



29 April 2015

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**Coordinating Body on the  
Seas of East Asia  
(COBSEA)**

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Twenty-second Intergovernmental  
Meeting of the Coordinating Body on  
the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA)  
Bangkok, Thailand, 27-28 April 2015

**REPORT OF THE 22<sup>ND</sup> INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING  
OF THE COORDINATING BODY ON THE SEAS OF EAST ASIA**

**Note by the Secretariat**

Attention is drawn to footnotes to paragraph 66 on page 11 as well as the last paragraph of Annex IV, Resolution 1, on page 19, with corrections to erroneous information contained in those paragraphs.

## **AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE MEETING**

### ***1.1 Welcome address and opening remarks by the Chair of the 21st intergovernmental meeting of COBSEA and representative of the Government of Thailand, and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).***

1. Mr. Niphon Phongsuwan, Marine and Coastal Ecosystem Resources and Environmental Research Specialist, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, welcomed delegates to the 22<sup>nd</sup> intergovernmental meeting of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA). He recalled the importance of COBSEA as a regional platform for collaboration on the issues related to the marine and coastal environment. He also emphasized the key moment in time of the meeting and the need to take decisions that would strengthen the institutional capacity of the COBSEA Secretariat.

2. Ms. Mette L. Wilkie, Director, Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), delivered a welcome address to the meeting. She began by thanking all the delegations for participating in such an important meeting that would determine the future of COBSEA. She recalled that it had been 34 years since the original Regional Action Plan for the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Marine and Coastal Areas in the East Asian Region was adopted and more than 20 years since its revision in 1994. In this sense, she mentioned that back in 1981 the region had challenges related to how to provide basic services to a growing population and how to ensure that the natural resources could be utilized to spur economic growth. With this progression, naturally, there was an increase in pressures towards the marine environment, mainly from land-based sources of pollution and extraction of resources, affecting its health and productivity. She reminded that it was in this context that the resolve of the COBSEA participating countries to tackle these foreseeable challenges and to take action, paved the way towards the agreement of the Regional Action Plan. She recalled the strong call from the global community acknowledging that the link between the environment, social and economic prosperity are intertwined and unbreakable and explained the ongoing discussions in the United Nations system regarding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the post-2015 development agenda that will set the course of international cooperation for the next 20 years. She made the case for the role of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans as regional multilateral environmental agreements in the future implementation of the SDGs and in the overall governance of oceans, as had been highlighted many times by member states at the UN General Assembly. She emphasized that the present meeting would conclude with a decision on the location of the COBSEA Secretariat. She mentioned the importance of having the participating countries of COBSEA to deliver on their pledged contributions to the East Asian Seas Trust Fund. She concluded by thanking all the delegations once again and wished successful deliberations.

### ***1.2 Presentation of credentials***

3. In accordance with Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, applicable mutatis mutandis to this meeting, the Bureau of the Meeting is to examine the credentials of the representatives of countries participating in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Intergovernmental Meeting of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia.

4. As of 10.00 hours of 28 April 2015, the representatives of the nine COBSEA Participating Countries, invited to participate in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Intergovernmental Meeting of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia were in attendance. Seven (7) States had

submitted to the Meeting Secretariat their formal credentials signed by Heads of State, Heads of Government or Ministers of Foreign Affairs, which were found to be in order:

Cambodia, China (People's Republic of), Malaysia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore and Viet Nam.

5. The credentials issued by or on behalf of the Head of State or Government or by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, had been received by facsimile or in photocopy for the representatives of the following two (2) Participating Countries:

Philippines and Viet Nam

6. Information concerning the appointment of representatives participating in the meeting had been communicated to the Meeting Secretariat by a letter from other government offices or authorities in the Ministries of Environment, for the representatives of the following two (2) countries participating in the meeting:

Indonesia and Thailand.

7. It was approved by the Meeting that both the credentials signed by or on behalf of the Head of State or Government or Minister of Foreign Affairs, received in originals, as well as the credentials signed by or on behalf of Head of State or Government or Minister of Foreign Affairs, received in facsimile or in photocopy, be also accepted on condition that the originals be submitted to the Meeting Secretariat as soon as feasible. This brought to a total of seven (7) the Participating Countries whose representatives were participating in the meeting with credentials found to be in order.

8. It was agreed by the Meeting that the representatives of the two (2) Participating Countries without credentials found to be in order could participate in the meeting but could not exercise their right to vote. However, the meeting later accepted as appropriate credentials, the letter presented by the Deputy Minister for Environmental Degradation Control and Climate Change of Indonesia, stating that the credential letter was already under process of being signed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and that it would be submitted to the Secretariat as soon as issued.

## **AGENDA ITEM 2: ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS**

### **1.3 Designation of Officers**

9. In accordance with the applicable Rules of Procedure, the Participating Countries were invited to elect a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and a Rapporteur.

10. The Meeting agreed to elect the following officers:

<b>Chairperson</b>	Mr. Niphon Phongsuwan, Marine and Coastal Ecosystem Resources and Environmental Research Specialist, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Thailand
<b>Vice-Chairperson</b>	Datuk Dr. Abdul Rahim bin Nik, Deputy Secretary General, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Malaysia
<b>Rapporteur</b>	Mr. Hazri Hassan, Director International Policy, International Relations Division, Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, Singapore

The list of participants is attached as **Annex 1** of this report.

#### **1.4 Adoption of the agenda**

11. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to introduce the provisional agenda for the meeting, presented as working document UNEP/DEPI/COBSEA IGM22/1. He noted that the provisional agenda and the annotated provisional agenda had been circulated, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure applicable to the meeting, six weeks in advance of the meeting. After considering the provisional agenda submitted by the Secretariat, the meeting adopted the agenda attached as **Annex II** to this report.

12. The Chairperson invited the Participating Countries to make short opening statements related to their support to COBSEA. .

13. The delegate from Cambodia stated that Cambodia has participated in COBSEA since 1994. He stressed Cambodia's commitment to COBSEA, noting the many benefits it provides and announced the increased contribution to COBSEA as a signal of this commitment. He stressed that this is an important meeting that would decide the location of the COBSEA Secretariat. And looked forward to discussing with the other Participating Countries.

14. The delegate from the People's Republic of China recalled that China joined in 1994 and they consider COBSEA as an important mechanism for regional cooperation. The People's Republic of China attaches great importance to marine and coastal issues, and in order to address the financial difficulties COBSEA is facing, China put forward a proposal to host the COBSEA Secretariat. She concluded by stating that a decision should be based on the financial sustainability of COBSEA.

15. The delegate from Indonesia stated appreciation of UNEP in organizing the meeting and stated the importance attached to COBSEA. He mentioned that the sustainability of COBSEA should be kept in mind as the meeting reached its decisions, and that those issues would be discussed in this meeting.

16. The delegate from the Republic of Korea congratulated the organizers for the efforts in the organization of the meeting. The delegate mentioned that the Republic of Korea hoped that the meeting would reach agreement on the location of the COBSEA Secretariat and reaffirmed the government's decision to offer to host the Secretariat.

17. The delegate from Malaysia supported the revitalization process of COBSEA and stressed the need for significant improvements in the delivery of capacity building to Participating Countries. He stated that COBSEA should be able to demonstrate its value added and supported future activities that may be designed for COBSEA.

18. The delegate from the Philippines thanked the organizers of the meeting and stressed his government's desire that the meeting would reach successful outcomes that will benefit COBSEA and its Participating Countries.

19. The delegate from Singapore noted that, being an island State, the state of the marine and coastal environment is important to Singapore. In this regard, Singapore supports the work of COBSEA, having been a Participating Country since its establishment in 1981. Singapore expressed hope that the hosting arrangements could be finalized soon so that COBSEA could look into the more substantive programmes and activities that would be of interest to each and every Participating Country. In this regard, the issues on marine water quality and marine litter would be instructive.

20. The delegate from Thailand recognized the importance of COBSEA for the region and mentioned his country increased contribution to the COBSEA Trust Fund to USD 42,000 starting in 2016. He also reminded delegates that Thailand had made an offer to host the COBSEA Secretariat.

21. The delegate from Viet Nam thanked the organizers of the meeting and recognized the work of COBSEA in the region. He mentioned his country increased contribution to the COBSEA Trust Fund as a sign of the importance that they place on COBSEA.

### **1.5 Organization of work**

22. The Chairperson announced that the meeting would take place on 27 and 28 April 2015 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., subject to adjustment as necessary.

23. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to introduce the working and information documents as presented in information document UNEP/DEPI/COBSEA IGM22/INF2.

24. The Secretariat briefed the meeting participants on the logistical arrangements for the conduct of the meeting. It was agreed that the meeting be conducted in plenary and in English.

### **AGENDA ITEM 3: REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UNEP ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COBSEA ACTIVITIES 2013-2014**

25. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present a summary of the Report of the Executive Director of UNEP on the implementation of COBSEA activities carried out during the period 2013-2014, presented as working document UNEP/DEPI/COBSEA IGM 22/4.

26. Ms. Mette Wilkie, Director, DEPI, UNEP, presented the report of the Executive Director of UNEP highlighting key areas where COBSEA had achieved impacts through the implementation of its activities. She began by presenting the efforts made by the COBSEA Secretariat and UNEP in the implementation of the Resolutions from the 21st Intergovernmental Meeting and the First Extra-ordinary Meeting of COBSEA. She continued presenting the activities related to information management and maintenance of the COBSEA and GEF-funded South China Sea project websites.

27. More substantially, she explained the capacity-building efforts at the regional and national levels on issues such as coastal and marine spatial planning, coastal erosion assessment and management, and coral reef conservation and management. As a result of these efforts, more than 240 professionals were trained by national teams through training courses using their training manuals on coastal and marine spatial planning.

28. In terms of strategic and emerging issues, she presented key programmes and projects that had been implemented during 2013 and 2014. For instance the green fin programme, the coral reef demonstration project, the regional programme on coastal erosion, and the Small Island Natural Resource Governance Project, which has enabled and supported participating countries on natural resource governance framework building, on the strengths of local and community-based management, as well as in the development and implementation of national policies and legal frameworks at different levels.

29. She proceed to explained the achievements of COBSEA in establishing and maintaining linkages with new and existing partners, including donor and funding agencies, towards regional and national cooperation. She mentioned the development of two GEF-

funded projects: South China Sea - Strategic Action Programme Implementation, with a proposed budget of USD 15 Million for 5 years with a Project Preparation Grant (PPG) of USD 300,000, and the Regional System of Fisheries Refugia in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand, with a proposed budget of USD 3 Million for 4 years, with a PPG of USD 100,000.

30. Ms. Wilkie also presented the financial performance report for the period 2013-2014 as at 31 December 2014, prepared in accordance with the UN Financial Rules and Procedures applying to COBSEA, including the expenditures of funds raised by the COBSEA Secretariat totalling USD 597,000.

31. The Chairperson invited comments and questions on the report. Viet Nam noted that marine spatial planning had been legalized in Viet Nam. Malaysia noted that they looked forward to the development and implementation of the GEF project on the South China Sea, and inquired about the detailed project timeline. Cambodia inquired on the Green Fins meeting and why Cambodia had not been invited. UNEP provided the timeline of the GEF project and clarified the non-participation of Cambodia at the mentioned meeting due to the fact that the meeting was part of a Mangroves for the Future (MFF)-funded project in which Cambodia was not participating, and referred to the possibility of involving Cambodia in future MFF/IUCN activities on Green Fins.

32. The Chairperson concluded the discussion by expressing thanks to the Executive Director of UNEP and the COBSEA Secretariat for activities implemented and progress made.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 4: HOST COUNTRY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE COBSEA SECRETARIAT**

33. The Chairperson invited the representative from each of the offering countries to make a presentation on the proposed hosting arrangements for the COBSEA Secretariat based on the information document that contains the original offers from Participating Countries to host the COBSEA Secretariat (UNEP/DEPI/COBSEA IGM22/INF/3).

34. The delegate from the People's Republic of China presented the offer as contained in UNEP/DEPI/COBSEA IGM22/INF/3.

35. The delegate from the Republic of Korea presented the offer as contained in UNEP/DEPI/COBSEA IGM22/INF/3.

36. The delegate from Thailand presented the offer as contained in UNEP/DEPI/COBSEA IGM22/INF/3.

37. UNEP presented the analysis of the three proposed hosting arrangements as contained in document UNEP/DEPI/COBSEA IGM22/3 Rev.2. Considering Resolution 1 adopted by the First Extraordinary Meeting of COBSEA in 2014, where, *inter alia*, the Participating Countries reaffirmed that the long-term sustainability of COBSEA should be the primary consideration for any decision regarding the hosting of the COBSEA Secretariat, the financial analysis of the offers received was presented in detail. The representative of UNEP repeatedly stressed that, given the current level of contributions and pledges; only one of the three offers met the criterion of long term sustainability. She further noted that in case one of the two other offers were selected, it would not be possible to initiate the recruitment of the COBSEA Coordinator.

38. The Chairperson invited the Participating Countries to make comments or ask questions for clarification. None of the participating countries raised the issue of the long term sustainability of the offers or proposed to disqualify any of the offers on the basis of the the long term sustainability consideration that they had reaffirmed at the First Extraordinary Meeting.

39. Malaysia inquired on the People's Republic of China offer on immunity given that the presentations by Thailand and the Republic of Korea provided this information. The People's Republic of China clarified that this would not pose a problem and would discuss with Ministry of Foreign Affairs in case the People's Republic of China was selected to host the Secretariat.

40. Singapore requested clarification on the People's Republic of China's financial offer of USD 500,000 and the location and current occupancy of the proposed COBSEA office. The People's Republic of China clarified that the said amount is the maximum amount for COBSEA and might not be enough later in case of increasing personnel requirements. The People's Republic of China stated that the building housed the Foreign Cooperation Centre and the China ASEAN Cooperation Centre, among others.

41. Viet Nam inquired and requested clarification as to the differences between the offers and the UNEP analysis. UNEP clarified the differences using the financial analysis table. UNEP further clarified that the analysis was based mainly on the cost of running the Secretariat and did not include the cost for activities; and reiterated that only one of the three offers met the criterion of financial sustainability. Should one of the two other offers were selected, it would not be possible to initiate the recruitment of the COBSEA Coordinator.

42. The Republic of Korea corrected the analysis table stating that the seconded staff is not mandatory and should be deleted from the costing. The Republic of Korea further clarified that their contribution for 1st year is USD 100,000 not USD 40,000 as stated.

43. Indonesia stressed that they needed more time to discuss internally, among the participating countries, before making a decision. This was supported by Malaysia, whose representative requested more time to allow consultations among non-offering countries.

44. The Philippines enquired if there were conditions as to the use of the funding from People's Republic of China that would be in excess of the expenses of the Secretariat, and enquired further if there were other benefits/privileges attached to the fact of hosting the Secretariat, as well as how funds for the activities would be determined. The People's Republic of China stated they were contributing USD 500,000 for the Secretariat and USD 30,000 for the Trust Fund. The People's Republic of China clarified that activities would have to be funded out from the COBSEA Trust Fund. She further clarified that there were no limitations to the use of funds for the Secretariat that would result in excess of the Secretariat's expenses.

45. UNEP stated that recognition is the foremost benefit of hosting the Secretariat as well as linkages with other organizations and programmes. UNEP further clarified that since UNEP had been requested by the Participating Countries to provide the COBSEA's Secretariat, the applicable rules to the Secretariat are those of the UN/UNEP regardless of the physical location of the Secretariat.

46. Further to the request in para 44 above, the non-offering Participating Countries met alone on three occasions under the chairmanship of the representative of Malaysia, who, after the various consultations held, informed the Meeting that they had not been able to reach a consensus on the location of the COBSEA Secretariat and that they had decided to vote. He requested UNEP to explain to the Meeting the applicable rules.

47. UNEP reminded the Participating Countries of Resolution 1 of the First Extraordinary Meeting, in which they had decided that final decision on the hosting of the COBSEA Secretariat would be made by the 22<sup>nd</sup> Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA. Once again UNEP outlined the implications of the different options in the light of the long term sustainability consideration that they had reaffirmed at their First Extraordinary Meeting.

48. UNEP read and explained the applicable Rules of Procedure, including those on the different methods of voting and the required majority. The Meeting decided to follow a secret ballot vote to decide on the location of the Secretariat based on the three offers to host the Secretariat.

49. Accordingly, the COBSEA Participating Countries undertook a first round of voting and reached the following results: Thailand 4 votes, People's Republic of China 3 votes and Republic of Korea 1 vote.

50. Given that there was no majority for any of the offering countries to host the COBSEA Secretariat, the meeting undertook a second ballot to select between the two offering countries that obtained the largest number of votes in the first ballot, i.e., Thailand and People's Republic of China, in accordance with Rule 56 of the Rules of Procedure.

51. The outcome of the second ballot was 4 votes for Thailand and 4 votes for the People's Republic of China.

52. Under this scenario, the Chairperson asked the Secretariat to provide guidance on how to proceed in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

53. The Secretariat read Rule 56 of the Rules of Procedure, which states *'if in the second ballot the votes are equally divided, the President shall decide between the candidates by drawing lots'*.

54. With the support of the Secretariat the Chairperson entered the names of the two offering countries that had obtained the same number of votes, i.e., Thailand and People's Republic of China, into the ballot. The Chairperson then proceeded in the plenary to select one of countries by drawing lots. The Chairperson drew the candidacy of Thailand to host the COBSEA Secretariat.

55. The participating countries congratulated Thailand on its selection as the physical location for the COBSEA Secretariat.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 55: WORK PLAN AND BUDGET FOR COBSEA FOR THE 2015-2016 BIENNIUM**

56. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present the draft work plan and budget for COBSEA for the biennium 2015-2016, as contained in working document UNEP/DEPI/COBSEA IGM 22/6.

57. Considering the decision of the Participating Countries on the location of the COBSEA Secretariat, the Chairperson asked the Secretariat to review and present an amended version of the work plan and budget for 2015-2016.

58. The Chairperson requested all participating countries to update the meeting on their respective progress with regard to respecting their target pledge as agreed in Resolution 1 of the 21st COBSEA IGM. All participating countries, to the exception of the People's

Republic of China and Singapore, which required further consultations, confirmed their yearly commitment as follows:

Cambodia: USD 15,000 starting from 2016

Indonesia: USD 40,000 starting from 2015

Republic of Korea: USD 45,000 starting from 2015, and would undertake efforts to increase its contribution.

Malaysia: USD 38,000 starting from 2015

Philippines: USD 50,000 starting from 2015

Thailand: USD 42,000 starting from 2016

Viet Nam: 15,000 starting from 2015

People's Republic of China: USD 30,000, indicating that further consultation was still required before finalizing the position, as mentioned above.

Singapore: USD 10,000, indicating that further consultation was required before finalizing the position, as mentioned above.

59. With this new state of contributions, the expected contribution for 2015 is improved to USD 258,900, and to USD 285,000 for the following years.

60. All new pledges will have to be formally confirmed in writing to the COBSEA Secretariat.

61. As requested, the Secretariat presented the amended work plan and budget for 2015-2019, attached as **Annex III** of this report.

62. In particular, it was proposed by the Meeting to delay the recruitment of the Coordinator until mid 2016 given the financial situation and to rather hire a consultant to be entrusted with the identification of current priorities and the preparation of respective strategic directions for COBSEA, financial scenarios and a cost-benefit analysis, the consultation with potential donors and partners, the preparation of a resource mobilisation strategy for COBSEA as well as a detailed work plan for the biennium 2016-2017 to be presented to the Second Extraordinary Meeting of COBSEA, that would have to take place in 2016.

63. After discussions and clarifications, the Participating Countries of COBSEA approved the budget for 2015 and the indicative budget for 2016. It is attached as Appendix 1 to Resolution 1 adopted by this Meeting (**Annex IV** of this report).

#### **AGENDA ITEM 6: STATUS OF THE GEF SOUTH CHINA SEA PROJECT**

64. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present the current status of the GEF-funded South China Sea Project as contained in working document UNEP/DEPI/COBSEA IGM 22/7.

65. The Secretariat presented the report providing a background to the original GEF-funded South China Sea Project that was implemented by UNEP from 2002 to 2008 with a budget of USD 16,294,000. The presentation outlined the goal of the Strategic Action Programme and the two proposed GEF projects: South China Sea Strategic Action Programme Implementation, and Regional Fisheries Refugia.

66. The People's Republic of China enquired on the MOU referred to by the Secretariat, as to whether it has to be signed before the GEF CEO endorsement of the project. It was agreed that UNEP would circulate the MOU to the relevant countries as advance information. UNEP noted that the MOU will have to be signed and endorsed prior to submission to the GEF in December. UNEP stated that being a GEF-funded project, the MOU should be signed by the GEF focal point.<sup>1</sup>

67. The Chairperson proposed that the relevant Participating Countries consult with their respective Ministries and GEF Focal Points by August 2015, so as to enable the timely signature of the Memorandum of Understanding agreeing to the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme, as required by the GEF.

68. The Chairperson and the Secretariat took note of the comments from the Participating Countries and UNEP was tasked to send more information regarding the MOU to the relevant Participating Countries. The meeting agreed to undertake further endeavours to inform the relevant institutions at the national level to advance the signature of the MOU.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 7: OTHER MATTERS**

69. The Chairperson invited the Secretariat to present the information document on the draft financial procedures for COBSEA as contained in working document UNEP/DEPI/COBSEA IGM22/5. After the presentation, participants were invited to comment on the proposed financial procedures for COBSEA.

70. After various rounds of comments, the Secretariat was tasked to revise the financial procedures for COBSEA. The amended version was presented and adopted by the Meeting. It is attached as Appendix 2 to Resolution 1 adopted by this Meeting (**Annex IV** of this report).

71. The Chairperson invited proposals and offers from the participating countries for the venue of the Second Extraordinary meeting of COBSEA, to be held in 2016, and the 23rd Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA in 2017. There being no proposals, it was agreed that the Secretariat would make further consultations with the Participating Countries on this issue.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 8: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

72. The meeting adopted the report and the resolution attached as **Annex IV** of this report.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 9: CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

73. Upon completion of the business of the meeting, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed.

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<sup>1</sup> UNEP's statement during the meeting with respect to the needed level of signature on the SAP implementation MOU that was communicated to IGM 22 regrettably does not reflect what the agreed PIF requests. The UNEP GEF officers have clarified that according to component 3 on page 16 and Annex 1 with the MoU on page 26 of the PIF, the MoU governing the implementation of the SAP should be signed at the ministerial level.

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## **ANNEX II**

### **AGENDA**

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
  - a) Designation of officers;
  - b) Adoption of the agenda;
  - c) Organization of work.
3. Report of the Executive Director of UNEP on the implementation of COBSEA activities 2013-2014.
4. Host country arrangements for the COBSEA Secretariat.
5. Workplan and Budget for COBSEA for the 2015-2016 Biennium.
6. Status of GEF South China Sea Project.
7. Other matters.
8. Adoption of the report.
9. Closure of the meeting.

## ANNEX III

## AMENDED WORKPLAN AND BUDGET FOR 2015-2019

Based on February UN rate and Post Adjustments	Budget by calendar year (in USD)				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>PERSONNEL COMPONENT</b>					
Coordinator (P4) - EOD 01/07/2016	0	152,015.13	174,030.26	179,251.17	184,628.70
Programme Officer	0	0	0	0	0
Administrative Assistance (G5/G6)	57,316.04	59,035.52	30,403.29	31,315.39	32,254.85
Senior Secretary	0	0	0	0	0
Adm. & Prog. support (HQ/ROAP)	39,200.00	39,200.00	39,200.00	39,200.00	39,200.00
<b>Sub-total Personnel</b>	<b>96,516.04</b>	<b>250,250.65</b>	<b>243,633.55</b>	<b>249,766.56</b>	<b>256,083.56</b>
<b>ACTIVITY</b>					
COBSEA IGM & Ex-IGM	25,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00	0	25,000.00
Travel	0	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00
Other Activity (Consultant*)	60,000.00	30,000.00	0	0	0
<b>Sub-total Activities</b>	<b>85,000.00</b>	<b>75,000.00</b>	<b>45,000.00</b>	<b>20,000.00</b>	<b>45,000.00</b>
<b>OPERATIONAL COSTS</b>					
Rent	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Office Equipment and Misc.	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00
<b>Sub-total Operational Costs</b>	<b>19,000.00</b>	<b>19,000.00</b>	<b>19,000.00</b>	<b>19,000.00</b>	<b>19,000.00</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>200,516.04</b>	<b>344,250.65</b>	<b>307,633.55</b>	<b>288,766.56</b>	<b>320,083.56</b>
13% Programme support cost (PSC)	26,067.08	44,752.58	39,992.36	37,539.65	41,610.86
Working Capital Reserve 15% Biennium	33,987.47	24,363.02	(6,206.60)	(3,197.96)	5,308.23
<b>GRAND TOTAL with PSC &amp; WCR</b>	<b>260,570.59</b>	<b>413,366.25</b>	<b>341,419.32</b>	<b>323,108.26</b>	<b>367,002.65</b>
Financing by Host Country (QEL)					
Balance to be funded by COBSEA TF (ESL)	260,570.59	413,366.25	341,419.32	323,108.26	367,002.65
Forecast of contribution to the ESL	260,000.00	310,000.00	310,000.00	310,000.00	310,000.00
Fund closing balance (2014 = 250,000 USD)	249,429.41	146,063.16	114,643.84	101,535.59	44,532.94

\* consultant = COBSEA Strategy, roadmap and cost/benefit analysis

## ANNEX IV

### RESOLUTION 1 - HOSTING OF THE COBSEA SECRETARIAT, SUSTAINABILITY AND PRIORITIES OF COBSEA, WORKPLAN AND BUDGET

#### **The Participating Countries of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia, taking part in its 22<sup>nd</sup> Intergovernmental Meeting:**

*Recalling* resolution 1, adopted by the 21<sup>st</sup> Intergovernmental Meeting of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) and particularly our agreement on the proposed target annual budget for COBSEA as the minimum financial requirement for a maintained level of implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan and Secretariat services;

*Also recalling* resolution 1, adopted by the 1<sup>st</sup> Extraordinary Meeting of COBSEA; and in particular our decision that final decision on the hosting of the COBSEA Secretariat should be made by the 22<sup>nd</sup> Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA;

*Conscious of* our decision, as reflected in the East Asian Seas Action Plan, that the Action Plan is expected to be financially self-supporting through the East Asian Seas Trust Fund or any other approved and appropriate mechanisms;

*Reminded of* our own expectation, as reflected in the East Asian Seas Action Plan, that UNEP's support would decrease over the time as we increase our ownership and responsibility for the agreed Action Plan and its coordinating body;

*Considering* that the long term sustainability of COBSEA and a no-deficit scenario from year 1 are the primary considerations for any decision regarding the hosting of the COBSEA Secretariat and the adoption and implementation of a workplan that addresses its current needs, priorities and challenges;

*Thanking* UNEP for its commitment to COBSEA demonstrated through its continuous financial, technical and human support since the establishment of COBSEA in the provision of Secretariat services to the East Asian Seas Action Plan, the implementation of the Action Plan, the leveraging and raising of funds, and the management of the East Asian Seas Trust Fund;

*Willing* to strengthen the implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan and its current priorities through an enhanced and revitalized COBSEA;

*Reiterate* our decision that long term sustainability requires that all the participating countries meet the annual budget of US\$ 340,000, agreed in Resolution 1 of the 21<sup>st</sup> Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA;

*Thank* the Participating Countries who have already pledged and paid their increased contributions towards the achievement of the agreed target budget;

*Decide* that Thailand will host the COBSEA Secretariat in Bangkok;

*Approve* the budget for 2015 and the indicative budget for 2016, as contained in Appendix 1 to this resolution;

*Adopt* the Financial Procedures for the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia, as contained in Appendix 2 to this resolution;

*Decide* to hold a Second Extraordinary Meeting in the first quarter of 2016, which shall approve the COBSEA work plan and budget for the biennium 2016-2017;

*Agree* to entrust the consultant, to be recruited by UNEP, to identify the current priorities and respective strategic directions for COBSEA, prepare financial scenarios and a cost-benefit analysis, consult with potential donors and partners, prepare a resource mobilization strategy for COBSEA as well as a detailed workplan for the biennium 2016-2017 to be presented to the Second Extraordinary Meeting;

*Commit* to facilitate the submission of the signed Memorandum of Understanding by the GEF focal points through the appropriate channels, as requested by the GEF in order for the GEF CEO to endorse the Project “Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea”, and thus enable its implementation.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Erroneous information was regrettably provided during the meeting as to the needed level of signature on the SAP implementation MOU, which thus led to the agreement of the Participating Countries on the text in this paragraph. As explained in the Meeting Report, after consultation with the Meeting Rapporteur, footnote 1 on page 11 clarifies that, according to component 3 on page 16 and Annex 1 with the MoU on page 26 of the PIF, the MoU governing the implementation of the SAP should be signed at the ministerial level.

## Appendix 1

## Approved Budget for 2015 and Indicative Budget for 2016

Based on February UN rate and Post Adjustments	Budget by calendar year (in USD)	
	2015	2016
<b>PERSONNEL COMPONENT</b>		
Coordinator (P4) - EOD 01/07/2016	0	52,015.13
Programme Officer	0	0
Administrative Assistance (G5/G6)	57,316.04	59,035.52
Senior Secretary	0	0
Adm. & Prog. support (HQ/ROAP)	39,200.00	39,200.00
<b>Sub-total Personnel</b>	<b>96,516.04</b>	<b>250,250.65</b>
<b>ACTIVITIES</b>		
COBSEA IGM & Ex-IGM	25,000.00	25,000.00
Travel	0	20,000.00
Consultant	60,000.00	30,000.00
<b>Sub-total Activities</b>	<b>85,000.00</b>	<b>75,000.00</b>
<b>OPERATIONAL COSTS</b>		
Rent	10,000.00	10,000.00
Office Equipment and Misc.	9,000.00	9,000.00
<b>Sub-total Operational Costs</b>	<b>19,000.00</b>	<b>19,000.00</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>200,516.04</b>	<b>344,250.65</b>
13% Programme support cost (PSC)	26,067.08	44,752.58
Working Capital Reserve 15% Biennium	33,987.47	24,363.02
<b>GRAND TOTAL with PSC &amp; WCR</b>	<b>260,570.59</b>	<b>413,366.25</b>

Appendix 2

**UNITED  
NATIONS**

**EP**

**UNEP/DEPI/COBSEA**  
IGM 22/5

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**Coordinating Body on the  
Seas of East Asia  
(COBSEA)**

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**Twenty-second Intergovernmental Meeting  
of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East  
Asia (COBSEA)**  
Bangkok, Thailand, 27-28 April 2015

**Financial Rules and Procedures for COBSEA**

### **Recommendations to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA**

1. The intergovernmental meeting is invited to establish the Financial Rules and Procedures to the COBSEA, which will supplement the UN/UNEP Financial Regulations and Rules.
2. Adopt, the UN/UNEP Financial Regulations and Rules and the specific procedures for the operation of the Coordinating Body and its subsidiary bodies as well as for the operation of the Coordinating Body Secretariat, which are appended to this Decision;
3. Review these Rules and Procedures at 23<sup>rd</sup> intergovernmental meeting, and, if necessary, amend the procedures in accordance with any decision of the UNEA on the relationship between UNEP and the MEAs for which it provides the Secretariat or secretariat functions.

### **Scope**

1. The Financial Regulations, Rules and Procedures of the “COORDINATING BODY OF THE SEAS OF EAST ASIA-COBSEA” are the Financial Regulations and Rules of the UN and the Financial Rules of UNEP as supplemented by the additional procedures established below.
2. These Procedures shall govern the financial administration of the “COORDINATING BODY OF THE SEAS OF EAST ASIA-COBSEA”.

### **Financial period**

#### **Procedure 1**

1. The financial period shall be for one calendar year from 1st January to 31st December. The biennial programme of work and budget of the COBSEA shall consist of two consecutive calendar years, the first of which shall be an even year<sup>3</sup>.

### **Budget**

#### **Procedure 2**

1. The Coordinator of the Secretariat to the COBSEA (hereinafter referred to as the Coordinator) shall prepare the budget estimates for the following biennium in US Dollars showing projected income and expenditures for each year of the biennium concerned. The budget should be presented by nature of cost harmonized to the extent appropriate with those used by UNEP. The Coordinator, after consultation with, and clearance by the Executive Director of UNEP, shall dispatch the draft budget to all Participating Countries<sup>4</sup> for their consideration, six weeks before the Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) at which the budget is to be adopted.
2. As per UN Financial Regulation 6.3<sup>5</sup>, the base currency of the United Nations is the US dollar. Appropriations, allocations, revenue and expenses are managed, maintained and audited in UNEP's accounts, and reflected in UNEP's financial statements, in US dollars. Losses/gains on exchange may be charged/credited to the Trust Fund for the Protection and Development of East Asian Seas Marine Environment (ESL).
3. The Coordinator shall provide the Intergovernmental Meeting with cost estimates for actions that have budgetary implications that are not foreseen in the draft programme of work but are included in proposed draft decisions prior to the adoption of those decisions by the Participating Countries.

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<sup>3</sup> The financial period pertains to accounting and auditing, while the budget shall be available for expenditure during the whole biennium

<sup>4</sup> Cambodia, China (People's Republic of), Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam.

<sup>5</sup> ST/SGB/2003/7, as may be amended

4. The Participating Countries shall, prior to the commencement of the financial period that the budget covers, consider the budget estimates and adopt an operational budget by consensus entrusting UNEP to certify and authorize expenditures, other than those referred to in procedure 4, paragraphs 3 and 4 below.
5. Adoption of the operational budget by the Participating Countries shall constitute the basis for UNEP to issue allotments and to incur commitments and make payments for the purposes for which the appropriations were approved, provided always that, unless specifically authorized by the Executive Director, commitments is covered by related income.
6. UNEP may upon proposal from the Coordinator make budget transfers within each of the main appropriation lines of the approved operational budget. The Co-ordinator may also approve transfers between such appropriation lines within 10% or any other criteria set by the IGM.

## **Funds**

### **Procedure 3**

1. A Trust Fund for the COBSEA has been established by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and approved by the governing body of UNEP. The fund is to provide financial support for the work of the Coordinating Body Secretariat. Contributions made pursuant to procedure 4, paragraph 1 (a) below, shall be credited to this fund. The name of this fund is ESL.
2. A Trust Fund to receive discretionary contribution to complement the support for the work of the Coordinating Body Secretariat has been established by the Executive Director of UNEP and approved by the governing body of UNEP. This fund shall receive contributions pursuant to procedure 4, paragraphs 1 (b) below. The name of this fund is QEL.
3. Within the ESL there shall be maintained a working capital reserve. The purpose of the working capital reserve shall be to ensure continuity of operations in the event of a temporary shortfall of cash as well as to provide for potential losses on exchange. Drawdowns from the working capital reserve may be authorized by the Executive Director and shall be replenished from contributions, or gains on exchange, as soon as possible. The level of the working capital reserve shall be determined by the Intergovernmental Meeting by consensus, bearing in mind the desirability of bringing its level to the recommended UN rate of 15% of the average annual budget for the biennium, inclusive of programme support costs, as rapidly as possible.
4. All budget expenditures that are made pursuant to Procedure 2.5 shall be charged to the ESL, QEL or any other fund provided to support the work of the Coordinating Body.
5. Subject to the request of the Participating Countries, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme may establish other trust funds and will seek the approval of the Environment Assembly of UNEP.
6. In the event that the Participating Countries wish to terminate a trust fund established pursuant to the present procedures, they shall so advise the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme at least six months before the date of termination so decided. The Participating Countries shall decide, in consultation with the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, on the distribution of any uncommitted balances after all liquidation expenses have been met. Any such termination of a trust fund shall be in accordance with UN/UNEP Regulations, Rules, Procedures and standard business practice.

## **Contributions**

### **Procedure 4**

1. The resources of the Coordinating Body shall comprise:
  - (a) Contributions made each year by Participating Countries on the basis of an agreed scale adopted by consensus by them. The scale of assessments of the United Nations may be adopted for reference and actualization;

- (b) Discretionary Contributions made each year by Participating Countries in addition to those made pursuant to paragraph (a);
  - (c) Voluntary Contributions from States, Member to the Coordinating Body, as well as other governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other sources;
  - (d) The Executive Director of UNEP may also allot funds to the COBSEA.
  - (e) Miscellaneous revenue.
2. In respect of contributions made pursuant to procedure 4, paragraph 1 (a) above:
- (a) The Executive Director of UNEP, through the Coordinator shall inform the Participating Countries of their contributions in USD under the agreed scale;
  - (b) Contributions for each calendar year are expected within the first quarter of that year and should be paid promptly and in full. Parties should be notified of the amount of their contributions for a given year by 15 October of the previous year;
  - (c) Each Member of the COBSEA shall, as far in advance as possible of the date due for the contribution, inform the Coordinator of the projected timing of its contribution;
  - (d) If contributions of any parties have not been received by the first semester of the relevant year, the Coordinator shall write to those Members to impress upon them the importance of paying their respective contributions for the year as well as arrears for prior periods;
  - (e) The Coordinator shall propose to any Member, whose contributions are in arrears for two or more years, a payment schedule to enable such a Member to clear all outstanding arrears within a maximum of three years, depending on the financial circumstances of the Member State, and to pay future contributions by their due dates. The Coordinator shall report to the Participating Countries at their next meetings on progress under any such schedule;
3. Discretionary and voluntary contributions made pursuant to procedure 4, paragraphs 1 (b) and (c), shall be used in accordance with such terms and conditions, consistent with the objectives of the Coordinating Body and the Financial Regulations, Rules, Policies and Procedures of the United Nations Environment Programme, as may be agreed between the Executive Director and the respective contributors.
4. All contributions shall be paid in USD or in another convertible currency and credited to an official UNEP bank account, the details of which are to be provided by the Executive Director. This bank account is to be managed in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations.
5. UNEP shall acknowledge promptly the receipt of all pledges and contributions and the Coordinator shall publish on the COBSEA website up to date information on the status of pledges and payments of contributions.
6. Contributions not immediately required shall be invested in accordance with procedures of the UN's Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts on behalf of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme. The resulting income or losses shall be applied to the relevant Trust Fund in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations.

#### **Accounts and audit**

##### **Procedure 5**

1. The accounts and financial management of all funds governed by the present procedures shall be subject exclusively to the internal and external audit process of the United Nations.

2. A statement of accounts for the financial period shall be provided to the Participating Countries as soon as possible after the accounts for the financial period are closed and audited. This statement of accounts shall be an extract from the audited financial statements of UNEP.

3. The Participating Countries shall be informed of any remarks in the reports of the United Nations Board of Auditors on financial statements of the United Nations Environment Programme that are relevant to the COBSEA.

### **Administrative support**

#### **Procedure 6**

1. The Participating Countries shall reimburse UNEP for the support services provided to the Participating Countries from the expenditures incurred based on the funds referred to in procedure 3 above. This practice is in accordance with the general policy and business practice of the United Nations and applicable agreements between UNEP and donors.

### **Public Disclosure**

#### **Procedure 7**

1. All approved programme of work and budget documents, financial statements and audit reports concerning the COBSEA shall be made publicly accessible and posted on the Coordinating Body website.

### **Amendments**

#### **Procedure 8**

1. Any amendment to the present document shall be adopted by consensus of the Intergovernmental Meeting of the COBSEA.

### **Entry into Effect**

#### **Procedure 9**

1. These Financial Rules and Procedures, as agreed by the Executive Director of UNEP and adopted by the Participating Countries, shall be effective from 1 May 2015.