/initiatives supporting the Year 2023 targets of the SDS-SEA IP 2023-2027 and identified the challenges and opportunities to implementation, key areas of support and feedback on the reporting template. PRF noted the suggestions and recommendations put forth by the Technical Session and will review and implement the proposed changes especially on the reporting



format and dissemination and consider further in depth discussion on common themes of interest in future sessions.

**8.29 Recommendations:**

- China shared information on biodiversity projects under GEF and encouraged the PC to share knowledge, tools and technology under similar objectives to those of SDS-SEA. China also encouraged PRF to play an active role in sharing data and information, tools and technologies as a regional platform.

**9.0 UPDATES ON THE BLUE CARBON PROGRAM (PC/16/DOC/09)**

9.1 Ms. Gonzales presented the updates of the Blue Carbon (BC) Program of PEMSEA, particularly on the results of the baseline assessments on the accounting methodology, supply and demand in the region, as well as the results of the 3rd BC Working group meeting on 22 July 2024 (list of participants in Annex 3.2).

9.2 Ms. Gonzales reiterated the objectives of the PEMSEA Blue Carbon Program:

- To support conservation and improvement of coastal blue carbon ecosystems and optimize its contribution to Green House Gas (GHG) emissions reduction and coastal resilience to climate change; and
- To improve local government and community access to financial mechanisms which may support the scaling up of blue carbon ecosystem management

9.3 To realized the program, the PRF developed a PEMSEA Blue Carbon Roadmap (Figure 2.) which outlined the Immediate-term (2023-2024), Medium-Term (2025-2028), and the Long-Term (2029) targets in relation to methodology, supply and demand of Blue carbon certification. The Roadmap was approved by the PEMSEA EC during its 31st Meeting in

October 2023.

PEMSEA Blue Carbon Program Roadmap				
	BC Standardized Accounting Methodology	Supply	Demand	Certification
Immediate (2023-2024)	<b>Target:</b> Standard BC accounting methodology developed	<b>Targets:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baseline survey of BCEs in (#) sites (inventory)</li> <li>• BCE accounting done in (#) sites using standards</li> </ul>	<b>Target:</b> Policy and market research conducted	<b>Targets:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business plan developed</li> <li>• Core team trained (assessment, certification, management)</li> </ul>
Medium-term (2025-2028)	<b>Target:</b> Approved BC Accounting Standards used in sites	<b>Targets:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCE accounting done in at least (#) sites using BC Accounting Standards</li> <li>• Models for co-benefits arrangements</li> </ul>	<b>Target:</b> Partnerships with private sector and sites forged/projects developed	<b>Target:</b> Certification system established
Long-term (2029-2033)	<b>Target:</b> PEMSEA BC Accounting Standards recognized/accredited as voluntary standard in (#) countries	<b>Targets:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCE Accounting done in (#%) of PEMSEA sites</li> <li>• (#) PEMSEA sites in registry</li> </ul>	<b>Target:</b> (#) private sector partners in registry	<b>Target:</b> PEMSEA Certification System operational

Figure 2. PEMSEA Blue Carbon Program Roadmap

- 9.4 Upon approval of the Roadmap, the PRF commissioned BC specialists such as the University of the Philippines - Marine Science Institute and Oceanpixel to conduct a comparative analysis on several accounting methodologies for BC in the region. Furthermore, the PRF also engaged consultants to study the supply and readiness of BC ecosystems in the PEMSEA ICM sites/PNLG sites as well as on the demand for carbon markets in the region. The studies were conducted between January - June 2024. Results of the studies are shown in Annex 2-D.
- 9.5 Based on the results of the baseline study on BC supply in the region, Ms. Gonzales cited that while BCEs have ecological, economical and social importance in the EAS Region, they are currently threatened by numerous anthropogenic threats including logging, aquaculture, coastal development, tourism, pollution, and the impacts of climate change. Likewise, initiatives that protect BCEs include the establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) sites, Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs), and Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs) and the implementation of existing local regulations and ordinances.

- 9.6 On the study of accounting methodologies in the region, the study compared the methodologies (both national and academe-developed) from five countries, namely: China, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, and RO Korea, against the methodology outlined by VERRA, the internationally recognized methodology for blue carbon accounting. The comparative analysis included factors such as focus, measurement, ecosystem and carbon pools, gaps, consideration for harmonization, computation and methods, field data collection, field data collection, field sampling specification, verification, and certification.
- 9.7 The comparative study found out that blue carbon accounting methodologies in the region are at various stages, depending on the priority or capacity of the country. For example, while both VERRA and Japan are focused on the carbon crediting stage, ROK and Indonesia's methodology emphasized reporting and inventory. On the other hand, China's national standard highlights monitoring and management, but the methodology of Xiamen University China is in its carbon credit. The Philippines accounting methodology focuses on monitoring and conservation status of BC Ecosystems.
- 9.8 Ms. Gonzales highlighted the takeaways and best practices among VERRA and other East Asian Countries. VERRA has stringent verification and certification processes and established comprehensive methodologies for baselines, monitoring, and verification and Japan has the advanced technologies to conduct acoustic surveys and the utilization of underwater drones. Japan has also included seaweed and aquaculture in its BCE accounting. Moreover, Korea has detailed protocols for national GHG reporting and inventory while China has robust monitoring and management practices of blue carbon sinks and it has advanced use of remote sensing and GIS Data. Indonesia has comprehensive sampling methods for BCE assessments and it has already integrated blue carbon data into national inventories. Lastly, the Philippines currently has community-based monitoring and conservation-focused practices..
- 9.9 The ED outlined the following ways forward as identified by the working group:
- Finalization of the reports with key recommendations;

- Further discussions with broader stakeholders at the 2024 East Asian Seas Congress and World Ocean Week in Xiamen;
- Formalizing the Blue Carbon Working Group under the Technical Session of PC;
- Forging strategic partnerships and mobilizing resources to refine activities of each work streams, and
- Review and presentation of further studies at the 17th EAS PC Meeting in July 2025.

9.10 **Conclusion:** The Technical Session noted with appreciation the updates provided by the Secretariat on the progress of developing the PEMSEA Blue Carbon program, with requests to provide more detailed Information on the baseline studies presented. They likewise expressed their interest to formalize further discussions on the BC Program by establishing a formal working group who can provide more concrete recommendations to the PC in future meetings.

9.11 **Recommendations:**

- Vietnam sought guidance on how they could participate in the Blue Carbon Program, to learn more about best practices on blue carbon initiatives.
- China presented information on the initiative of NMHMS regarding the Blue Carbon program and indicated their intention to provide further details during the EAS Congress.
- Japan suggested the establishment of a technical working group within the Technical Session as per established procedure.
- Timor Leste requests PEMSEA to disseminate information regarding the Blue Carbon Program to the Council.
- ACB raised a potential partnership with PRF to further support the efforts to develop the BC program given a common goal of identifying opportunities for nature based solutions.
- PNLC called on the PC's support to help enhance the capacity and technical knowhow on the blue carbon ecosystem status in the region

## **10.0 Closing of Technical Session**

- 10.1 Before closing the technical session, Dr. Kwon opened the floor to the Council for any additional business. The Secretariat Coordinator then provided a brief update on the results of the selection process for the Humans of EAS. The Selection Committee of PRF selected 30 individuals who have shown outstanding work in coastal management through their affiliation with PEMSEA and its projects over the past thirty years.
- 10.2 Ms. Cruzada shared that the stories of the selected nominees will be featured in the PEMSEA and EAS Congress social media platforms and websites, and will culminate with a recognition ceremony during the EASC 2024 Partnership Night on November 7. The top 3 awardees will have their travel expenses covered by PRF.
- 10.3 Dr. Kwon thanked the Secretariat and expressed his anticipation in meeting the awardees during the Partnership Night at the EAS Congress in November. He then proceeded to his closing remarks where he expressed appreciation to all participants for their active involvement and valuable contributions and highlighted the significant progress on the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia Plan since 2003, emphasizing its role in advancing inclusive and sustainable solutions. He also noted the advancements in the blue carbon program and its importance in promoting climate resilience through nature-based solutions.
- 10.4 Dr. Kwon reminded the Council to invite participants to the EAS Congress-World Ocean Week in Xiamen (November 6-8, 2024) and reminded them to register to get invitation letters for visa processing. He then officially declared the Technical Sessions of the 16th EAS Partnership Council Meeting closed at 12:00 (UTC+8) .

**11.0 Opening of the Intergovernmental Session and Adoption of the Meeting Agenda (PC/16/DOC/10)**

11.1 Ms. Cruzada called the country partners to reconvene for the intergovernmental session at 13:30 (UTC+8). She then introduced Ms. Danhong, the Intergovernmental Chair, to open the session.

11.2 Ms. Danhong thanked Ms. Cruzada and called the Intergovernmental Session to order. She then requested that Ms. Cruzada present the agenda for the session.

11.3 **Decision:** The agenda was adopted.

**12.0 8th Ministerial Forum and Ministerial Declaration (PC/16/DOC/11)**

12.1 Ms. Danhong turned over the floor to the Executive Director to present the progress and updates on the 8th Ministerial Forum and the Ministerial Declaration.

12.2 Ms. Gonzales began her presentation by outlining the key activities for the 8th East Asian Seas (EAS) Ministerial Forum. These include the Senior Government Officials Meeting (SGOM) scheduled on October 22, 2024, the Opening Ceremony, the EASC Exhibition Tour, the Ministerial Forum, the Ministerial Luncheon, Ministerial Field Visits, and the Ministerial Banquet on November 6, 2024 (Table 3).

Table 3. 8th EAS Ministerial Forum Key activities

Date and Time	Activity	Purpose	Expected participants
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<b>22 October 9:00 -12:00 UTC+8</b>	Senior Government Officials Meeting (SGOM)	Secure final confirmation on the draft Ministerial Declaration and arrangements in conducting the Ministerial Forum.	PEMSEA National Focal Points/authorized representative to clear MinDec contents
<b>6 November 8:30 - 10:00 UTC+8</b>	Opening Ceremony	Reading and Signing of 8th EAS Ministerial Declaration	Ministers/ Heads of Delegation; Country Delegations, VIPs, PEMSEA EC, PNLG/PNLC EC
<b>10:00 - 10:30</b>	EASC Exhibition Tour	Showcase PEMSEA and country partner achievements on coastal and ocean management	Ministers/ Heads of Delegation; Country Delegations, VIPs, PEMSEA EC, PNLG/PNLC EC
<b>10:45 - 12:15</b>	Ministerial Forum Proper	Determine country initiatives to deliver Ministerial Declaration commitments	Ministers/ Heads of Delegation; Country Delegations, VIPs, PEMSEA EC, PNLG/PNLC EC
<b>12:30 - 13:30</b>	Ministerial Luncheon	Networking activity	Ministers/ HODs select VIPs
<b>14:00 - 17:00</b>	Ministerial Field visits	Showcase Xiamen’s good practices on ecological restoration and biodiversity conservation	Ministers/HODs, select VIPs
<b>18:00 - 21:00</b>	Ministerial Banquet	Networking Activity	Ministers/HODs, select VIPs

12.3 Senior Government Officials Meeting (SGOM). Ms. Gonzales shared that the SGOM is

tentatively scheduled on 22 October 2024 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM (UTC+8) via Zoom. The Meeting will be jointly chaired by the Intergovernmental Session Chair, Ms. CHEN Danhong and co-Chair, Mr. Le Dai Thang. National Focal Points. Expected participants to the SGOM are PEMSEA focal points and/ or senior representatives of PEMSEA countries who are authorized to provide clearance on the final contents of the Ministerial Declaration. She then presented the provisional agenda of the SGOM (Table 4) for feedback from the session..

Table 4. Provisional Agenda of the Senior Government Official’s Meeting

Date and Time	Activity	Date and Time
9:00 - 9:05	<b>1.0 Opening of the EAS SGOM</b> Speaker: Intergovernmental Session Chair	9:00 - 9:05
9:05 - 9:10	<b>2.0 Virtual Group Photo</b>	9:05 - 9:10
9:10- 9:15	<b>3.0 Review and Adoption of the Meeting Agenda</b>	9:10- 9:15
9:15 – 9:20	<b>4.0 Presentation of the EAS Youth Call to Action</b>	9:15 – 9:20
9:20- 10:20	<b>5.0 Review and Endorsement of the Final Draft Xiamen Ministerial Declaration</b>	9:20- 10:20
10:20 - 11:20	<b>6.0 Review and Confirmation of the Provisional Program for the Ministers, Signing Protocol for the Xiamen Ministerial Declaration, and other MF arrangements</b>	10:20 - 11:20
11:20- 11:30	<b>7.0 Other Business</b>	11:20- 11:30
11:30 - 12:00	<b>8.0 Closing Ceremony of the EAS SGOM</b>	11:30 - 12:00



- 12.4 Ministerial Forum Proper. Ms. Gonzales shared updates on the 8th EAS Ministerial Forum, which carries the theme "From Declaration to Delivery: Innovations, Opportunities, and Prospects for the EAS Region." The 2024 Ministerial Forum will focus on discussions on how to effectively implement the commitments outlined in the Ministerial Declaration. It will be conducted on November 6, after the Opening Ceremony of the EAS Congress.
- 12.5 The forum will be conducted in the format of a moderated dialogue, subject to the approval of the country partners. Target participants of the forum include the Heads of Country Delegation, at least at the Minister or Vice Minister level. Observers from the PEMSEA Executive Committee members, SGOM Officials from PEMSEA CPs, Other non-EAS countries, Heads of PEMSEA Non-Country Partners, PNLG and PNLC Executive Committee, and high level representatives of development partners, NGOs, academe and private sector are likewise invited. The provisional program of the Ministerial Forum proper is shown on Table 5.

**Table 5. 8th EAS Ministerial Forum Provisional Program**

Time	Activity
10:45 – 10:50	Opening by Moderator and Introduction of Ministers
10:50 – 11:05	Synergy on Ensuring Inclusive Multi Stakeholder Engagement and Science-Policy Interface
11:05 – 11:15	Synergy on Innovations in Technologies and Approaches
11:15 – 11:25	Synergy on Blue Financing and Investments
11:25 – 11:55	Statements on commitments and aspirations linked with the EAS Congress theme and the Xiamen Ministerial Declaration

11:55 –  
12:00

Conclusion by the Moderator

- 12.6 In the interest of having a productive discussion amidst the limited time for the forum, each country will be assigned a topic to focus their discussion on, subject to the approval of the country partners. The proposed assignments per country are as follows:
- ***Synergy on Ensuring Inclusive Multi-Stakeholder Engagement and the Science-Policy Interface***: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Timor-Leste, and DPR Korea.
  - ***Synergy on Innovations in Technologies and Approaches***: China, Japan, and Singapore.
  - ***Synergy on Blue Financing and Investments***: Indonesia, the Philippines, South Korea, and Vietnam.
- 12.7 Lastly, Ms. Gonzales shared that Xiamen is preparing a field visit for the Ministers, which will feature two sites that have applied the ICM framework through ecological restoration and good governance. The sites are Yundang Lake and Wuyuan Bay, which are prime examples of how Xiamen has restored degraded coastal areas into thriving economic hubs while also preserving the ecological integrity and biodiversity of the ecosystems.
- 12.8 Ms. Danhong thanked the Executive Director for the thorough overview. She then asked the Council to review and approve the first part of the presentation, which detailed the schedule and activities for the 8th East Asian Seas (EAS) Ministerial Forum and the Senior Government Officials Meeting. Additionally, she requested that country partners provide updates on the status of their delegations for the 8th Ministerial Forum.
- 12.9 **Discussion Highlights:**
- Timor-Leste clarified the required level of the potential speaker and the number of delegates involved in the ministerial forum dialogue. They mentioned that their format includes a Minister as the head of delegation, along with one Director and one Adviser.

- The Secretariat clarified that the number of delegates for the Ministerial Forum depends on each country's arrangements. However, the average members of a delegation include the Minister/HOD and 1-2 senior officials, and 2 support staff.
- Cambodia requested that their topic be subject to revision, as they have not yet had the time to review their assigned topic. The Secretariat noted the request and advised them to provide feedback within the month of August.
- RO Korea requested to change their topic from innovations in Blue financing and investments to innovations in technologies and approaches. The Secretariat noted the request.
- China requested the support of Country Partners to confirm their participation by the end of August, given the complexity of courtesy treatment arrangements in China.
- Indonesia noted that the proposed schedule of the SGOM will coincide with the COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting that will take place in Siem Reap Cambodia from October 21-23, 2024. The Secretariat took note of the information and informed the body that they will propose alternative dates for the SGOM, subject to the approval of the majority.

12.10 After all questions and concerns were raised, Ms. Danhong requested for Ms. Gonzales to present the second part which discusses the 8th EAS Ministerial Declaration in detail.

12.11 Ms. Gonzales presented the theme for the upcoming 8th Ministerial Declaration which is Strengthening Synergies in the Implementation of the SDS-SEA for a Sustainable, Inclusive, and Climate-Resilient Ocean with the following key objectives:

- **Highlight the progress** of the EAS region in delivering the PEMSEA Roadmap to 2030 and the SDS-SEA Implementation Plan 2023-2027;
- **Catalyze synergies** for a sustainable and resilient East Asian Seas
- **Ensure alignment and contribution** of the EAS region's efforts to achieving key international and regional commitments supporting Blue Economy.

12.12 The Ministerial Declaration will build upon previous Ministerial Declaration commitments, PEMSEA and CP progress in SDS-SEA implementation and meeting ocean targets of regional and global commitments (e.g. UN SDGs, KMGBF, PA, etc), identification of scaled-up pathways to enhance blue financing and investments, new and emerging issues and trends, and strengthening existing partnerships and capacitating strategic multi-stakeholder cooperation.

12.13 Ms. Danhong thanked Ms. Gonzales and then invited the council to provide recommendations and comments on Draft 2.0 of the 8th Ministerial Declaration. Each country partner was requested to provide their line-by-line feedback on the draft. The Secretariat took note of the initial comments to Draft 2.0 and collated all feedback into a summary outlined in Annex 2-E.

12.14 Once all countries provided their comments, the Intergovernmental Session Chair requested the Secretariat to make the necessary revisions and share Draft 3.0 to the Intergovernmental session by August 1, 2024, for further review.

12.15 **Conclusions:**

- The Intergovernmental Session reviewed the proposed programs and format of the Ministerial Forum activities and provided initial feedback on the SGOM and MF proper programs.
- The Intergovernmental Session provided initial updates on the status of their respective HODs, with formal confirmation on the participation of their Ministers/HODs to the Secretariat and MNR, China by August 31, 2024:
  - **Cambodia:** Minister of Environment confirmed.
  - **Indonesia:** Ministerial Head of Delegation currently undetermined.
  - **China:** Minister of Natural Resources confirmed.
  - **Japan:** Seeking confirmation of Deputy Minister of Technical Affairs, MLIT.
  - **Lao PDR:** Information on Minister/Vice Minister participation to be given by August 31.

- **Philippines:** Seeking confirmation of Minister, to be confirmed by end of August.
  - **Timor Leste:** MALFF Minister participation confirmed.
  - **RO Korea:** Internal discussions ongoing; updates to follow.
  - **Singapore:** Minister will not be able to attend due to conflict in schedules, but currently assessing the Ministerial Head of Delegation.
  - **Vietnam:** Seeking confirmation of Minister; update expected by August 31, 2024.
- The Intergovernmental session provided their recommendations to Draft 2.0 of the 8th Ministerial Declaration, with the view to making it clearer, more concise and responsive to country priorities. The Intergovernmental Session noted additional inputs or suggestions from the countries on the draft Ministerial Declaration 2.0. Based on the additional inputs or suggestions, the PRF will refine and release draft 3.0 for further review and consultation with the Country Partners by August 1.

12.16 **Recommendations:**

**On the SGOM agenda**

Indonesia proposed to reschedule the date of the SGOM due to schedule conflicts with the 26th Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia Intergovernmental Meeting (COBSEA IGM 26).

**On the proposed format and program for the Ministerial Forum Proper**

- China confirmed the proposed format and suggested to make the guide questions clear and concise to effectively showcase the progress made by different countries in the EAS region from multiple aspects and dimensions.
- Cambodia confirms participation of the Minister of Environment but cannot confirm approval on the proposed topic for them until internal discussions are finalized.

- China requested the support from Country Partner focal representatives to confirm their Ministers/HODs attendance to the MF by August 31.
  - RO Korea requested to change their assigned topic from ‘Synergy on Blue Financing and Investments’ to ‘Technological Innovations and Approaches’
- Timor Leste requests for more detailed information regarding the protocol, seating arrangements and country delegation expectations for the various Ministerial activities.

#### 12.17 **Decisions:**

- The Intergovernmental Session approved the proposed SGOM agenda and instructed PRF to check for other suitable dates for the SGOM.
- The Intergovernmental Session agreed to provide formal confirmation on Minister/HOD participation by August 31.
- The Intergovernmental Session approved the format of the Ministerial Forum as a moderated dialogue, subject to changes in assignment of topics in terms of CPs preferences.

### **13.0 Updates on the PEMSEA Sustainability Plan (PC/16/DOC/12)**

- 13.1 Ms. Danhong turned over the chairmanship of the meeting to Mr. Le Dai Thang, the Intergovernmental Session Co-Chair, to preside over the remaining agendas.
- 13.2 Mr. Thang thanked Ms. Danhong and expressed his gratitude for her valuable contributions and for ensuring the smooth progress of the meeting thus far. He then moved on to the next agenda item and gave the floor to Ms. Gonzales to present the updates on the PEMSEA Sustainability Plan.
- 13.3 Ms. Gonzales started her presentation with the key aspects of the PEMSEA Sustainability Plan 2023-2030 to align with SDS-SEA IP 2023-2027 and updates for July 2024.
- 13.4 On the operationalization of the SDS-SEA Implementation Plan 2023-2027; PNLG SAP

2022-2030, new PNLC Charter and execution of the plans through the multi-year multi-country projects (IRBM, ATSEA 2, Marine plastics, etc) including the SDS-SEA GESI Action Plan and SEAS- SEA IP M&E plan;

- Update as of July 2024: Year 2 implementation of the various projects are ongoing and the results of the Year 1 (2023) SDS-SEA M&E report including those of the projects were presented during 16th PC Technical Session.

13.5 On new strategic partnerships and resource mobilization (review of partnership arrangements; marketing/communications, role of PEMSEA and identification of potential investment opportunities), the key partnerships forged so far include:

- ASEAN, WB, and UNOPs on the combatting marine plastic pollution via the
- SEA-MaP project 2023-2027
- Australia Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water with special project on abandoned, lost, and otherwise discarded fishing gears (ALDFGs) for the Arafura Timor Seas program
- National Marine Hazard Mitigation Services, China on blue carbon and other climate related activities
- ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity on ICM/MSP application to strengthen integrated management/governance in key marine protected areas in ASEAN
- IMO/German government on combating GHG emissions in maritime sector in ASEAN

13.6 She mentioned fundraising proposals under development which includes:

- ATSEA 3- operationalization of SAP and regional governance mechanism (GEF 8)
- Biofouling 2- training and capacity development to manage invasive aquatic species and undertaking further baseline research (Non Country Partner)
- Blue Carbon program (private foundations/joint funding proposal)
- ICM linked with MSP and other area-based management approaches training and capacity development (Country Partners)

13.7 **Conclusion:** The Intergovernmental session expressed their appreciation of the updates provided by the Secretariat, and made recommendations on how to further strengthen collaboration with PEMSEA partners to mobilize resources.

13.8 **Recommendations:**

- China recommended the active promotion of new Country Members of PEMSEA and encouraged more research institutes to become non-Country Partners.
- Vietnam suggested to develop activities in line with promoting climate resilience in the ocean.
- Cambodia proposed the development of projects to address plastic pollution in the Mekong region and to develop, as a region, a declaration on combating marine pollution.
- LAO recommended PRF to continue support in implementing IRBM in more river basins in Lao

## 14.0 **PRF Work Plan and Budget for 2024- 2025 (PC/16/DOC/13)**

14.1 Ms. Gonzales presented the PRF Work Plan and Budget for 2024-2025 and stated the different objectives of PRF for F.Y. 2024-2025.

Objective 1. To secure PEMSEA’s financial and operational sustainability for 2024-2025 between USD 3-4 million annually. Financial sources include:

- Annual country contributions.
- Year 2-3 implementation of the UNDP/GEF/ASEAN/PEMSEA Project on Reducing Pollution and Preserving Environmental Flows in the EAS through the Implementation of Integrated River Basin Management in ASEAN Countries (IRBM Project) and the RoK ODA Marine Plastics Project.
- implementation of the final year and transition year of the ATSEA2 project.



- Submission of new project proposals for GEF 8 through ATESEA-3 and Blue Economy proposal and pursuit of other collaborative funding opportunities.
- Operationalization of training, capacity development, and monitoring services of the PRF in collaboration with the PEMSEA Network of Learning Centers (PNLC) and non-country partners (NCPs).

14.2 Objective 2. To ensure the complete delivery of years 2 and 3 of SDS-SEA IP 2023-2027.

- implementation of the targeted actions of years 2 and 3 of the SDS-SEA IP 2023-2027;
- Reporting on CY 2023 and 2024 accomplishments of SDS-sEA IP at the 16th and 7th EAS Partnership Council;
- Approval of the regional governance mechanism and regional strategic action plan and financing plan for the Arafura and Timor Seas (ATS) at the ATS Ministerial Forum in September 2024, establishing the regional program and the program secretariat from September 2024 to December 2025;
- Securing approval of the regional guidelines on biofouling management by the ASEAN Environment Ministers in 2025;
- Applying the learnings and experiences in implementing ICM to promote blue economy with national governments, PNLC, and PNLG;
- Promoting PEMSEA through broader dissemination of the 2023 and 2024 PEMSEA Annual Reports, State of the River Basin methodology and other reports, case studies, and knowledge products, and
- Implementing the PEMSEA Training and Capacity Development Plan for 2024 and 2025.

14.3 Objective 3. To secure partnerships and other high profile collaborative activities through forging formal partnerships

- Applying as partner-observer in ASEAN;
- Forging a memorandum of agreement with Malaysia through the IRBM project and Malaysia and Thailand through the Blue Solutions project;

- Organizing the EAS Congress 2024;
- Organizing ocean roundtable dialogue at the Our Ocean Conference in Busan, RO Korea in 2025; and
- Facilitation and execution of 2024-2025 actions of the SDS IP 2023-2027, communications and marketing, administration and financing, and implementing the recommendations and decisions taken during the EAS Congress 2024 and the 8th EAS Ministerial Forum.

14.4 Ms. Gonzales presented the summary of projected revenue sources for 2024-2025 with a total of US\$3,236,588 in 2024 and US\$3,678,513 in 2025.

**Table 6. Summary of Projected Revenue Sources for 2024 and 2025 in USD**

Identified Source of Revenue	2024	2025
<b>PRF</b>		
Japan	125,000	125,000
ROK	204,500	45,000**
Singapore	20,000	20,000
China	75,000	75,000
Vietnam	12,000	12,000
Timor-Leste	50,000*	
Indonesia	20,000	
UNOPS/SEA MAP	44,380	44,380
KIOST	11,000	
PSHEMS	2,500	
ATSEA2 Execution Fee*	33,808	
IRBM Execution Fee*	72,386	144,904
ODA Management Fee*	77,681	147,172
Interest Income from bank Deposit	500	500

<b>SUB-TOTAL PRF Source of Funds</b>	<b>748,755</b>	<b>613,956</b>
<b>PROJECT FUNDS</b>		
ATSEA 2	529,653	
IRBM	992,120	1,986,033
ODA	966,060	1,692,479
<b>SUB-TOTAL Project Funds</b>	<b>2,487,833</b>	<b>1,692,479</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,236,588</b>	<b>3,678,513</b>

\*Expected

\*\*Could be bigger - discussions to start Q42024

- 14.5 Ms. Gonzales also presented the summary of uses of funds in 2024-2025 as of 24 June 2024 with US\$3,057,561 used in 2024 and US\$4,180,441 used for 2025.

**Table 7. Summary of Uses and Funds 2024-2025**

Identified Source of Revenue	2024	2025
<b>PRF</b>		
Personnel	158,652	158,652
Travel and Meetings	118,000	20,000
Consultant	13,000	10,000
Audit	20,000	20,000
Subcontract	74,500	
Printing and other costs	1,700	1,200
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>385,852</b>	<b>209,852</b>
<b>PROJECT FUNDS</b>		
ATSEA 2	563,461	
IRBM	1,064,506	2,130,937
ODA	1,043,741	1,839,652

<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>2,671,709</b>	<b>3,970,589</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,057,561</b>	<b>4,180,441</b>

- 14.6 The Technical Session Co-Chair opened the floor for comments from the Intergovernmental Session. As there were no comments raised, the Co-Chair requested the IG to approve the work plan and budget.
- 14.7 **Conclusion:** The Intergovernmental session noted the objectives, activities and respective funding sources outlined by PRF in their proposed Work Plan and Budget for FY 2024-2025.
- 14.8 **Recommendation:**
- China recommended PRF to develop more partnerships and project collaborations in the future; actively participate in significant global marine events and leverage its strengths as a regional cooperation platform as well as actively participate in key marine events organized by country partners.
- 14.9 **Decision:** The PRF 2024-2025 Work Plan was approved.
- 15.0 **Other business**
- 15.1 Other business raised during the Technical Session included:
- 15.2 Updates on the PEMSEA Network of Learning Centers (PNLC)
- Dr. Yonvitner, President of PNLC shared some key agreements made by the PNLC Executive Committee during their meeting on 22 July 2024. These included the:
  - Approval of the MOA for PNLC Secretariat Turnover to be signed by IPB University and PEMSEA during the PNLC General Assembly in November in Xiamen, China.
  - Acceptance of 2 new PNLC members into the network: MSU-Naawan, Philippines and National University of Lao, Lao PDR. They will formally sign the PNLC Charter during the PNLC GA in November in Xiamen, China. A new PNLC applicant for membership, Guangdong Ocean University, China has submitted all necessary requirements which the PNLC EC will review in August for acceptance into the

network. If accepted, they will be invited to sign the PNLC Charter as a formal member in November during the PNLC GA.

- Discussion on the PNLC program development and financial sustainability, which included the consideration of a tiered membership fee model with corresponding entitlements, creation of a regional knowledge hub that could possibly include knowledge products and training materials and programs from PNLC members which could be considered as an in kind contribution to the networks, Engagement of the network members in existing and recently approved projects, such as the ENMAPS Project, and development of learning materials and training and capacity development programs and materials, such as on ICM (basic and advanced), Blue Carbon methodology, among others.
- Discussion on a MOA between the PNLC and the PNLC for signing at the joint PNLC-PNLC learning event on 7 November during the EAS Congress.

### 15.3 Updates on the Marine Plastics Project's Marine Plastic Center Database

- Dr. Won-Tae Shin, Regional Project Manager/ODA/MOF, provided updates on the East Asian Seas Marine Plastics Data Center page in PEMSEA's SEA Knowledge Bank.
- The "Reducing Marine Plastics in the East Asian Seas Region" or the Marine Plastics Project is a six-year initiative between Partnership in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia and the Republic of Korea through the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries. It aims to reduce marine plastics in 10 local sites in the Philippines (6) and Timor-Leste (4) through improved governance and management, demonstration of best practices and innovative solutions, marine litter monitoring, and increasing capacity and awareness of the partner communities.
- The Data Center will showcase the results of the project based on the 4 components of (1) enhancing local governance on marine plastics management, (2) conduct of beach monitoring of marine plastics and litter for long-term tracking of occurrence and trend, (3) demonstration of best practices and innovative solutions in marine plastic management, and (4) strengthening capacity awareness and communication initiatives on marine plastics management.
- The project team likewise conducted consultation meetings on Monday and

Tuesday, July 22 and 23 with their project site representatives from the Philippines, focusing on demonstrating best practices and innovative solutions. The discussions included identifying local government issues and exploring how PEMSEA projects could address them. Based on these discussions, a final project proposal was developed, and implementation is planned for next year.

- Furthermore, the project is working with academic institutions to conduct regular beach monitoring, with the aim to replicate South Korea's approach by testing the same sites approximately six times a year.
- The implementation progress of the ODA project will be showcased at the EAS Congress International Conference, with a parallel session hosted by the MP ODA project.

## **16.0 Summary and Approval of Conclusions and Recommendations of the Council Session and Technical Session (PC/16/DOC/14)**

16.1 The Secretariat presented the summary of conclusions and recommendations of the meeting for the approval of the Intergovernmental Session.

### **16.2 Recommendations:**

- The Philippines suggested that the summary of conclusions and recommendations be subject to individual review.
- Timor-Leste expressed a preference for the draft Ministerial Declaration to be revised before October.

16.3 **Decision:** The Intergovernmental Session approved the summary of conclusions and recommendations, subject to further revisions via email.

## **17.0 PRF Secretariat Announcements**

17.1 The PEMSEA Secretariat requested that participants complete the feedback

survey for the 16th EAS Partnership Council meeting and provided information about the field visit to the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River.

18.0 **Closing of the Intergovernmental Session**

18.1 Mr. Thang expressed his thanks to all participants for their active involvement and valuable contributions throughout the session.

18.2 He mentioned notable milestones the IG has achieved including the Ministerial Forum and Declaration, reflecting the IG's collective commitment and progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA), as well as the progress made towards the PEMSEA 2030 roadmap, which focuses on effective ocean governance and fostering healthy oceans, people, and economies.

18.3 He then continued by sharing the updates and endorsements discussed during the meeting, including the review and endorsement of updates to the PEMSEA Sustainability Plan, which reaffirms the Council's commitment to protecting marine and coastal environments for future generations. He highlighted the productive discussions on the PRF Annual Work Plan and Budget 2024-2025, which set the stage for effective resource utilization and the implementation of the Council's shared goals.

18.4 He also highlighted the Humans of East Asian Seas initiative as a reminder of the positive impact of our work on communities and individuals across the region.

18.5 Mr. Thang then emphasized the importance of continuing the spirit of collaboration and determination and the continuous commitment to sustainable development, resilience, and inclusivity in the East Asian Seas.

18.6 He once again thanked the PRF Secretariat and all personnel for their efforts in

planning and coordinating the successful partnership council meeting. He also looked forward to continuing collaboration toward a sustainable future.

18.7 Mr. Thang turned over the floor to the EAS PC Chair, Dr. Vann Monyneath.

19.0 **Closing of the 16th EAS PC Meeting**

19.1 Dr. Monyneath turned over the floor to the AS PC Co-Chair, USEC. Jonas Leones, to officially close the 16th EAS PC Meeting.

19.3 USEC. Jonas Leones expressed gratitude to the Executive Council Officials, country and non-country partners, PEMSEA Resource Facility, and all participants for their contributions to the success of the 16th East Asia Seas Partnership Council meeting.

19.4 He also extended special thanks to the DENR colleagues, the Provincial Environment and Natural Resource Office (PENRO) of Palawan, and the Provincial Governor of Palawan, Hon. Victorino Dennis M. Socrates, for hosting the meeting and demonstrating commitment to regional sustainable development.

19.5 He highlighted the importance of dedication and collaboration in protecting and preserving marine ecosystems, and emphasized the need for effective governance to achieve healthier oceans, economies, and communities.

19.6 He encouraged the Council to maintain and strengthen partnership and take action to turn discussions into tangible results for a sustainable future for our seas and oceans. He also hoped that the participants would enjoy their stay in Palawan and extended a warm farewell.

19.7 He officially closed the 16th EAS Partnership Council Meeting, which was adjourned at 16:00 (UTC+8).

**Annex 1. Agenda of the 16th East Asian Seas Partnership Council Meeting**



Day	Time	No	Agenda	Speaker/Presenter	Action Requested
22 July			Arrival of participants		
Council Session					
23 July	9:00 – 9:15	1.0	Opening of the 16 <sup>th</sup> EAS Partnership Council Meeting	Dr. Vann Monyneath Chair, EAS PC	
	9:15 – 9:20	2.0	Adoption of the Meeting Agenda	Ms. Abi Cruzada Secretariat Coordinator, PRF	Adoption of the Agenda
	9:20 – 9:50	3.0	Admission of National Marine Hazard Mitigation Service (NMHMS) as PEMSEA Non-Country Partner	Ms. Abi Cruzada Secretariat Coordinator, PRF	1.0 Approval of the admission of the NMHMS as NCP  2.0 Recommendations on engagement of NMHMS with PRF and other PEMSEA partners
	9:50 – 10:10	4.0	Report of the Executive Committee (EAS PC) Chair	Dr. Vann Monyneath Chair, EAS PC	Acceptance of the Executive Committee (EAS PC) Chair's report
	10:10- 10:30	5.0	Report of the Executive Director	Ms. Aimee Gonzales Executive Director, PRF	1.0 Provide operational directives to PRF  2.0 Acceptance of the Executive Director's report
	10:30 – 10:50		Health Break		
Technical Session					

10:50 – 11:05	6.0	Opening of the Technical Session and Adoption of the Technical Session Agenda	Dr. Keita Furukawa Chair, Technical Session	Adoption of the Technical Session Agenda
11:05 – 11:50	7.0	EAS Congress 2024  MNR, China and PRF shall present updates on the preparations for the EAS Congress 2024, including the Opening Ceremony and International Conference Sessions.	Ms. Abi Cruzada Secretariat Coordinator, PRF	Recommendations to enhance the participation in the EAS Congress and conduct of the International Conference of the EAS Congress
11:50 – 13:20		Lunch		
13:20 – 15:20	8.0	Progress Report on SDS-SEA Implementation 2023-2027	Ms. Abi Cruzada Secretariat Coordinator, PRF	1.0 Identify key progress in SDS-SEA Implementation to highlight as accomplishment and/or targets/commitments in the 8 <sup>th</sup> Ministerial Declaration.  2.0 Identify areas for cooperation and collaboration between and among PEMSEA partners and PRF to improve achievement of SDS-SEA IP 2023-2027 targets.

	15:20 – 15:35		Health Break		
	15:35 – 16:50		Continuation of Progress Report on SDS-SEA Implementation 2023-2027 (Breakout Session)	Dr. Keita Furukawa Chair, Technical Session	
	18:00 – 20:00		Welcome Dinner/Partnership Night		
24 July	9:00 - 9:15		Resumption of Technical Session	Dr. Suk-jae Kwon Co-Chair, Technical Session	
	9:15 – 10:15	8.0	Continuation of Progress Report on SDS-SEA Implementation 2023-2027 (Plenary Reporting)		
	10:15 – 10:30		Health Break		
	10:30 – 11:30		Continuation of Progress Report on SDS-SEA Implementation 2023-2027 (Synthesis)		
	11:30 – 11:50	9.0	Updates on the Blue Carbon Program	Ms. Aimee Gonzales Executive Director, PRF	Recommendations on the next steps
	11:50 – 12:00	10. 0	Closing of Technical Session	Dr. Suk-jae Kwon Co-Chair, Technical Session	
	12:00 – 13:30		Lunch		
<b>Intergovernmental Session (Country Partners Only)</b>					
	13:30 - 13:35	11. 0	Opening of the Intergovernmental Session and Adoption of the Intergovernmental Session Agenda	Ms. CHEN Danhong Intergovernmental Session, Chair	Adoption of the Agenda

13:35 – 14:05	12.0	8 <sup>th</sup> Ministerial Forum and Ministerial Declaration	Ms. Aimee Gonzales Executive Director, PRF	Recommendations to enhance the provisional programme of the Ministerial Forum and the working draft of the 8 <sup>th</sup> Ministerial Declaration
14:05 – 14:25	13.00	Updates on the PEMSEA Sustainability Plan	Ms. Aimee Gonzales Executive Director, PRF	
14:25 – 14:45	14.0	PRF Work Plan and Budget for 2024 - 2025	Ms. Aimee Gonzales Executive Director, PRF	Approval of Work Plan and Budget
14:45 – 14:50	15.0	Other business		
		PEMSEA Country Partners may take this opportunity to raise other governance-related concerns.		
14:50 - 15:10		Health Break		
15:10 – 15:20	16.0	Summary and Approval of Conclusions and Recommendations of the Council Session and Technical Session	Ms. Abi Cruzada Secretariat Coordinator, PRF	Approval of the Conclusions and Recommendations of the Technical Session and Intergovernmental Session
15:20 – 15:25	17.0	PRF Secretariat Announcements		
15:25 – 15:30	18.0	Closing of the Intergovernmental Session	Mr. Le Dai Thang Co-Chair, Intergovernmental Session	
			Ms. CHEN Danhong Intergovernmental Session, Chair	

15:30 – 19.00	Closing of the 16 <sup>th</sup> EAS PC Meeting	Usec. Jonas Leones Co-Chair, EAS PC
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18:00 – 20:00	Dinner
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25 July	7:00 - 15:30	Field Trip in Puerto Princesa Puerto Princesa Subterranean River.
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## Annex 2. Links to Meeting documents, photos and presentations

- A. Meeting documents - [bit.ly/PC16](https://bit.ly/PC16)
- B. PC 16 Main presentation - [https://bit.ly/PC16 Presentation](https://bit.ly/PC16_Presentation)
- C. [Consolidated report for the SDS-SEA IP 2023-2027 Year 1 Progress](#) (Includes submissions and group report findings)
- D. [Blue Carbon Presentation and Reports](#)
- E. [Draft 3.0 of Ministerial Declaration](#) and [Summary of Country comments on Draft 2.0 of Ministerial Declaration](#)
- F. Other businesses presentation
  - a. [NMHMS](#)- Achieving 2023-2027 Targets through regional cooperation in Blue Carbon
  - b. [MP ODA](#)
- G. [16th East Asian Seas Partnership Council Meeting Photos](#)

## Annex 3. List of Participants

### Annex 3.1 Participants of the 16th East Asian Seas Partnership Council last July 23, 2024 to July 24, 2024

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

##### **Dr. Vann MONYNEATH**

EAS PC Chair and Undersecretary of State  
Ministry of Environment  
Cambodia

##### **Mr. Jonas Leones (Online)**

EAS PC Co-Chair and Undersecretary for  
Policy, Planning and International Affairs  
Department of Environment and Natural  
Resources  
Philippines

##### **Dr. Keita FURUKAWA (Online)**

Technical Session Chair and President of the  
Association for Shore Environment Creation  
(NPO)  
Japan

##### **Dr. Suk-Jae KWON**

Technical Session Co-Chair  
Korea Institute for Ocean Science and  
Technology  
RO Korea

##### **Ms. Danhong CHEN**

Intergovernmental Session Chair and Director  
General  
Department of International Cooperation  
Ministry of Natural Resources of China  
P.R. China

##### **Mr. Le Dai THANG**

Intergovernmental Session Co-Chair and Deputy  
Director  
Bureau of Marine Resources Control and  
Marine Island Environment Protection  
Viet Nam Administration of Seasand Islands  
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment  
Vietnam

#### COUNTRY PARTNERS

#### **CAMBODIA**

##### **Mr. Sith Roath**

Deputy Director General  
Ministry of Environment  
Cambodia

##### **Mr. Seyla Sok**

Chief of Coordination  
Policy Office, Ministry of Environment  
Cambodia

#### **CHINA**

##### **Dr. Wei Zheng**

Deputy Director  
Department of International Cooperation, First  
Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural  
Resources  
P.R. China

##### **Ms. Xinwei YU**

Deputy Division Director  
Department of International Cooperation  
Ministry of Natural Resources  
P.R. China

##### **Dr. Shouqiang Wang**

Project Director  
China-PEMSEA Sustainable Coastal  
Management Cooperation Center  
P.R. China

##### **Ms. Xiaotong Zhu**

Project Assistant  
China-PEMSEA Sustainable Coastal  
Management Cooperation Center  
P.R. China

#### **INDONESIA**

**Mr. Dasrul Chaniago**

Director of Coastal and Marine Pollution and Degradation Control  
Ministry of Environment and Forestry  
Indonesia

**Ms. Julia Labene**

Environmental Impact Control Officer  
Ministry of Environment and Forestry  
Indonesia

**JAPAN**

**Mr. Masashi KAWABE (Online)**

Director for International Ocean Affairs  
Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism  
Japan

**Mr. Yasushi, Mochizuki**

Coordinator for International Ocean Affairs  
Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism  
Japan

**LAO PDR**

**Mr. Ounakone Xayvilaya**

Deputy head of Division  
Department of Water Resources  
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment  
Lao PDR

**PHILIPPINES**

**Ms. Jeslina Gorospe**

Chief, Project Monitoring and Evaluation Division  
Foreign-Assisted and Special Projects Service  
Department of Environment and Natural Resources

**Ms. Hannah Louise Ritual**

Project Evaluation Officer II  
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Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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Dr. Keita Furukawa		Dr. Keita Furukawa
Mr. Yinfeng Guo	Chief Expert for International Cooperation	National Marine Hazard Mitigation
Mr. Yinfeng Guo		Mr. Yinfeng Guo

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