



THE EAST ASIAN SEAS CONGRESS 2015

Global Targets

Local Benefits

Setting the Sustainable Development Agenda for the Seas of East Asia beyond 2015

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A Decade of Partnerships in Sustainable Development of the Seas of East Asia: Synergies and Achievements

Workshop 3 Conclusions and Recommendations: Coastal and Ocean Governance in the Seas of East Asia: from Nation to Region

Prepared by the following Chairs, Co-Chairs and facilitators based on workshop presentations, moderated panel discussions and interactions between panellists and participants:

Ms. Lena Kern, Chief Adviser, GIZ/ SSME Project

Dr. Alan White, The Nature Conservancy

Dr. Gunnar Kullenberg, Former Executive Secretary, IOC/UNESCO

Mr. Hiroshi Terashima, President, Ocean Policy Research Institute – Sasakawa Peace Foundation

Dr. Chua Thia-Eng, Chair Emeritus of the EAS Partnership Council

Mr. Yinfeng Guo, PEMSEA

Workshop Focus

1. The focus of presentations and discussions held during the workshop were as follows:
 - responses, progress and achievements of EAS programs and initiatives in terms of institutional sustainability, program implementation and monitoring, as well as status and opportunities of coordination and collaboration;
 - the usefulness of SDS-SEA as the platform and framework for coordination and collaboration among East Asian Seas programs in achieving the SDGs.
 - partnership modalities and practices among EAS programs and initiatives, and with the business community, private sector, CSOs, academia, city networks and other stakeholders that bring

mutual benefits and transparency, as well as enhance the participation of stakeholders while contributing to the achievement of the SDGs, in particular Goals 14 and 6.

- progress and practices regarding the development and implementation of national policies and action plans in alignment with the frameworks provided by UNCLOS, Agenda 21, WSSD Plan of Implementation and The Future We Want.

Workshop Conclusions

2. **Stable and well-established regional institutional mechanisms are a prerequisite to long term programs involving the protection and management of coastal and marine ecosystems**, and may include, but not be limited to, functional secretariats, resource facilities, regional activity centers and technical working groups, most of which are multinational in structure.
3. **Sustainable finance mechanisms are critical to long-term functionality** of EAS initiatives. Mobilizing contributions from countries and setting up trust funds can enhance long term financial revenues for operation of the initiatives.
4. **Broad-based strategies and action plans encompassing the various social, economic and ecological challenges to sustainable development of coasts and oceans in the region** provide useful frameworks and platforms for strengthening collaboration and coordination of efforts across regional and country-driven programs and implementation of the SDGs, in particular those related with oceans (SDG 14) and water (SDG 6).
5. **Coordination and participation of concerned parties** (e.g., academia, government, non-governmental, civil organizations, private enterprises, etc.) are important and necessary in order to achieve the common vision of sustainable development.
6. **Regional, national and local cooperation is required in order to manage a transboundary environment like the ocean**, and to find solutions to adapt to climate change as part of ocean governance.
7. **It takes time to develop and implement an effective M&E system** which is usually only possible in mature programs.
8. **Private investments and management offer an alternative approach in some countries** to achieve sustainable funding and management options for implementing EAS programs and activities.
9. **A Comprehensive Ocean Act can be an ideal driving engine for ocean governance** at the national level. Individual national laws, relevant protocols and action plans can strengthen ocean governance measures in fulfilling national and international obligations through appropriate regulations and planning processes.
10. **Transparency in legislative design and implementation** from international treaties to the national legislative level is crucial.

Workshop Recommendations

11. **The national policy process and regional and international cooperation should be mutually reinforcing**, as a nation is the basic constituent of international society. To achieve the targets under the framework of UNCLOS, Agenda 21, WSSD Plan of Implementation, The Future We Want and the SDGs, as well as relevant regional strategies and strategic action plans and programs, there is a need to align national policies and action plans with regional and international obligations.
12. **All regional EAS initiatives need to be very sensitive to local, sub-national and national capacities** to undertake technical work, planning, financial planning and governance in order to ensure more sustainable outcomes.
13. **Regional and national plans of action need to be complimentary and better aligned** in order to ensure synergy and optimal leverage of resources from national and international sources and strong political will.
14. **Commonalities and opportunities for collaboration among EAS regional and sub-regional initiatives need to be proactively pursued**, and working agreements should be formed among regional programs through both formal and informal means, in order to enable efficiencies of the respective work programs, minimize overlaps and duplication of effort, and clarify roles, functions, capacities and needs in the implementation of programs and initiatives.
15. **EAS regional initiatives should develop innovative and self-sustaining financing mechanisms** in order to facilitate implementation of regional strategies, action plans and programs by collaborating countries.
16. **Effective M&E systems of regional strategies and programs need:**
 - good baseline data in order to measure change;
 - good information systems that track data and make it publically available and enhance potential analysis;
 - alignment of goals and objectives and indicators across ministries and sectors in a country and at the regional scale; and
 - process as well as outcome (impact) indicators.
17. **National ocean policies should aim at the nation's well-being, security and prosperity** in a balanced manner with equitable attention to local, national and regional management levels.
18. **There is a need to improve the links, dialogue and understanding between local actions, community actions and governments.** Governance should be understood in a much broader and inclusive sense rather than just as a centralized policy shaping mechanism.
19. **The roles of coastal and marine ecosystems in modern society and the impacts of humans on their health should be better understood** based on the results of best available scientific research and analysis. Such information should be integrated into school curriculums, from grade school to college, in an effort to raise awareness, nurture ocean stewardship and ensure compliance with policies and laws.