



PEMSEA Network on Local Governments (PNLG) for Sustainable Coastal Development

Background

The PEMSEA Network of Local Governments (PNLG) for Sustainable Coastal Development was established in 2001 as the Regional Network of Local Governments (RNLG) and officially launched as PNLG in December 2006 in Haikou, PR China, with the signing of the PNLG Charter and Code of Conduct by 18 founding local government members. It is a unique regional community of local governments that are working towards sustainable growth and development in the East Asian Region through integrated coastal management (ICM).

As a Non-Country Partner of the East Asian Seas Partnership Council, and guided by its vision of, “Coastal areas throughout the East Asian Region are managed sustainably”, the PNLG has played a critical role in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA) by serving as the primary vehicle for ICM implementation and scaling up and directly contributing to the 25% target of covering the regional coastline with ICM by 2021.

The PNLG’s mission is “to serve as a network of local governments in the region, which, along with their stakeholders, shall promote the application of ICM as an effective management framework to achieve sustainable coastal development”.

The PNLG’s objectives are:

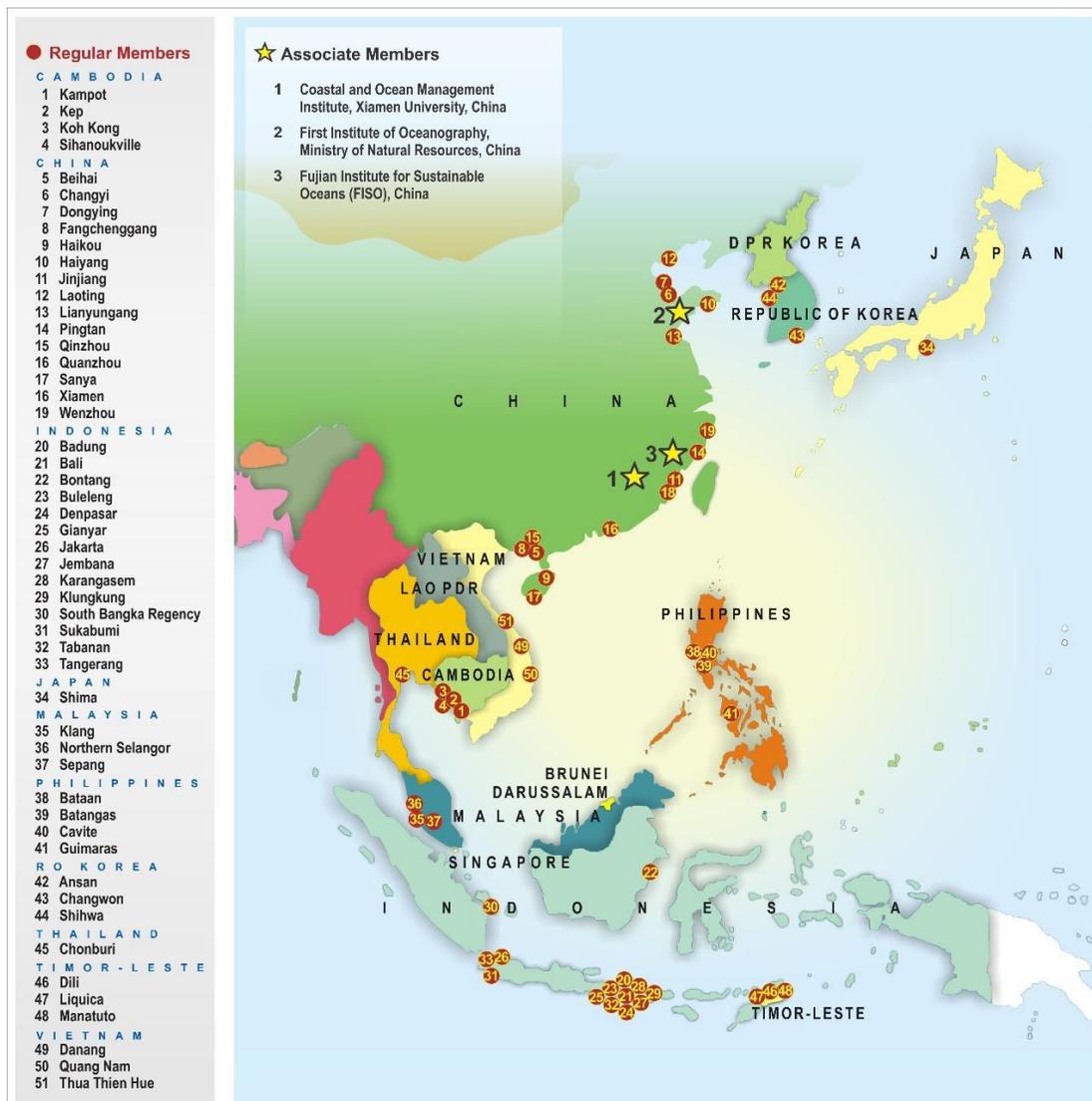
- 1) To enhance the capacity of local governments to plan, develop, and manage their coastal and marine resources for sustainable use;
- 2) To promote the application of ICM approaches, processes and tools in coastal planning, development and management;
- 3) To facilitate the linkage between scientific/technical institutions and local governments, in order to provide capacity building and scientific input to local government decision-making, policies and programs;
- 4) To implement innovative financing mechanisms and partnership arrangements for environmental investments with international and national financial institutions, private investors and operating companies, where appropriate;
- 5) To strengthen multi-stakeholder involvement in managing coastal and marine resources, in order to enhance societal and corporate responsibility for sustainable development of natural resource; and
- 6) To enhance local coastal governance, as well as inter-agency and multi-lateral coordination mechanisms, in dealing with coastal and ocean management issues.

The PNLG Secretariat is headquartered in Xiamen, PR China, and hosted by the Xiamen Municipal Government. The PNLG Secretariat is primarily funded by the operational funds provided by Xiamen Municipal Government. Grants and financial assistance from PEMSEA and other partners, including the membership fees and other fund-raising activities support the various capacity building activities of the network.

Since 2001, the PNLG has been holding an annual forum, where local government members take turn in hosting. The annual event includes a meeting of the General Assembly, its governing body headed by a President and Vice-President, and a technical workshop focusing on critical governance and management concerns and new developments that are of interest to the local governments.

The PNLG is the best example of local level partnership, relying on shared ideas, experiences, and approaches to managing the coastal and marine areas. While country-specific policies and strategies for sustainable development are crafted in alignment with the SDGs, these are translated on-the-ground through the implementation of management programs that address a broad range of issues, i.e., biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation, pollution reduction, sustainable fisheries and livelihood development. The number of local governments developing and implementing ICM systems has increased consistently since PEMSEA has pioneered and demonstrated the approach in the East Asian Region in 1994. As of 2021, the PNLG has 51 local government members and 3 associate members (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Location map of PNLG local government members and associate members.



PNLG Milestones

- **2006:** Inaugural Meeting and Launching of the PNLG with the signing of the PNLG Charter, Haikou, PR China during the 2006 East Asian Seas Congress.
- **2007:** PNLG Forum hosted by Da Nang City, Viet Nam with the theme, “Addressing Coastal Security by Investing in Natural and Man-made Hazards Prevention and Management”.
- **2008:** PNLG Forum hosted by Sihanoukville, Cambodia with the theme, “Water Resources Protection, Utilization and Management”.
- **2009:** PNLG Forum hosted by Bataan Province, Philippines during the 2009 East Asian Seas Congress; PNLG became a Non-Country Partner of the EAS Partnership Council.
- **2010:** PNLG Forum hosted by Chonburi Province with the theme, “Strengthening Oil Spill Preparedness and Response at the Local Level”; Preparation of PNLG Strategic Action Plan 2011-2015 approved by the General Assembly.
- **2011:** PNLG Forum hosted by Dongying City, PR China; Dongying Declaration on Building a Blue Economy through ICM signed; PNLG SAP 2011-2015 adopted supporting the implementation of the Dongying Declaration.
- **2012:** PNLG Forum hosted by Changwon City, RO Korea during the 2012 East Asian Seas Congress; Progress on SAP implementation and achieving the Dongying Declaration targets reviewed.
- **2013:** PNLG Forum hosted by Shima City, Japan with the theme, “Achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, New Satoumi and Vitalization of Coastal Areas through ICM”; Progress on SAP implementation and achieving the Dongying Declaration targets reviewed.
- **2014:** PNLG Forum hosted by Port Klang, Malaysia with the theme, “Governance and Participation in ICM”; Progress on SAP implementation and Achieving the Dongying Declaration Targets reviewed.

DONGYING DECLARATION TARGETS

1. Mainstream ICM strategies, objectives and targets into the local government development plans for sustainable marine and coastal development;
2. Implement the PEMSEA ICM Code and Recognition System across 50 percent of the PNLG local government membership by 2015;
3. Apply the State of the Coasts reporting system across 100 percent of the PNLG local government membership by 2015;
4. Co-organize an annual regional forum for Local Chief Executives on ICM scaling up, in collaboration with the PEMSEA Resource Facility and the Xiamen World Ocean Week;
5. Co-organize site-specific capacity development programs, in collaboration with responsible national agencies, local government networks and the PEMSEA Resource Facility; and
6. Achieve a 100 percent increase in PNLG membership by 2015.

- **2015:** PNLG Forum hosted by Da Nang City, Viet Nam during the 2015 East Asian Seas Congress; Reflections on the achievements of SAP implementation and Dongying Declaration Targets and mapping of sustainable development agenda for coastal cities and communities beyond 2015 discussed; preparation of PNLG SAP 2016-2021 approved by the General Assembly.
- **2016:** PNLG Forum hosted by Ansan City, RO Korea with the theme, “Sustainable Future Cities in the Coastal Area through UN SDGs”; PNLG SAP 2016-2021 adopted which aligned the ICM programs of the PNLG members with SDG 6, 11, 13 and 14; Creation of online reporting system to showcase PNLG action approved by the General Assembly.
- **2017:** PNLG Forum hosted by Sanya City, PR China with the theme, “Conservation to Ecological Restoration of Coastal Areas for Blue Economy”; PNLG SAP Tracking System introduced.
- **2018:** PNLG Forum hosted by Guimaras Province, Philippines; during the 2018 East Asian Seas Congress; Guimaras reported on progress made in tracking its SDG commitments using the PNLG SAP Tracking System.
- **2019:** PNLG Forum hosted by Xiamen, PR China with the theme, “Building Blue Economy through ICM: Reaffirming PNLG’s Commitment to the Dongying Declaration”; Progress in SAP reporting using the PNLG SAP Tracking System reviewed; Marine Debris Prevention Initiative launched.
- **2020:** PNLG Virtual Forum hosted by Xiamen, PR China with the theme, “Marine Eco-civilization, Blue Development”; Assessing the effectiveness and impacts of ICM systems discussed.

Tracking the PNLG’s Progress: Contribution to Global Targets and Blue Economy Development

The PEMSEA Resource Facility (PRF) in coordination with the PNLG Secretariat developed the online PNLG SAP Tracking System that is designed to capture and consolidate the PNLG members' progress and achievements in implementing programs related to their SDG targets (<http://seaknowledgebank.net/pnlg-tracking-system/pnlg-directory>).

PRF facilitated the creation of PNLG accounts in the Tracking System and provided guidelines and technical assistance in completing the various pages of the system. In 2018, half of the 48 members have provided the information needed, however, only 7 members have achieved more than 50% completion (see *Table 1*).

Follow up emails have been sent to the 48 members prior to the 2019 PNLG Forum to determine the assistance needed to populate the system. In view of the significance of the reporting system in capturing and showcasing the PNLG’s efforts in localizing the SDGs individually and collectively, we urge the members to revisit the tracking system and complete the required data and information. Please contact the PNLG Secretariat (pnlg2015@163.com) or PRF (info@pemsea.org) for assistance in completing the needed information.

Table 1. Status of completion of PNLG SAP Tracking System.

ICM Site	Country	Incomplete Pages	Estimate % Completed
1. Kampot	Cambodia	1, 3, 4	85%
2. Kep	Cambodia	1, 3, 4	75%
3. Koh Kong Province	Cambodia	1, 2, 3, 4	75%
4. Preah Sihanouk Province	Cambodia	1, 2, 3, 4	20%
5. Shima City	Japan	2, 3, 4	45%
6. Bali Province	Indonesia	1, 2, 3, 4	5%
7. Sukabumi Regency	Indonesia	1, 2, 3, 4	5%
8. Tangerang Regency	Indonesia	1, 2, 3, 4	20%
9. Northern Selangor	Malaysia	1, 2, 3, 4	12.5%
10. Port Klang	Malaysia	1, 2, 3, 4	10%
11. Sepang	Malaysia	1, 2, 3, 4	10%
12. Xiamen	People's Republic of China	1, 2, 3, 4	10%
13. Bataan	Philippines	1, 4	80%
14. Batangas	Philippines	1, 2, 4	90%
15. Province of Cavite	Philippines	2, 4	50%
16. Province of Guimaras	Philippines	4	95%
17. Ansan City	Republic of Korea	2, 3, 4	25%
18. Masan Bay	Republic of Korea	1, 2, 3, 4	20%
19. Chonburi	Thailand	1, 2, 3, 4	20%
20. Dili	Timor-Leste	1, 2, 3, 4	12.5%
21. Liquiça Municipality	Timor-Leste	1, 2, 3, 4	12.5%
22. Manatuto Municipality	Timor-Leste	1, 2, 3, 4	12.5%
23. Da Nang	Việt Nam	1, 2, 3, 4	12.5%
24. Quang Nam	Việt Nam	1, 2, 3, 4	10%
25. Thua Thien Hue	Việt Nam	1, 2, 3, 4	12.5%
26. Other members not specified above		1, 2, 3, 4	0%

A Marine Debris Prevention Initiative was launched during the 2019 PNLG Forum calling the members to strengthen policies, regulations, institutional arrangements, monitoring and reporting, data sharing and experience sharing on marine debris management and advocating for a Blue Citizen action to encourage participation from a broad range of stakeholders.

Moreover, the 2019 PNLG Policy Forum on Blue Economy has provided a platform for the member local governments and partners to share experiences and insights on blue economy approaches, identify policy concerns and options to facilitate blue economy development at the local level. Fifteen (15) PNLG members shared the following locally-driven initiatives with blue economy components:

- Xiamen: Rehabilitation and clean-up of Wuyuan Bay and beach restoration in the Guanyinshan Business District;
- Beihai City: Use of innovative technologies in emerging industries to reduce environmental impacts;
- Sukabumi: Establishing the Ciletuh Palabuhanratu Geopark which was recognized by UNESCO due its geological richness and high biodiversity;

- Batangas Province: Establishing and sustaining the Batangas Environment Laboratory, the first of its kind in the Philippines;
- Cavite Province: Good governance and best practices in solid waste management
- Guimaras: Transformation into a green province by promoting the use of renewable energy and establishing sustainable tourism practices;
- Sihanoukville: Management of the first nationally declared marine protected area in Cambodia;
- Selangor: Fireflies conservation in Selangor for ecotourism development;
- Manatuto: Use of traditional and indigenous and local knowledge in conservation and coastal management;
- Da Nang: Development and implementation of integrated environmental monitoring program in support of the Environmental City Initiative;
- Chonburi: Addressing IUU fishing; pollution reduction; coral conservation and restoration that contributed to sustainable tourism development;
- Dongying: Seagrass-shell-seaweed ecosystem restoration using the muddy offshore multi-level ecosystem construction and restoration approach;
- Bataan: Development of long-term plan for the province's transitioning into a carbon neutral province which include greenhouse gas inventory, identification of emission sources, impositions of carbon tax, etc.;
- Bontang: Development and implementation of an integrated land and marine spatial plan with measurable ecological, social and economic impacts and,
- Tangerang: Development of Mangrove Conservation Center and implementation of Mangrove Rehabilitation Plan.

In the same year, a joint PNLG and PEMSEA Network of Learning Centers (PNLC) learning event was also initiated. It is envisioned that the joint learning events could include:

- a) Joint PNLG-PNLC Science-Policy Forum: as platform of sharing of progress on local implementation of science-based policy making focusing on specific management issue (e.g., marine debris, climate change adaptation, water use and conservation, etc.); identifying knowledge gaps and research and development needs; application of new and innovative technologies and opportunities for partnerships, better interfacing between science and policy and appreciation of PNLG's relevance and contribution to science-based global sustainable development agenda.
- b) Joint ICM Executive Training Course: as platform for discussing management strategies and role of local executives in ICM implementation. Through participatory training methodologies such as case studies, knowledge exchange sessions, field works/study tour, the course aims to create awareness among top local executives and policy makers on the importance of the coastal resources, need for an integrated approach for the management of coastal resources and provide them with management options applicable in their respective areas.
- c) Joint Study Tours can provide Local Chief Executives (LCEs) an understanding of the role of a local government in the implementation of an ICM program and the benefits of being part of the PNLG. Study tours can provide opportunities to exchange experiences and insights on the development and implementation of ICM with their counterparts at various ICM learning sites. LCEs can observe the environmental improvements and socioeconomic benefits from implementation of ICM and in turn strengthen the capacity of their respective sites in various aspects of ICM development and implementation.

Furthering the Vision, Mission and Goals of the PNLG

With the completion of the PNLG SAP 2016-2021, the PNLG's accomplishments are currently under review in preparation for the development of a new Strategic Action Plan for 2022-2030 in alignment with the timeline of the new SDS-SEA Implementation Plan (2022-2030) and global sustainability targets of the UN SDGs to 2030.

A framework of new targets, indicators and corresponding actions as the network's focus through 2030 will be crafted in close coordination with the members with a view of launching the new SAP at the EAS Congress on December 1-2, 2021. The PNLG Secretariat with PRF's assistance will also identify measures to improve and strengthen the monitoring, evaluation and reporting of SAP implementation.

For further information, please contact the PNLG secretariat (pnlg2015@163.com) or PEMSEA Resource Facility (info@pemsea.org).