



HISTORY OF TIMOR LESTE'S ENGAGEMENT IN PARTNERSHIPS IN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT FOR THE SEAS OF EAST ASIA

2006

- Joined the East Asian Seas (EAS) Congress and Ministerial Forum 2006, and signed the Haikou Partnership Agreement on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA), thereby adopting the SDS-SEA as a shared regional strategy for coastal and ocean governance in the EAS region, and joining the EAS Partnership Council as one of the 11 PEMSEA Country Partners (and henceforth attending all Council meetings).

2007

- Site scoping and stakeholder consultations for SDS-SEA project development in Timor-Leste

2008

- Joined the regional project GEF/UNDP/UNOPS Implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (2008-2010). The project in Timor Leste focused on contributing to the development of a functional regional mechanism for SDS-SEA implementation; development of national marine and coastal policy; development of ICM programs in the Districts of Manatuto and Liquica focusing on marine resources conservation and alternative livelihood development; and capacity building to support ICM development and implementation

2009

- National project inception workshop (March 2009); establishment of SDS-SEA/ICM Project coordination and management mechanisms at the national level and ICM project sites (Districts of Manatuto and Liquica)
- Initial capacity building for communities in SDS-SEA project sites (training on seaweed farming and environment-friendly salt-making in Manatuto and Liquica)
- Internship at the PEMSEA Resource Facility for Project Coordinator at the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) (September-November 2009)
- Joined the 3rd East Asian Seas Congress and Ministerial Forum; adopted the Manila Declaration together with 10 other countries in the region and committed to strengthen the implementation of ICM for sustainable development and climate change adaptation.
- Signed the Agreement Recognizing the International Legal Personality of PEMSEA together with seven PEMSEA Country Partners
- Representatives from MAF participated in regional training on coastal use zoning and training on innovative technologies for marine environmental monitoring (Manila, 2009)
- Started participation as observer in the annual forum of the PEMSEA Network of Local Governments for Sustainable Coastal Development (PNLG) (2009-2016)

2010

- ICM Training (May 2010, Jakarta and September 2010, Bali) and State of the Coast Reporting Training (Aug. 2010, Jakarta) for representatives from MAF, Liquica and Manatuto
- Development of ICM programs in Manatuto and Liquica focusing on alternative livelihood development initiated

2011

- Training Course on Ecosystem Approaches to Managing Coastal and Marine Resources in Timor Leste (Dili, June 2011); focused on ICM applications for sustainable fisheries management, co-organized by PEMSEA, MAF, US Coral Triangle Initiative Support Program (US-CTI) and U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), participated by representatives from government agencies and districts involved with PEMSEA, CTI, ATSEA, and FAO projects
- Training Workshop on Rapid Appraisal and State of the Coast (SOC) Reporting (Dili), and community consultations and field visits to conduct rapid appraisal in Manatuto and Liquica (July 2011); livelihood scoping report and draft SOC reports prepared
- Development of 5-year SDS-SEA Implementation Plan for Timor Leste identified priorities and needs for improving marine and coastal management in the country
- National initiative: Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030 provides a framework for Timorese people to work together toward a common vision of a prosperous and strong nation, including priorities and targets for environmental protection and management

2012

- ICM orientation of local leaders and ICM Task Teams in Manatuto and Liquica developed integrated action plans for the pilot sites to demonstrate interagency and multisectoral collaborations
- Internship at the PRF focusing on ICM and development of sustainable livelihood programs for 3 representatives from MAF, Manatuto and Liquica (May-July 2012); training on development of alternative livelihood programs and mangrove/coastal rehabilitation conducted in project sites after the internship
- Preparation of draft Marine and Coastal Policy for Timor Leste through stakeholder consultations
- Participated in the 4th EAS Congress held in RO Korea and adopted the Changwon Declaration on Blue Economy together with 10 other countries in the EAS region.

2013

- Site scoping and stakeholder consultations for the fourth phase of GEF/UNDP SDS-SEA project, considering the priorities and needs identified in the 5-year SDS-SEA Implementation Plan
- ICM Study Tour participated by representatives from the municipalities of Manatuto, Liquica and Dili, MAF and National University of Timor Leste (UNTL) to learn good practices in ICM implementation from Batangas, Philippines (December 2013)

2014

- Joined the GEF/UNDP Regional Project on Scaling up SDS-SEA Implementation (2014-2019). With eight participating countries, the project targets to support scaling up of ICM implementation to at least 20% of the regional coastline

2015

- National Project Inception Workshop (Dili, February 2015); MOU signed between PEMSEA and the Government of Timor- Leste through MAF for the implementation of the SDS-SEA project, supporting ICM scaling up in the municipalities of Liquica, Manatuto and Dili.
- Participation of UNTL and Oriental University of Timor-Leste (UNITAL) in the Regional ICM Training of Trainers (August, Batangas, Philippines)
- Study Tour in Bali, Indonesia for representatives from Liquica, Manatuo, Dili, UNTL and UNITAL to learn experiences in ICM implementation and applications to sea turtle and mangrove conservation, mangrove crab culture, beach restoration and home industries, among others.
- Timor-Leste participated in the 5th EAS Congress and Ministerial Forum held in Vietnam, and

together with 10 other countries in the EAS region signed the Da Nang Compact which reaffirms the updated 2015 SDS-SEA as shared regional coastal and marine strategy, and lays down the post-2015 Strategic Targets of PEMSEA. The Compact is the region's support for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other relevant international and regional commitments related to coasts and oceans.

- UNTL and UNITAL were designated as PEMSEA ICM Learning Centers in Timor-Leste and inaugural members of the PEMSEA Network of Learning Centers (PNLC).

2016

- National Workshop on ICM and Relevant Tools for Baseline Assessment, Risk/Vulnerability Assessment and SOC Reporting (Dili, March 2016)
- Training Workshop on the Development of Coastal Strategy for ICM Sites in Timor-Leste (Dili, November 2016)
- National initiative: Decree-Law No. 3/2016 enables the creation of Local Governments including development of local administrative systems, human resource capacity and infrastructure, until the local government becomes fully capable and autonomous from the central government in the development and execution of public policies and programs.

2017

- ICM Study Tour in Sukabumi Regency, Indonesia (January 2017) for representatives from Dili, Manatuto, Liquica and MAF showcased good practices in various aspects of coastal management, including sea turtle conservation, mangrove and coral conservation, eel and shrimp culture, waste management, CCA/DRR, ecotourism, and home industry and livelihood development and management.
- Baseline and risk/vulnerability assessment report for pilot sites in Dili, Manatuto and Liquica and draft SOC reports prepared
- National Oceans Policy (NOP) developed through multi-sectoral consultations, and presented in the UN Oceans Conference (New York, June 2017) as one of the country's voluntary commitments to SDG 14 implementation
- Preparation of National State of the Oceans and Coasts (NSOC) report initiated. The report highlights the contribution of the ocean economy to the country.
- Municipalities of Dili, Liquica and Manatuto inducted as members of the PEMSEA Network of Local Governments for Sustainable Coastal Development (PNLG) (Sanya City, China, December 2017)
- Project preparation for: 1) GEF/UNDP Project on Implementation of the Arafura and Timor Seas Regional and National Strategic Action Programs (ATSEA-2); Second Phase of the Arafura Timor Seas Ecosystem Action (ATSEA) Program (with UNDP-Timor Leste and MAF)

2018

- Consultations for preparation of Coastal Strategy and implementation plans (CS/CSIP) for Dili, Manatuto and Liquica, and action plans for pilot sites
- Promotion of National Oceans Policy to government and partners for adoption
- National SOC report finalized and presented in the EAS Congress
- EAS Congress and Ministerial Forum 2018 - Timor-Leste Signed the Iloilo Ministerial Declaration which commits to pursue PEMSEA's self-sustainability post-2019 and endorsed the SDS-SEA Implementation Plan 2018-2022. The Plan is composed of 3 Priority Management Programs (Biodiversity Conservation and Management; Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management; and Pollution Reduction and Waste Management) and 3 priority Governance Programs (a) Ocean Governance and Strategic Partnerships; b) Knowledge Management and Capacity Development; and c) Blue Economy Investment and Sustainable Financing). The implementation plan is aligned with international commitments such as the UN SDGs, UNFCCC and CBD Aichi Biodiversity targets.

2019

SDS-SEA Project:

- CS/CSIP and action plans completed and presented to local governments for incorporation into annual municipal work and budget plans
- Training and initiation of alternative livelihood programs in pilot sites in Liquica, Manatuto and Dili
- Preparation of National Oceans Policy Implementation Plan initiated
- Finalizing local SOC reports and National SOC report for publication

ATSEA-2 Project:

- Participated in the Regional Inception Workshop and the First Regional Steering Committee (RSC) of the GEF/UNDP ATSEA-2 Project in Bali, Indonesia (November 2019). The project was designed to support the implementation of the first Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the Arafura and Timor Seas (ATS) region, addressing issues on unsustainable fisheries, marine pollution, habitat degradation, declining biodiversity, and impacts of climate change. The participating countries include the four littoral countries in the ATS region, with Timor-Leste, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea as project beneficiaries and Australia providing technical support.

2020

SDS-SEA Project:

- Held National End-of-Project Forum (December) to share ICM and SDS-SEA implementation results.
 - Expanded ICM coverage to 235.20 km (32% of national coastline), with progress in Dili, Manatuto, and Liquiça.
 - Improved METT rating for Atauro Island MPA.
 - Increased household incomes through alternative livelihoods (salt-making, seaweed farming, eco-tourism).
 - Strengthened policy basis for integrated management of marine and coastal areas through the National Ocean Policy and NSOC report.
 - Established inter-agency ICM coordination mechanisms at the municipal level.

ATSEA-2 Project:

- Participated in regional assessments on marine and coastal regional initiatives and their governance mechanisms; climate change vulnerability assessment in the ATS; stock assessment of red snapper fisheries in the ATS; review of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing baselines and legal frameworks; marine and coastal pollution hotspots in the ATS; and mapping of coastal habitats and ecosystems and status of sea turtles in the ATS region.
- Conducted national consultations on the establishment of mechanisms for multi-sectoral collaboration including the National Inter-Ministerial Committee (NIMC) and Stakeholder Partnership Forum
- Completed the pollution hotspot analysis in the south coast of Timor-Leste
- Established the ICM Sub-Task Team for Posto Administrativo Barique in the south coast of Manatuto with representation from key sectors, supported by an official order from the Municipal Administrator. The Barique ICM Sub-Task Team will be working with the Manatuto ICM Task Team established under the SDS-SEA Project.
- Participated in the 2nd ATSEA-2 RSC Meeting in November 2020 (virtual), together with representatives from Australia, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea

National Initiative:

- Timor-Leste's government issued Decree Law no. 6/2020, "establishing the Legal Regime for the protection and conservation of biodiversity. It is an affirmation of the country's commitment to

sustainable marine and coastal ecosystem management in the ATS.

2021

ATSEA-2 Project:

- Participated in regional consultations to develop the design of a regional governance mechanism to promote coordination and collaboration in addressing environmental issues in the ATS region
- Participated in the development of the following documents: Regional EAFM (ecosystem approach to fisheries management) Plan for Red Snappers in the ATS, Regional MPA (marine protected area) Network Design and Roadmap, and Regional Plan of Action for the Protection of Sea Turtles in the ATS
- Hosted national consultations supporting the development of a regional governance mechanism (RGM) in the ATS region under ATSEA-2.
- An 8-member ATSEA-2 Project Coordination Task Force was established to guide the establishment of the National Inter-Ministerial Committee (NIMC)
- Completed report on land- and marine-based pollution in the south coast of Timor-Leste; shared findings in a regional webinar on ATS pollution (May) and at the 2021 EAS Congress workshop; pollution/waste management awareness campaigns and training on plastic recycling done in PA Barique, Município Manatuto (September 2021)
- Completed stock and value-chain assessment of red snapper fisheries in the South Coast of Timor-Leste and developed EAFM Plan
- Conducted awareness raising on MPAs in Manufahi Municipality and marine turtle protection in Com Village; Released 450 sea turtle hatchlings to the sea in Com Village in Nino Konis Santana National Park (August 2021)
- Trainings conducted: 1) Production of affordable fish feeds from the locally available materials in Aubeon village, PA Barique, Manatuto; 2) Fish handling, value addition and financial management skills was done in Manufahi; 3) Boat machine repair and bottom longline fishing in Silihasan sub-village, Betano village, Manufahi; and 4) Significance of forming fishery groups and cooperatives
- Over 2750 trees planted in April 2021 in Betano; Over 2000 tree seedlings, including Fruit Trees, planted in Manatuto Municipality in November 2021
- Completed report on baseline assessment on climate change vulnerability and adaptation options, including ecological and socio-economic conditions in Aubeon and Uma Boco of Barique, Manatuto Municipality (to support development of ICM Plan)
- Participated in the 3rd ATSEA-2 Regional Steering Committee Meeting (December 2021, virtual), together with representatives from Australia, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea.

TL CSA:

- Timor-Leste representatives participated in the EAS Congress (International Conference, Ministerial Forum, and PNLG Forum) hosted by Cambodia (hybrid events due to COVID-19)

2022

ATSEA:

- Endorsed, along with Australia, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea, the Regional Marine Protected Area (MPA) Network Design, the Regional Program of Action for the Protection of Sea Turtles in the ATS region .
- Participated in national and regional consultations on the design of the ATS Regional Governance Mechanism and updating of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) identifying priority transboundary environmental issues in the ATS region. National Country Synthesis Report prepared to serve as input to the TDA.

- Established National Inter-Ministerial Committee (NIMC) for ATSEA
- Finalized Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Plan and Strategic Implementation Plan for Barique, Manatuto and initiated implementation
 - Trainings conducted: 1) Establishment of cooperatives (May 2022) which led to the establishment of a women-led cooperative (Tok Derek Cooperative) officially launched by the Representative from Secretary of State for Cooperatives in June 2022 (with 53 participants); 2) Financial accountability and management for women cooperative members and leaders (27 June to 01 July 2022); and 3) establishment of drought resilient home gardens in Manatuto and Manufahi
- Completed and initiated implementation of the EAFM (Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management) plan for Red Snapper in the Timor Seas.
 - Conducted local trainings on sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in Viqueque, Manufahi, Manatuto, and Lautem (161 trained)
 - Installed Fish Aggregating Devices (FAD/RUMPON) as part of livelihoods program in communities near Nino Konis Santana (NKS) National Park to improve economic viability of fishers
- Supported NPOA-IUU: Conducted fishing boat marking exercise in fishing vessels operating in the South Coast; Conducted training on Independent Monitoring System for enumerators and analysts.
- Conducted training in Betanu and Suai with support from the Ministry of Petroleum and ANPM (National Agency of Mineral and Petroleum) to enhance awareness, knowledge and capacity on oil pollution management (70 trained)
- Participated in the Regional Exchange on Oil Spill Preparedness and Response in Singapore
- Completed socio-economic, biophysical, and sustainable financing plan reports to support the updating of the management plan for the NKS National Park and the establishment of a new MPA management plan in Manufahi
- Participated in the 4th ATSEA-2 Regional Steering Committee Meeting (November 2022, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea), together with representatives from Australia, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea.

TL CSA:

- Participated in EAS Partnership Council Meeting via Zoom in August 2022.
- Participated in the PNLG Forum in Tangerang Regency, Indonesia in November 2022

2023

ATSEA:

- Participated in further national and regional consultations to achieve consensus on the design of the ATS Regional Governance Mechanism; finalize the updated Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA); and update the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) addressing priority transboundary environmental issues in the ATS region in the next 10 years.
- Endorsed, along with Australia, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea, the following key regional documents:
 - Updated Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis for the ATS region (June 2023)
 - Model for the ATS Regional Governance Mechanism, and associated Transition Plan and Financial Plan (ATSEA-2 Regional Steering Committee (RSC) Meetings in July and November 2023.
 - Updated Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the ATS region for 2024-2033 which outlines actions to address transboundary environmental concerns including

unsustainable fisheries, habitat degradation, pollution, and climate change (5th RSC Meeting, November 2023).

- Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (VA) Guidebook for the ATS region (5th RSC Meeting, November 2023)
- In support of sustainable fisheries: 1) Convened National Fisheries Advisory Committee (NFAC) and conducted local workshops to support the implementation of the EAFM plan; and 2) Conducted trainings on boat repair and maintenance for fishermen from Lautem, Viqueque, Manatutu, Manufahi, and Covalima.
- In support of coastal and marine biodiversity conservation: 1) Conducted training on MPA management for MPA managers from NKS National Park, Atauro, Liquica, and Manufahi; 2) Initiated a pilot project in the NKS National Park which facilitated the construction of turtle protection fence, turtle ponds and fishponds resulting to conservation of 1,200 turtles and 400 turtle hatchlings; 3) Completed an assessment of MPA Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) score for NKS National Park which showed significant improvement (from a score of 24 in 2016 to 46 in June 2023); and 4) Developed a draft Ministerial Decree for the establishment of a new MPA from Manufahi to Manatuto covering 51,000 hectares
- Participated in consultations on the updating of the National Ocean Policy for Timor-Leste

Marine Plastics ODA Project:

- Participated in the Inception Workshop for the Marine Plastics ODA Project (July, Manila), with representatives from MALFF, MTE, MSA, and local governments of Dili, Liquiça, Manatuto, and Atauro.
- Selected Marine Plastics and Litter Monitoring Institutes: UNTL, UNITAL, and Roman Louan.
- Monitoring institutes joined the Training of Trainers on Marine Plastics and Litter Monitoring (September, Bali, Indonesia).
- Conducted training on Plastic Analysis Characterization Study in Dili (November), with participation from national agencies and local government representatives.
- Conducted ocular inspection of potential beach monitoring sites (November, Dili, Liquica and Manatuto).
- Participated in the 1st Regional Steering Committee Meeting on the Marine Plastics ODA Project (December, On-line).

TL CSA:

- Facilitated the updating of the National Ocean Policy for Timor-Leste and its presentation to the Council of Ministers (COM); The COM formally adopted the National Ocean Policy on April 12, 2023.
- Conducted SDS-SEA/ICM reorientation of new local executives and ICM Task Team members in Manatuto and Liquica
- Participated in the 15th EAS PC Meeting in Hanoi Vietnam on July 2025
- Participated in Annual PNLG Forum in Xiamen, China on November 2025

2024

ATSEA-2 Project:

- Participated in Technical Working Group meetings on the development of the 2024 ATSEA Ministerial Declaration to adopt the updated ATS SAP 2024-2033 and ATSEA RGM, and in the Senior Government Officials Meeting (SGOM) in Brisbane, Australia, on 25 June 2024, to finalize the Ministerial Declaration.
- Completed the National Action Programme and Financial Plan in support of the ATS SAP 2024-2033; Conducted a Mainstreaming Workshop to facilitate integration of priority actions in the SAP and NAP

into national programs and budgets

- Participated in the ATSEA-2 Project's Final Regional Steering Committee Meeting in Bali, Indonesia, on 10 December 2024 and shared key project results.

Marine Plastics ODA Project:

- Established the National Project Board of Timor-Leste (NPB-TL) and hosted the 1st National Project Board (NPB) Meeting for the Marine Plastics ODA Project (February, Dili).
- Signed MOU and LOA between PEMSEA and Marine Plastics and Litter Monitoring Institutes (February).
- Initiated marine plastics and litter monitoring activities across six sites: Dili (1), Liquiça (1), Manatuto (2), and Atauro (2) (March-December).
- Participated in the 1st Learning Exchange Program on Marine Plastic Waste Management in the Republic of Korea (April, Seoul), with representatives from MALFF, MTE, MSA, and local governments.
- Contracted a National Consultant for Baseline Assessment of Timor-Leste (October)
- Conducted the Plastic Analysis Characterization Study (PACS) in all project sites (November).
- Participated in the Marine Plastics ODA Project Workshop (November, Xiamen, China), with representatives from MALFF, MTE, MSA, local governments, and monitoring institutes.
- Signed MOU between PEMSEA and MALFF for continued implementation of the Marine Plastics ODA Project (November, Xiamen, China), during the 2024 East Asian Seas (EAS) Congress.
- Participated in the 2nd Regional Steering Committee Meeting on the Marine Plastics ODA Project (December, Manila).

TL CSA:

- Initiated consultations to develop pilot projects addressing local priorities in Manatuto, Liquica, Dili and Atauro
- Participated in 2024 EAS Congress Events - Youth Forum, April 2024, in RO Korea; and International Conference, Ministerial Forum, Annual PNLG Forum in Xiamen, China on December 6-8, 2024

2025

ATSEA:

- Participated in the First ALDFG Regional Workshop held in Cairns, Australia from 4-7 February 2025, together with participants from Australia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Timor-Leste. The workshop discussed the situational analysis on abandoned, lost and otherwise discarded fishing gears (ALDFG), also known as 'ghost nets', which adversely affect marine life, for the purpose of discussing targeted interventions and developing a Regional Action Plan.

Marine Plastics ODA Project:

- Convened the 2nd National Project Board of Timor-Leste (NPB-TL) Meeting to review project progress and plan upcoming activities (February, Dili).
- Continued implementation of Marine Plastics and Litter Monitoring, ongoing until 2028 across six sites.
- Participated in the 2nd Learning Exchange Program on Marine Plastic Waste Management and the 10th Our Ocean Conference (April, Busan, Republic of Korea), with delegates from MALFF, MTE, MSA, and local governments.
- Completed the Baseline Assessment of Marine Plastics in Timor-Leste (June).
- Conducted an orientation of the four NGOs in Timor-Leste for the Marine Environment Protector

(MEP) Program in Timor-Leste (June, Dili).

- Interviewed two candidates for the pilot project concept development in Timor-Leste (June, Dili).
- Signed a revised Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Forestry (MALFF) and the PEMSEA Resource Facility for the Implementation of the Marine Plastics ODA Project in Timor-Leste (Oct 3, 2025, Manila)
- Participated in the 3rd Regional Steering Committee Meeting on the Marine Plastics ODA Project (December, online).

TL CSA:

- Pilot projects addressing local priorities in Manatuto, Liquica, Dili and Atauro identified; project proposals developed and submitted by the four municipalities; contract between PRF and MALLF developed to support the implementation of agreed pilot projects.
- Participated in 2025 EAS Partnership Council Meeting in Quezon City, Philippines, July 2025 and the PNLG Forum in Jakarta, Indonesia in September 2025

2026

Marine Plastics ODA Project

- Contracted a National Consultant for Pilot Project Concept Development at the Four ODA Project Sites of Timor-Leste (January)
- Convened a National Project Launch of the Marine Plastics ODA Project, co-organized by the MALFF, in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MTE) and PEMSEA (February).



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