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the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA)**
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**REPORT OF THE UNEP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE EAST ASIAN SEAS ACTION PLAN 2009 - 2012**

Summary

The present report by the Executive Director of UNEP provides information on the following subjects, as mandated in decisions adopted at the previous Intergovernmental Meeting of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia:

- (a) The activities under COBSEA by the Secretariat from 2009 to 2012;
- (b) The extra budgetary funding and regional cooperation;
- (c) The status of the COBSEA Trust Fund.

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EAST ASIAN SEAS ACTION PLAN 2009 - 2012

1. Introduction

1. This progress report is presented to the 21st Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) as a general overview of the progress made with the implementation of the *New Strategic Direction for COBSEA (2008-2012)* since the 20th Meeting of COBSEA in Ha Long City, Viet Nam on 2-5 November 2009.
2. The 19th Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) of COBSEA in Siem Reap, Cambodia on 22-23 January 2008 adopted the *New Strategic Direction (2008-2012)* which is based on four components (http://www.cobsea.org/documents/Meeting_Documents/19COBSEA/New%20Strategic%20Direction%20for%20COBSEA%202008-2012.pdf):
 - a) Information management
 - b) National capacity building
 - c) Strategic and emerging issues
 - d) Regional cooperation
3. The *New Strategic Direction* also outlines three priority thematic areas:
 - a) Marine- and land-based pollution
 - b) Coastal and marine habitat conservation
 - c) Management and response to coastal disasters
4. In resolution 3 of the 20th IGM of COBSEA, the IGM decided that “COBSEA will concentrate, in the coming years, on a limited number but well defined activities that will be coordinated with other regional players, in order to avoid duplication of efforts and resources. These activities will be the following:
 - a) Developing the GEF project ‘SAP Implementation’;
 - b) Implementing the Sida project on spatial planning;
 - c) Develop, and if resources will be made available, implement the three priority activities: marine invasive species, marine litter and coastal erosion and integrate these activities into the GEF project;
 - d) Resource mobilization;
 - e) Develop other activities in line with *COBSEA New Strategic Direction 2008-2012* if adequate external resources would be made available. “
5. The 20th IGM also approved a work plan and budget for 2010-2011 focusing on these activities.
6. This report summarizes COBSEA activities during the last three years (2009-2012) and outlines the efforts of the Secretariat to implement the resolutions, work plan and budget approved by the 20th Intergovernmental Meeting.
7. This report is structured along the lines of the “*COBSEA New Strategic Direction 2008-2012*”
8. General comment – COBSEA’s financial situation continues to be critical, the core expenditures of the Secretariat are larger than that of the annual income from countries contributions to the Trust Fund and UNEP, as an interim emergency measure, pays for the difference. However, this arrangement is no longer feasible and a decision is required on the future of COBSEA.
9. UNEP and the COBSEA Secretariat continuously and closely monitor the Trust Fund situation and continue to send reminders to countries in arrears. COBSEA’s financial situation, including a lack of funds to implement any activity through the Trust Fund, has significantly constrained COBSEA’s ability to deliver its Programme of Work (PoW).

2. Information Management

2.1 East Asian Seas Knowledgebase

10. The Secretariat, through the Tropical Marine Science Institute (TMSI), University of Singapore, concluded the development of the 2nd phase of the *East Asian Seas Knowledgebase*. The recommendations of the first regional Knowledgebase workshop (5-6 April 2007, Singapore) were incorporated into the Knowledgebase by actively involving national experts and regional partners who added and approved data and information collected. The 3rd phase of the Knowledgebase aimed at expanding it to priority strategic and emerging issues, was developed and implemented through a contract with TMSI.
(http://www.cobsea.org/activities/activities_information%20management.html)
11. This portal contained large quantities of data and information, which is based on the inputs from member countries and other sources of published data. It is a user friendly ‘one-stop-shop’, aimed to share of information on coastal and marine data and information in the EAS Region. It was launched in January 2010 with COBSEA countries being requested to provide comments on the friendliness, ease of operation and also to update national information through a limited link. Funding was provided until the end of 2010.
12. Continuous funding for its maintenance and development was not found and therefore the project ended in early 2011. The portal and knowledgebase can be revitalized once funding is secured.

2.2 East Asian Seas Environment Outlook – State of the Marine Environment Report Follow Up

13. The first ‘State of Marine Environment Reporting (SOMER) of East Asian Seas’ (SOMER) for the region was approved by the 20th IGM of COBSEA. The report was launched at the 37th Session of the GESAMP meeting with an official press release by UNEP. 500 hard copies were printed and distributed globally. The report was well received by experts and governments and was referred to and mentioned in various meetings and other reports. If possible, this exercise should be repeated in 4-5 years. The SOMER can be found in (<http://www.cobsea.org/documents/Report-SOMER/State/Marine/Report.pdf>). The report will also contribute to the U.N General Assembly ‘Regular Process on the World Ocean Assessment’.

2.3 Outlook on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity

14. Under the initiative of UNEP/MCEB (Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Branch) towards CBD COP 10, and with funds provided by MCEB, COBSEA contracted in June 2010 a consultant to compile data and information on i) pressures; ii) status and iii) response on the marine and coastal biodiversity threats in the COBSEA region, for the CBD COP-10 in Nagoya, Japan. COBSEA’s report was delivered and integrated into the global biodiversity outlook produced by UNEP/DEPI/MCEB. The report can be downloaded from www.marinebiodiversityoutlook.org

2.4 Continuous maintenance of the South China Sea project website

15. With the closure of the UNEP GEF South China Sea project, COBSEA Secretariat acts as interim secretariat for the project until the next project phase will be developed and approved. The SCS website (<http://www.unepscs.org>) is continuously maintained and operates through a consultant who also hosts the website on his server. The maintenance and hosting of the website runs until August 2013, when funding for this activity ends.
16. The South China sea GEF Project website is very active, with approximately 2000 hits per day. Since the closure of the project in January 2009, there has been no new content from SCS countries into the website.

2.5 Revitalization of the COBSEA Website

17. The COBSEA Secretariat engaged a consultant to redesign the COBSEA website with new structures, style and layout. The renewed website includes information and 'sub-pages' on new projects and initiatives as well as new links to other relevant websites. Please see <http://www.cobsea.org>. The maintenance and hosting of the COBSEA website as well as the South China Sea Project website will run until funding for this activity ends.

2.6 Periodical Reports and communication with partners

18. COBSEA Secretariats issues periodical and annual reports on its activities at the end of each calendar year and maintains routine updating and communication with its National Focal Points and National Contact Points,

3. National Capacity Building

3.1 Regional Workshop on Spatial Planning (Sida Phase 1)

19. The project 'Spatial Planning in the Coastal Zone – Disaster Prevention and Sustainable Development' was developed by the COBSEA Secretariat as a post-tsunami project during 2006 and submitted to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), which approved it for funding in late 2009.

20. A *Regional Workshop on Spatial Planning* was organized in Bangkok on 29 November to 2 December 2010 under the 1st Phase of the Sida project. The workshop participants discussed, reviewed and agreed on the development of Regional Guidelines "Regional Guidelines on Spatial Planning in the Coastal Zone – Disaster Prevention and Sustainable Development" that was developed through a consultant company based in Sweden. The workshop participants agreed for the consultant to further update and adjust the regional document into a resource document that will provide guidance on how to integrate emerging issues and new management approaches into existing spatial planning systems and procedures. The participants also agreed and endorsed the plan for Phases II and III of the project.

21. Six *Country Consultation Workshops* were organized in Phnom Penh, Beijing, Jakarta, Bangkok, Hanoi and Manila in November and December 2011 under the 2nd Phase of the Sida project. The main objective of the country consultation workshops was to plan the 'national adaptation' of the *Regional Resource Document (RRD)*, and to discuss the countries' individual adaptation and capacity-building options based on their needs and priorities. During the national consultations, the activities identified for implementation at the national level in all countries were: 1) organization of a regional train-the-trainer course; 2) development of national training manuals; 3) organization of national training courses; 4) translation and adaptation of the RRD into national setting; and 5) amendment of existing national land-use spatial planning guidebooks (for the Philippines). The Sida Project Coordination Team was headed by Dr. Elik Adler, Dr. Lawrence Hildebrand and Mr. Reynaldo Molina who met with various national authorities and experts with responsibilities for coastal spatial planning in the countries. Please see <http://www.cobsea.org/documents/COBSEA/SpatialPlanning/RegionalResourceDocument.pdf>

3.2 Second Regional Consultation Workshop (Sida Phase 2)

22. To present the results of the national consultation process, a *Regional Workshop on Country Adaptation and Capacity Building Activities* was organized on 23 January 2012 in Manila. This workshop served as a concluding summary of the project's second phase and marked the beginning of the 3rd and final phase of the Sida project. The results, particularly the country specific capacity building and adaptation activities and implementation schemes as identified during the individual country consultations, were presented, discussed and agreed upon by the workshop participants for national implementation.

3.3 Regional Train-the-Trainer Course and National Training (Sida Phase 3)

23. To start the implementation of the 3rd phase, a *Regional Train-the-Trainer Course on Spatial Planning in the Coastal and Marine Zone of the EAS Region* was organized on 14-18 May 2012 in Phuket, Thailand where

national teams from six countries were trained on how to integrate emerging issues and modern management approaches into their national spatial planning processes and regimes. A total of 34 participants from six countries were instructed in English by three international experts, namely: Dr. Lawrence Hildebrand from Canada, Dr. Charles Ehler from USA, and Mr. Anisur Rahman of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC).

24. Four key regional resource documents were provided to the participants and used as reference training materials: 1) COBSEA Spatial Planning in the Coastal Zone of the East Asian Seas Region: Integrating Emerging Issues and Modern Management Approaches (Interim Edition); 2) UNEP Taking Steps Toward Marine and Coastal Ecosystem-Based Management – An Introductory Guide; 3) UNESCO IOC Marine Spatial Planning: A Step-by-Step Approach toward Ecosystem-based Management; and 4) Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) Regional Training Manual on Disaster Risk Reduction for Coastal Zone Managers.
25. The regional training course established six national teams of instructors and developed six national training syllabi in the English language. The national teams of trainers finalized and translated their training course curricula and scheduled their national training courses in their respective countries in October-December 2012.
26. The six participating countries agreed to conduct a National Training Course as one of the national activities identified and agreed upon during the national consultation workshop held in November/December 2011. There was also a follow-up activity to the Regional Train the Trainer Course organized by COBSEA in May 2012 in Phuket, Thailand.
27. **Cambodia** through the Ministry of Environment (MOE) organized the national training course, Training on Integrating Coastal Spatial Planning to Address Emerging Issues, from 1-3 October 2012 at the Kampot Provincial Environment Department Office, Kampot Province. A total of 42 participants from the national and sub-national offices and authorities from the 4 coastal provinces (Koh Kong, Sihanoukville, Kampot and Kep) participated in the training course.
28. **China** organized their National Training Course on Spatial Planning in the Coastal Zone on 14-16 November 2012 in Beihai City, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomy Region. The course was organized by the South China Institute of Environmental Sciences (SCIENS) and the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP). Around 43 participants attended from central, provincial and city governments including professionals who are involved in drafting and implementing spatial plans.
29. For **Vietnam**, the Training on Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning was organized on 27 November – 1 December 2012 in Haiphong City and Catba Island by the Vietnam Administration of Seas and Islands (VASI). A total of 49 participants from administration agencies at national and provincial levels especially from coastal provinces, universities and research centers and institutes participated in the training course.
30. The Training on Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning in **Indonesia** was organized by the Centre for Coastal and Marine Resources Studies – Bogor Agricultural University (CCMRS-IPB) on 10-14 December 2012 in Bogor Province. Around 17 participants from different ministries at the central and provincial levels participated in the training course.
31. **Thailand** organized their Training Course on Spatial Planning in the Coastal Zone on 28 January-1 February 2013 in Chumpon Province, Thailand. The course was organized by the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) and the Prince of Songkla University - Center of Excellence for Biodiversity of Peninsular Thailand (PSU-CBIPT). Around 38 participants from national and provincial authorities from the 6 coastal provinces including academia and research institutes participated in the training course.
32. The organizers and participants of the national training courses had expressed their appreciation to COBSEA and Sida for the support and organization of the training courses and had expressed an intention to follow-up with activities particularly in building capacity of national and local authorities through on the ground application of coastal and marine spatial planning. The national training course for the **Philippines** is scheduled for the first quarter of 2013 and will be organized by the Department of Environment and Natural

Resources (DENR) and Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB). Participants will be from the central and regional offices of DENR and HLURB.

3.4 Regional Coastal Erosion Workshop

33. A Regional Workshop on Climate Change, Sea Level Rise and Coastal Erosion in Bangkok, Thailand, on 25-28 April 2011, was organized by the COBSEA Secretariat. National authorities and experts in the region discussed and agreed on the regional strategy and policy document on coastal erosion, which will serve as the main reference document and platform for the development of regional programs on coastal erosion for EAS countries. This workshop was made possible by the kind support of Korea Ministry of Land Transportation and Maritime Affairs (MLTM), through the Korea Maritime Institute to COBSEA.
(http://www.cobsea.org/documents/report-Coastal_Erosion/Report%20Coastal%20Erosion%20Regional%20Resource%20Document.pdf)
34. Back to back with the regional workshop, an International Symposium on Sea Level Rise and Coastal Erosion was co-organized on 28 April 2011 by COBSEA with the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR), Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Thailand to share experiences, exchange information and to explore possibilities on regional initiatives and frameworks in managing climate change, sea level rise and coastal erosion.

3.5 Yeosu Korea Coastal Erosion Project Regional Inception Workshop

35. As a “commencement event” for the implementation of the Yeosu Coastal Erosion and Sea-Level Rise Project (see 3.3.4 below), a Regional Inception Workshop was organized by COBSEA Secretariat in Bangkok, Thailand on 31 July - 1 August 2012. The workshop brought together relevant national authorities and experts from six participating countries as well as international experts from Canada, Singapore and Germany to discuss coastal erosion and coastal management issues in general, and the Yeosu Project and its activities and requirements in particular.
36. The Workshop was made possible with the kind support of Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and Yeosu Organizing Committee which were represented at the workshop by a KOICA representative.

3.6 Regional Workshop on the World Ocean Assessment

37. A Regional Scientific and Technical Capacity Building Workshop on the World Ocean Assessment (the formerly titled U.N Regular Process) on the South China Sea was held on 17–19 September 2012 in Bangkok, Thailand to build the capacity of regional and national organizations and authorities to conduct similar assessments in a manner that is coherent across the region and consistent with the spirit of the World Ocean Assessment.
38. The assessment process, including the workshop, uses expert judgment that is set within a systematic and consistent methodology that minimizes the risk of bias and enables the capture and reporting of information, both relevant to the region and likely to be useful for the World Ocean Assessment. The process consists of three phases: first, a pre-workshop agreement on the decision structure, parameters and assumptions/constraints; second, attendance at the workshop by the invited experts to provide their judgment and secure their consensus; and third, a short post-workshop period for any refinements and updating to be finalized before issuance of a final summary report.
39. The workshop was co-organized and financially supported by UNEP, UNESCO/IOC, WESTPAC, NOWPAP, COBSEA, UNEP/GRID Arendal, and the Asia Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN). The final report on the workshop, details on the assessment of the South China Sea and the methodology used at the workshop is on COBSEA website at - <http://www.cobsea.org/documents/Reports/>.

3.7 International Water Science Conference 2012

40. The COBSEA Secretariat acted as the lead local organizer coordinating with relevant offices in Bangkok and abroad and providing key administrative and logistical support to UNEP and GEF IW:LEARN HQ in the preparation and organization of the conference. Please see - <http://iwlearn.net/events/international-water-science-conference-iwsc-2012>. The first GEF International Waters Science Conference (IWSC 2012) was held on 24-26 September 2012 in Bangkok.
41. The IWSC 2012 marked the first occasion to examine innovative marine and coastal environment approaches, developed after more than twenty years of GEF International Waters (IW) project implementation. The conference promoted public awareness and advance scientific information into relevant regional processes for better management of marine and coastal environments. It provided a platform for linking scientific knowledge with policy making and management practices and promoted lessons learned to other regions and the global scientific community. (http://iwlearn.net/abt_iwlearn/events/iw-science-conference/iw-sc-2012-conference)
42. The conference was held in collaboration with partners and with the financial support from Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). The associated GEF IW Scientific Network was organized by the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health in partnership with UNEP and UNDP. The first GEF IWSC was hosted by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC) in Bangkok.

4. Strategic and Emerging Issues

4.1 Marine and land-based pollution

4.1.1 The Marine Litter Activity

43. Due to financial and human resources constraints, the third Regional Workshop on Marine Litter and the Regional Clean Up campaign planned for 2009 are still postponed until funds are available.

4.1.2 Termination of the project on Modeling of Pollution Loading

44. A four-year old study, “*Determination of Pollution Loading from Land-based Sources by Using Modeling and GIS*” which did not produce significant results was terminated in 2009 and the remaining payment of 28,000 USD was recovered to the Trust Fund. The usable outcomes of this activity are incorporated into EAS Knowledgebase and the possibility of a revised project under the second phase of the SCS project will be examined.

4.1.3 Representation of UNEP and COBSEA in UNEP/IMO Forum on Ballast water

45. In early October 2010, the Coordinator represented DEPI/MCEB and COBSEA in the UNEP/IMO Forum that was dedicated to the implementation of the Ballast Water Convention, among others, through the Regional Seas platform. COBSEA regional proposal on Marine Invasive Species (MIS) was presented and was well received as a pioneering example to approach MIS on a regional level. It was noted that the COBSEA MIS programme includes ‘non-shipping’ components and that the same cooperation as with IMO, is needed with other agencies (such as with FAO for the fisheries and aquaculture component of MIS).

4.2 Coastal and marine habitat conservation

4.2.1 Green Fins Project

46. The *Green Fins* project initiated in 2005 by COBSEA and the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) promotes conservation and monitoring of coral reefs through environmentally responsible diving. Diver

operators are trained to adhere to a *Code of Conduct* to conserve the marine environment while divers are educated on basic reef ecology and monitoring. A *Green Fins* website was established to enable the public to access further information. (<http://www.greenfins.net>)

47. In 2009, the *Green Fins* programme became a 'COBSEA supported activity', meaning that most of the actual work is carried out now by the NGOs which are supported through modest financial agreements. Unfortunately, funding for this activity was available only until mid-2010.
48. The *Green Fins* programme is recognized widely in the region and raised much interest in the tourism and reef conservation sectors. The Regional Steering Committee of Mangroves for the Future (MFF RSC-7) meeting agreed that Green Fins is good regional initiative and requested UNEP/COBSEA to develop a regional project proposal for its promotion and further development and consideration as one of MFF regional initiatives.
49. During 2011/12 a project proposal to MFF on the enlargement of the Green Fins approach in the Philippines and Maldives was developed by COBSEA and the UNEP Coral Reef Unit. The proposal was approved for 2 years and funding received for USD200,000 the project will be launched in the first half of 2013.

4.2.2 Mangroves For the Future (MFF) Regional Initiatives

50. Since its inception in 2006, UNEP and COBSEA are acting as core partners in the Regional Partnership of MFF. In June 2011, the Coral Reef Unit of UNEP/DEPI and COBSEA have developed and submitted the three project proposals to MFF Secretariat on:
 - i) Climate Change Adaptation, disaster risk reduction in coastal areas focusing on sea level rise and coastal erosion (for Pakistan and Thailand);
 - ii) Strengthening and promotion of the regional Green Fins Programme; environmentally responsible diving activities for reef conservation and through education (for Maldives and Vietnam);
 - iii) Natural resources governance in small islands (for Seychelles, Maldives and Thailand).
51. Each regional project involves 2-3 MFF countries, runs for two years and has a ceiling of \$200,000. All three proposals have now been approved and will be implemented jointly by COBSEA and the Coral Reef Unit of UNEP/DEPI in the first half of 2013.

4.2.3 Marine and Coastal Invasive Species (MIS)

52. The 20th IGM of COBSEA (Viet Nam, Nov. 2009) in its 'Resolution 2 on Regional Programme on Marine and Coastal Invasive Species' noted that marine invasive species have been identified as an emerging threat to the marine and coastal ecosystems in the East Asian Seas region; The IGM also expressed its wish to build capacities in COBSEA countries to address the emerging transboundary threat of marine and coastal invasive species, in line with the *New Strategic Direction of COBSEA 2008-2012*;
53. The 20th IGM has also endorsed then the Marine Invasive Species (MIS) Programme as presented by the COBSEA Secretariat and requested the Secretariat to develop it, pending the availability of resources, in coordination and cooperation with other relevant partners and without duplicating other regional and global initiatives; The IGM also requests the Secretariat to report on the progress of the MIS Programme to the next Intergovernmental Meeting.
54. Following the IGM Resolution, COBSEA Secretariat together with the UNEP/GEF Biodiversity Unit developed a GEF project on MIS for the region. An expert international consultant was engaged to assist the Secretariat to develop the PIF (Project Identification Form) in consultation with the National Focal Points. A final draft of the PIF was circulated to the COBSEA Focal Points in July 2010 together with a request to ensure its inclusion on the GEF V priority list for each country, and to secure letters of endorsement. However, by June 2011 no endorsement of the PIF was received.

55. In view of the low level of interest in this project from COBSEA countries and after careful consideration and consultations with UNEP/GEF and UNEP HQ in Nairobi, the COBSEA Secretariat, terminated the development of the proposed project.

4.3 Management and response to coastal disasters

4.3.1 The Indramayu Pilot Project on Integrated Coastal Zone management

56. In early 2007, COBSEA was provided with 80,000 USD from Mangroves for the Future (MFF) for the implementation of a district-level pilot activity to combine climate change adaptation measures into integrated coastal zone planning through spatial planning in Indramayu, Java island, Indonesia. The project was initiated in November 2007 and completed in mid 2009. The Ministry of Environment, Indonesia was the lead agency while cooperating with the National Spatial Planning Coordination Board, the Ministry of Marine Affairs (MMAF) and its Directorate of Spatial Planning for Sea, Coasts and Small Islands.
57. The objectives were to identify indicators for monitoring coastal and livelihood changes due to climate variability, to develop criteria/guidelines for integration of climate change adaptation measures into the integrated coastal planning of Indramayu and to develop a detailed spatial plan with consideration to climate change and adaptation measures. A final report of the project was produced and published in early 2010. The lessons learned from the project were also used for the planning and implementation of the proposed Sida Project on spatial planning
<http://www.cobsea.org/documents/Indramayu%20Project.%20MFF-ROAP.%20FINAL%20Report.%20%20March%202010.pdf>

4.3.2 The Project: Spatial Planning in the Coastal Zone

58. The project ‘Spatial Planning in the Coastal Zone – Disaster Prevention and Sustainable Development’ was developed by the COBSEA Secretariat as a post-tsunami project during 2006 and was approved by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), in late 2009. The capacity building component is described above (Section 3.1 to 3.3)
59. The three-year project focuses on spatial planning in coastal areas with an overall goal to prevent and reduce the impacts from natural disasters, climate change and sea level rise, and to promote sustainable development of the coastal areas through the application of spatial planning.
60. The project is being implemented in three phases: Producing a Regional Resource and Guidance Document (RRD) for the integration of new concepts, such as climate change adaptation, disaster-risk reduction, ecosystem-based management and results-based management into existing coastal spatial planning policies and procedures; national consultations focusing on identifying and planning national capacity building priorities and activities aimed at ‘national adaptation’ of the Regional Resource Document; and – capacity building, national translation and adaptation of the RRD and demonstration projects.
61. The project has a total budget of 1,292,960 USD with duration of almost four years from 1st January 2010 to 31st October 2013. The project is implemented in six of the COBSEA member countries: Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. UNEP/COBSEA is the implementing organization of the Project while COBSEA Secretariat acts as the Project Coordination Unit and oversees the project implementation.
62. During 2010, the COBSEA Secretariat focused on setting up the project and the implementation of Phase 1 activities including some preparatory work towards Phases II and III. These include the establishment of project management team in May 2010, and the establishment of administrative and financial procedures with the first sub-allotment made in June 2010; the identification of national institutions and national project focal points (NPPF) as nominated by COBSEA National Focal Points in September 2010; and the mobilization of a consultancy group in July 2010 to develop the draft regional guidelines and facilitate the first regional workshop.

63. The first draft of the regional guidelines was submitted by the Swedish consultancy group (SSPA) to COBSEA on 22 October 2010 and was then distributed to the countries on 9 November 2010 for review and comments. The review and endorsement of the first draft of the Regional Guidelines was accomplished through a Regional Workshop convened in Bangkok, Thailand from 29 November to 2 December 2010. (See also Section 2 National Capacity Building)
64. As agreed during the regional workshop and after consultations with UNEP HQ, three international experts in the field were contracted as peer reviewers (Dr. Richard Kenchington, Australia; Dr. Tundi Argady, USA; Dr. Lawrence Hildebrand, Canada) to review the second draft of the regional document as well as to ascertain that the document produced under the project is of high quality that meets international standards. The peer review was completed on 11 January 2011.
65. The second year of project implementation, 2011, focused on changes and adjustments in the project approach brought about by the substantive comments made on the draft regional document by the participants of the COBSEA Regional Workshop held in Bangkok. Additional comments made by the three international experts who peer reviewed the second draft and also suggested a change in the project approach. Those changes were also approved by UNEP and by Sida during the Annual Review Meeting on 16 March 2011. The changes and adjustments were introduced to the Second Revision of the Project Document, as approved by UNEP HQ on 3 June 2011.
66. One of the peer reviewers, Dr. Lawrence (Larry) Hildebrand, was engaged in April 2011 to amend the 'regional guidelines' into a Regional Resource Document (RRD). The draft RRD "Spatial Planning in the Coastal Zone of the EAS Region: Mainstreaming Emerging Issues and New Management Approaches" was submitted to COBSEA on 18 July 2011. A draft menu of possible capacity building options 'Training and Capacity Building for Coastal Spatial Planning in the EAS Region: Menus and Ingredients' was also developed and submitted on 21 July 2011 to COBSEA. Both documents were submitted to UNEP in late July 2011 for comments.
67. Following comments from COBSEA and UNEP, two documents were finalized in October 2011 – the RRD "*Spatial Planning in the Coastal Zone of the EAS Region: Integrating Emerging Issues and Modern Management Approaches*" and the "*Training and Capacity Building for Coastal Spatial Planning in the EAS Region: Menus and Syllabus*". The RRD and the 'menu' were sent to the COBSEA Focal Points, COBSEA Contact Points, and the National Project Focal Points and nominated National Experts on 12 October 2011. These documents concluded Phase 1 implementation.
(<http://www.cobsea.org/documents/COBSEA%20Spatial%20Planning%20Regional%20Resource%20Document.pdf>)
68. Phase 2, implementation, involved individual country consultations on the needs and priorities for capacity building for spatial planning. In coordination with the COBSEA National Focal Points, six *national consultations meetings* were organized by COBSEA Secretariat as follows: Viet Nam, Hanoi (18 November 2011), China, Beijing (25 November 2011), Philippines, Manila (28 November 2011), Thailand, Bangkok (30 November 2011 and 4 January 2012), Indonesia, Jakarta (20 December 2011) and Cambodia, Phnom Penh (22 December 2011). The Sida Project Coordination Team, composed of Dr. Ellik Adler and Mr. Reynaldo Molina of the COBSEA Secretariat and Dr. Lawrence Hildebrand as the International Consultant, visited all six participating countries to meet with various national authorities and experts with responsibilities for spatial planning in the coastal zone. Six consultations summary reports were prepared for each country, summarizing the consultation process, the needs and priorities for capacity building, the adaptation and capacity building activities identified and agreed, and the schemes to implement the activities as 'Workplans and Budgets'.
69. The Interim Edition (November 2011) of the RRD and the menu of possible capacity-building activities were presented at the national consultations with the aim of identifying country-specific needs for adapting the Regional Resource Document as well as national priorities for capacity building in coastal spatial planning.
70. The activities identified and agreed during the national consultations for implementation at the national level were as follows: translation and adaptation of the RRD into national settings; development of national

training manuals; organization of national consultation workshops; organization of national training courses; and amendment of existing national land-use spatial planning guidebooks.

71. COBSEA Secretariat organized a regional workshop on the “Results of the National Consultation Process” on 23 January 2012 in Manila to discuss and finalize with countries the logistical and technical arrangements to implement the capacity building activities of each country in Phase 3. The workshop reviewed the outcomes of (e.g. RRD of national consultations) which Phase 2 guided further refinement of the activities for Phase 3 of the project.
72. A local information technology and website expert was contracted in February 2012 to develop a web-page for the Sida-COBSEA project under the COBSEA website. The contract also included the redesigning, hosting and maintenance of the COBSEA website.
(http://www.cobsea.org/projects/SIDA_Spatial_Planning_Project.html)
73. On 6 March 2012, the Annual Review Meeting between Sida and COBSEA was held to review the 2011 project activities and accomplishments and to discuss the future project implementation in 2012.
74. A common activity identified during the national consultation was to begin Phase 3 activities with the organization of a train the trainer course at the regional level. From May 14 to 18, 2012, the UNEP/COBSEA Regional Train-the-Trainer Course on Spatial Planning in the Coastal and Marine Zone in the EAS Region was held in Phuket, Thailand to train future national trainers on how to integrate emerging issues such as adaptation to climate change and sea-level rise, and modern management approaches including ecosystem-based management, disaster-risk reduction and marine spatial planning, into national and sub-national spatial planning processes in the coastal and marine environments. A total of 34 participants from Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam attended the training course.
75. The regional training course concluded with the completion of six draft national training syllabi that were developed further through national consultations, and finalized in preparation for national training courses conducted in late 2012/early 2013. Six national teams of instructors were established to conduct the national training courses in their own countries and languages. These courses were conducted in late 2012 and early 2013.
76. The translation and adaptation of the Regional Resource Document into National Resource Documents (NRD) as part of Phase 3, provides local planners, researchers, students, and national authorities with relevant information on coastal spatial planning. The NRDs are comprehensive documents with material relevant to the legal, administrative and institutional aspects, as well as reference to case studies, and to projects that have already applied coastal spatial planning and integrated disaster-risk reduction, climate change, ecosystem-based management, and more into the national settings.
77. In July 2012, Sida approved the request for no cost extension of the project from 31 December 2012 to 31 October 2013, and an additional contribution of SEK 500,000 to the UNEP-GEF International Waters Science Conference (IWSC 2012);
(http://iwlearn.net/abt_iwlearn/events/iw-science-conference/iw-sc-2012-conference)
78. National Training Courses on Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning were held in Cambodia, China, Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand. A national training course in the Philippines is scheduled in the first quarter of 2013. Please see Section 3.5 Regional Train-the-Trainer Course and National Training Phase 3 for further details.
79. Phase 3 of the project will be concluded with the organization of a *regional workshop* to synthesize the outcomes of all capacity building activities and to integrate good practices and lessons learned into the final Regional Resource Document. This process may include the addition of regional data and information needs for spatial planning.
80. The Sida Coastal Spatial Planning Project to date has made good progress with all activities and outputs delivered well within schedule and budget. The success of the project can be attributed to the commitment of the national institutions and national coordinators in the six participating countries. The regular communications made by COBSEA Secretariat with these countries to monitor the progress of

implementation of national activities, and the timely provision and release of funds by UNEP ROAP and UNESCAP for national activities, also contributed to its success.

4.3.3 Regional Coastal Erosion Programme

81. In response to the decision of the 20th COBSEA's IGM, which identified in its Resolution 3 coastal erosion as a priority emerging issue in the EAS region, UNEP COBSEA on March 2010 signed an MoU of Collaboration with the Korea Maritime Institute (KMI) to develop a *regional programme* to address coastal erosion.
82. With the kind support of the Government of Korea through KMI and the Ministry of Land Transport and Maritime Affairs (MLTM), COBSEA recruited a Canadian consulting company to draft the regional guidelines and principles for governments on how to develop their national policies on sea level rise and coastal erosion. The draft guidelines were delivered in October 2010.
83. In December 2010, the MLTM (and KMI kindly offered to further support COBSEA with USD41,000 for the organization of a regional workshop aimed at discussing and approving the regional guidelines and to agree on the 'way forward' for the coastal erosion programme. Contacts were established with the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Thailand to jointly organize a regional symposium and a field trip in conjunction with the regional workshop.
84. The COBSEA regional workshop on "Climate Change, Sea Level Rise and Coastal Erosion" in Bangkok, Thailand ran from 25-28 April 2011. The workshop participants, national authorities and experts, discussed and agreed on the regional strategy and policy document on coastal erosion, which will serve as the main reference document and platform for the development of regional programs on coastal erosion for EAS countries.
85. An International Symposium on Sea Level Rise and Coastal Erosion was held on 28 April 2011 in Bangkok, Thailand which was co-organized by UNEP/COBSEA and the Thai Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR).
86. After peer review by three international experts and comments received from countries, COBSEA Secretariat finalized in October 2011 the Regional Resource Document (RRD) "*A Regional Approach to the Sustainable and Ecosystem-Based Management of Coastal Erosion in the East Asian Seas Region: A Resource Document*". The document lays the foundation for a regional strategy or policy on coastal erosion in the region. (http://cobsea.org/documents/report-Coastal_Erosion/Report%20Coastal%20Erosion%20Regional%20Resource%20Document.pdf).

4.3.4 COBSEA Yeosu Coastal Erosion and Sea-Level Rise Project

87. In March 2011 COBSEA Secretariat submitted to the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the Yeosu 2012 EXPO Organizing Committee a project proposal entitled "*YEOSU Project: Addressing the Challenge of Sea-Level Rise and Coastal Erosion in the East Asian Seas – Initial Implementation of the COBSEA Regional Strategy*", to implement the initial stages of the strategy in six developing countries (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam) where erosion is causing serious and growing impacts to their coastal ecosystems, infrastructure, people, economies and livelihoods.
88. The COBSEA Secretariat met with KOICA delegation on 5-6 September 2011 in Bangkok, to discuss the procedural arrangements of the proposed project. The COBSEA proposal was one of the six selected among some 20 international organization proposals due to its relevancy and urgency for implementation in the region.
89. UNEP and the Organizing Committee for EXPO 2012 Yeosu Korea and the KOICA signed a Donor Agreement on 21 December 2011 for the implementation of the COBSEA-YEOSU Project. The project started in early 2012 and ends late 2013 with a USD400,000 budget. The regional strategy document (RRD) on coastal erosion is the main reference document for the implementation of this project.

90. On 25 March 2012, the COBSEA Secretariat convened the Coordination and Planning Meeting on the 'Yeosu Project' to organize, plan and coordinate the preparation and implementation of the YEOSU Project activities for the six participating countries. Important decisions were made on: the rationale and goals of the project and the three phases of the project; the outputs and deliverables of the project which will be the six National Assessment Reports (NARs), a highlighted menu of possible pilot interventions, six country consultation reports and a roadmap for implementation; the preparation of the Regional Inception Workshop; the workplan and budget of the project.
91. National management teams composed of the NPFs and national consultants (NC) are established in each country. The nominations of the NCs and NPFs were based on appropriate mandates, resources, motivation and capacity to lead the process and also in consultation with the COBSEA National Focal Points. The nominated NCs together with NPFs are responsible for national-level coordination as well as situation analysis, assessment of gaps and implementation of pilot interventions.
92. The *Regional Inception Workshop* for the project organized by COBSEA Secretariat in Bangkok, Thailand, 31 July- August 2012 discussed and agreed on the implementation of the Yeosu project. National authorities and international experts discussed various directions, options and possible activities. It was a good opportunity for sharing of experiences between the participating countries and also for coordinating in making important decisions on the way forward for the implementation of the project. 17 representatives from six COBSEA countries (nominated national focal point (NFP), national consultant (NC) and national authorities (NA)) attended the workshop.
93. The project provided funding to support the nominated national focal points for implementation of national coordination activities of the project such as the preparation of the National Assessment Report (NAR), the organization and conduct of the National Consultation Meeting, and the translation and publication of the final NAR.
94. Individual consultancy contracts were prepared for the nominated national consultants who are responsible for the preparation of NARs for submission in December 2012. So far, the NARs submitted are from Cambodia, Malaysia and Vietnam.

5. Regional cooperation

5.1 Cooperation and Collaboration with Partner Organizations

95. Building on COBSEA's cooperation with other regional organizations in the past, the COBSEA Secretariat continued to develop collaborative working relations with donor and funding agencies and with partner organizations such as: Sida, KOICA, PEMSEA, ASEAN Working Groups on Coastal and Marine Environment, ASEAN WG on Maritime Transport, UNESCO/IOC/WESTPAC, GEF, FAO, MFF, SEAFDEC, UNEP/ROAP, NOWPAP, SACEP, YSLME, BOBLME, IMO, UNDP, CBD, GISP, IUCN, local universities and with global conventions and U.N. organizations. The precise details of the cooperation between COBSEA and these organizations are beyond the scope of this report, and further information can be obtained from the Secretariat.

5.2 Cooperation with other Governments

96. In March 2010, a general 'umbrella' MoU between UNEP/COBSEA and Korea Maritime Institute was signed to strengthen the cooperation between the two organizations. According to this MoU, specific projects will be developed to strengthen the cooperation between the Government of Korea and COBSEA. Under this MOU, an exchange of 'Letters of Agreement' between KMI and COBSEA took place in early May 2010 regarding the development of regional strategy on sea level rise and coastal erosion. KMI graciously provided COBSEA with USD20,000 for developing a regional policy and programme to address coastal erosion. In addition and as a follow up to this MoU additional support, of USD43,100, from Ministry of Land Transport and Maritime Affairs (MLTM) was generously transferred to UNEP/COBSEA in December 2010. The purpose of this support was to convene a Regional Workshop of National Authorities and National

Experts aimed at discussing and agreeing on the RRD and on the future regional programme for COBSEA on coastal erosion.

5.3 Organization and Participation in International/Regional Events

97. COBSEA hosted the 11th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas in Bangkok and was responsible for the logistical arrangements as well as to some substantive matters. COBSEA Coordinator chaired the meeting which was considered as very successful by all participants. All costs were covered by UNEP DEPI/MCEB.
98. COBSEA co-organized with NOWPAP, UNDP, PEMSEA and YSLME a workshop on regional governance during the PEMSEA East Asian Seas Congress in Manila in November 2009.
99. COBSEA hosted the 37th Session of the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP) on 14 – 19 February 2010 in Bangkok and was financially supported by DEWA. COBSEA, together with other Asia Pacific Regional Seas and MAP contributed significantly to the success of the meeting. Discussions were held also on strengthening the cooperation between GESAMP and Regional Seas. Possible cooperation between COBSEA and GESAMP related to the Sea Level Rise and Coastal Erosion project was discussed.
100. The GEF International Waters secretariat initiated together with World Bank, UNDP and UNEP and in collaboration with other regional and global organizations a stocktaking process aimed at assisting governments and the GEF 'to strategize' its activities and investments in the East Asian Seas region. COBSEA, together with MCEB and UNEP/DGEF participated in this process throughout 2010. MCEB and COBSEA participated in the 'Stocktaking Meeting' hosted and organized by PEMSEA in Manila in late October 2010. GEF agencies, with the financial support of UNEP hired consultants to prepare a report and analysis of the situation in the region. GEF Sec and its implementing agencies concluded this exercise and integrated its results into GEF's strategic and programmatic approach. This process delayed submission of the GEF proposal for the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for the South China Sea.
101. While the Regular Process on the Assessment of Marine Environment now called the World Ocean Assessment is still ongoing under the U.N General Assembly, UNESCO/IOC has organized, with the support of the Government of Korea a regional workshop in October 2010 to promote the process in Southeast Asia. COBSEA (as well as NOWPAP) assisted IOC and KORDI in identifying relevant participants from their member countries and the both Coordinators contributed to the meeting by promoting regional cooperation within the larger framework of the WOA.
102. During the meeting, the Coordinator had also discussed with GRID-Arendal the project proposal on capacity building related to the WOA that was jointly submitted by GRID and COBSEA to the Asia Pacific Network (APN). The \$40,000 project proposal was approved in 2012 and funded the organization of the East Asian Seas Regional Workshop for the World Ocean Assessment (Bangkok, Thailand, 17-19 September 2012). Please see Chapter 3.9 National Capacity Building in this report.
103. The Coordinator was invited to represent UNEP and COBSEA in the 5th International Marine Debris Conference in Hawaii in March 2011, where the Coordinator presented a paper on UNEP's work on marine litter, as well as strengthening UNEP's team to the conference as a co-organizer (with NOAA) of the event.
104. The COBSEA Secretariat participated in the Global Land Oceans Connections Conference (GLOC) and the Third Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the GPA (IGR 3; UNEP's Global Programme of Action on the Prevention of Marine Pollution from Land Based Activities in Manila on 23-27 January 2012. The COBSEA Coordinator made a presentation on the COBSEA/Sida Project in a side event on Marine Spatial Planning (organized by the GEF, COBSEA, UNEP and the CBD) which was well attended and the Sida project featured well and raised interest.
105. The UNEP-COBSEA Team (Dr. Elik Adler and Mr. Reynaldo Molina) participated in the EAS 2012 Congress in July 2012 in Changwon, Korea. The Coordinator served as a panel member in the Workshop on Using Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) as a Tool to Achieve Aichi Targets and presented a paper on

Coastal Spatial Planning in the East Asian Sea Region in the Special Workshop: Expert Consultation Workshop on Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Approach: International Experiences. The COBSEA Team also met with several COBSEA National Project Focal Points and National Experts to discuss the implementation of Phase 3 activities of the Sida Spatial Planning Project, and the preparation and requirements for the regional inception workshop of the Yeosu Coastal Erosion Project.

106. From 24-26 September 2012, the COBSEA Secretariat supported the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in organizing the first GEF International Waters Science Conference (IWSC 2012) in Bangkok, in collaboration with partners and with the financial support from GEF, UNEP and Sida (Sweden). The associated GEF IW Scientific Network was organized by the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health in partnership with UNEP and UNDP. The first GEF IWSC was hosted by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC) in Bangkok. Please see Chapter 3.10 National Capacity Building in this report.
107. During the reporting period 2010-2012 the COBSEA Coordinator and COBSEA Secretariat team participated and represented COBSEA in various regional meetings and events such as World Ocean Forum (key note lecture), GEF IW Learn meeting, ASEAN WGCME, PEMSEA, MFF and others.

5.4 Routine Secretariat work and day-to-day management

108. COBSEA Secretariat has run and maintained all routine and day-to-day management and coordination activities related to administrative, financial, technical and scientific aspects of COBSEA's work. In view of the 20th IGM decision on zero funding of activities from the COBSEA Trust Fund, all the activities and missions mentioned above were carried out with external funding.

6. Implementation of igm decisions

109. Implementing the decisions of the 20th COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting in November 2009 in Halong Bay, Viet Nam were challenging as there was no increase in contributions to COBSEA Trust Fund. All the activities noted in this report were carried out with external funding (approximately USD2.4 million) to date for activities mobilized by the Secretariat. UNEP provided USD150,000 for 2011 and USD180,825 for 2012 to support the salaries of the Secretariat.
110. Table 1 summarizes the status of the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the 20th Meeting of COBSEA.

Table 1 - Status of the implementation of the Resolutions of the 20th Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA (2-5 November 2009, Ha Long City, Viet Nam).

Resolution	Status of Implementation	Comments
<p>Resolution 1 – the GEF Project SAP Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizing that the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) will contribute to the capacities of COBSEA countries to protect and better manage their marine and coastal resources; • Desiring to develop a new GEF project for the region of East Asian Seas that will implement the SAP in benefit of the improved livelihood and well-being of coastal communities in the region; • Mindful that member countries support the role of COBSEA in the development and implementation of the SAP; <p>The 20th Intergovernmental Meeting of COBSEA -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Requests COBSEA Secretariat to develop a Project Information Format (PIF) for the GEF Project ‘SAP Implementation’ in collaboration with the UNEP-DGEF and through a process of coordination and consultations with COBSEA member countries and the GEF Secretariat; ➢ Requests the Secretariat to include emerging issues of regional concern such as marine invasive species, marine litter and coastal erosion as integral activities of the SAP Implementation project. ➢ Decides that SAP Implementation project will be executed within COBSEA framework and will be hosted within the COBSEA Secretariat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COBSEA Secretariat together with UNEP/GEF and UNEP DEPI developed a Draft PIF that was sent to countries for comments and endorsement in August 2010. Following the outcomes of the GEF review, a request by GEF Secretariat to include fisheries component that was later dropped and a slow rate of response from countries, the initiative to finalize the SAP Implementation PIF was renewed by UNEP and COBSEA Secretariat in September 2012. In December 2012 a regional consultation meeting was organized by UNEP and COBSEA following which countries have been requested in early January 2013 to endorse the latest version of the PIF. Please see details in Paragraphs 124-129 in Chapter 7.4. • During the early stages of the project an updated version of the TDA and of the SAP will be produced and any identified emerging issues will be considered and agreed activities will be developed during the development of the full project document. • Depending on the decision of the 21st IGM on the future of COBSEA, UNEP sees COBSEA as the best platform to develop and implement the SCS SAP Implementation project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The future of COBSEA and the development and implementation of the GEF Project for the South China Sea are interlinked. Failure to strengthen, develop and sustain one will negatively affect the other. All efforts should be made by COBSEA countries to support both COBSEA and the SCS SAP implementation project.
<p>Resolution 2 – Regional Programme on Marine and Coastal Invasive Species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noting that marine invasive species have been identified as an emerging threat to the marine and coastal ecosystems in the East Asian Seas region; • Recognizing that the coastal and marine ecosystems in the East Asian Seas are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the IGM Resolution, COBSEA Secretariat together with the UNEP/GEF Biodiversity Unit circulated a final draft of the PIF to the COBSEA Focal Points in July 2010 with a 	

Resolution	Status of Implementation	Comments
<p>among the richest and most productive in the world, of vast social and economic importance and are under threat of harmful effects of marine invasive species;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desiring to build capacities in COBSEA countries to address the emerging transboundary threat of marine and coastal invasive species and recalling that this is in line with the <i>New Strategic Direction of COBSEA 2008-2012</i>; <p>The 20th COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endorses the Marine Invasive Species (MIS) Programme as presented by the COBSEA Secretariat and requests the Secretariat to develop it, pending the availability of resources, in coordination and cooperation with other relevant partners and without duplicating other regional and global initiatives; Requests the Secretariat to report on the progress of the MIS Programme to the next Intergovernmental Meeting. 	<p>request to include it in the GEF V priority list for each country, and to secure letters of endorsement. The response from countries was limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the low level of interest in this project the COBSEA Secretariat terminated the development of the proposed project. 	
<p>Resolution 3 - Workplan and Budget for 2010- 2011 and the Way Forward for COBSEA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizing that COBSEA has suffered in recent years from financial and human resources shortages and challenges; Noting the critical situation of the East Asian Seas Trust Fund and also being aware that without ample and urgent increase of support and contributions to the Trust Fund, it may have limited abilities to deliver a full and comprehensive Programme of Work; Adopting a conservative and careful approach and trying to conserve the limited resources of the Trust Fund; Wishing to provide realistic guidance to the COBSEA Secretariat so that it can focus its activities in the coming biennium; <p>The 20th COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approves the COBSEA Workplan and Budget for 2010-2011 as detailed in table 1 below and requests the COBSEA Secretariat to implement it accordingly. Decides that that COBSEA will concentrate, in the coming years, on a limited number but well defined activities that will be coordinated with other regional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COBSEA Secretariat fully followed the decision of the 19th IGM and this report describes in detail the various activities that were developed and implemented by the Secretariat under the critical financial constraints since the last IGM. 	

Resolution	Status of Implementation	Comments
<p>players, in order to avoid duplication of efforts and resources. These activities will be the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing the GEF project ‘SAP Implementation’; 2. Implementing the Sida project on spatial planning; 3. Develop, and if resources will be made available, implement the three priority activities: marine invasive species, marine litter and coastal erosion and integrate these activities into the GEF project; 4. Resource mobilization; 5. Develop other activities in line with <i>COBSEA New Strategic Direction 2008-2012</i> if adequate external resources would be made available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As mentioned before all COBSEA activities as from 2009 until 2012 were carried out with external funding to the COBSEA Trust Fund. ● For details please see the various sections of this report. 	

7. Fundraising

7.1 External support to COBSEA

111. For the 2009 – 2012 reporting period, support for COBSEA activities came from external sources. UNEP's traditional support to COBSEA's activities shrunk as UNEP also saw financial constraints during the last few years.
112. UNEP's support during 2009-2012 was of: i) 10,000 USD to develop the Regional Marine Biodiversity Outlook in June 2010 (see Chapter 2.3 above); ii) 40,000 USD to organize the Regional workshop on the Regular Process on World Ocean Assessment in September 2012 (see Section 3.6 above) and iii) to pay the shortfall in the Secretariat salaries as of December 2011.
113. Other 'traditional' sources of support to COBSEA have also declined: Sida's support of about 90-100,000 USD per year from 2004 – 2009 has come to an end. Sida has changed its approach and as of 2010 it has set regional priorities that are realized through their Regional Office for Asia. The loss of Sida's direct support to COBSEA affected the Secretariat's ability to deliver. However, COBSEA Secretariat is grateful to Sida for supporting for over three years, the project on *Spatial Planning in the Coastal Zone*. The project is implemented in six COBSEA member countries with a total budget of USD1.292 million USD. (see also Section 4.3.2 above).
114. The traditional support of the U.S to COBSEA coral reef and pollution from land-based activities has also ended in 2009.

7.2 Mangroves for the Future (MFF) Regional Initiatives

115. During the last few years, COBSEA, together with UNEP/ROAP (Regional Office for Asia Pacific) and UNEP Coral reef Unit represented UNEP as core partner to MFF and assisted in the development of joint programmes and activities. In June 2011, the Coral Reef Unit of UNEP/DEPI and COBSEA Secretariat developed and submitted three project proposals to MFF Secretariat. Each regional project involves 2-3 MFF countries with a budget of 200,000 USD. All three Donor Agreements between UNEP and MFF have been signed and will be implemented jointly by COBSEA and the Coral Reef Unit of UNEP/DEPI as of January 2013. (see also 4.2.2 above)

7.3 COBSEA Yeosu Project on Coastal Erosion

116. In March 2011 COBSEA Secretariat submitted to the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the Yeosu 2012 EXPO Organizing Committee a project proposal to address the problem of coastal erosion in six developing countries. The proposal was approved and UNEP, the Organizing Committee for EXPO 2012 Yeosu Korea and the KOICA signed a Donor Agreement for the implementation of the COBSEA-YEOSU Project in December 2011. The project started in early 2012 for two years with a 400,000 USD budget (see Section 4.3.4 above).

7.4 Development of the GEF South China Sea SAP Implementation Project

117. UNEP/DGEF began developing the PIF (Project Identification Form) for next phase of the project - *Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea*. In accordance with the decisions of the 19th IGM and the 20th IGM of COBSEA and UNEP and GEF Secretariat agreement, this project was to be carried out by COBSEA as its Executing Agency and UNEP as the Implementing Agency. It is expected that once finalized and endorsed by COBSEA countries, the PIF will be submitted to GEF Secretariat in early 2013.
118. Following decisions of COBSEA IGMs, the Secretariat, with the help of UNEP/DGEF and UNEP/DEPI engaged in developing the PIF (Project Identification Form, or Project Concept) for the *SAP Implementation*. A first version of the PIF was developed and sent in August 2009 to COBSEA countries for initial comments.

During this time, the GEF Secretariat initiated a review of marine projects in South East Asia and then asked UNEP to consider including a fisheries component which was later dropped. This combined with limited responses delayed PIF development.

119. In order to accelerate the endorsement process of the PIF, UNEP/DEPI/MFWEB and COBSEA Secretariat convened on 6-7 December 2012 in Bangkok a regional consultation meeting on the development of the project concept (PIF) for the South China Sea SAP Implementation. The main objectives of this consultation meeting were to discuss the draft PIF in detail and to technically agree on its scope and content and to discuss and agree on the level of co-financing that each GEF eligible country will have to provide in order to achieve the required level of co-financing;
120. Following this Consultation Meeting and once an agreement has been reached on these two issues, the amended draft PIF was sent by UNEP on 17 December 2012 to countries for comments. A final version of the PIF incorporating comments from the countries will be sent to the seven participating countries for formal endorsement on 14 February 2013 along with a request to endorse the PIF by their respective GEF Operational Focal Points for submission to GEF.

7.5 Australia's withdrawal from COBSEA

121. In August 2011, Australia formally withdrew from COBSEA, citing budget constraints and a desire to engage "in a smaller number of key areas", thus reducing the number of member countries to 9 and the contributions to the Trust Fund to \$152,000 per annum.

8. COBSEA Sustainability

8.1 Meeting of COBSEA Ministers/High Officials with UNEP's Executive Director (ED)

122. As a follow up to the decision of UNEP Executive Director, Mr. Achim Steiner, to address COBSEA's critical financial situation, UNEP/DEPI and COBSEA organized a meeting of Ministers/High Level Officials of COBSEA member countries with the Executive Director. The meeting was held on 26 October 2010, during the CBD COP 10 in Nagoya, Japan and discussed the future of COBSEA with the Ministers in view of its critical financial situation and the total depletion of COBSEA Trust Fund. One minister (Malaysia) attended the meeting and only six out of ten countries were present.
123. At the meeting, the Executive Director discussed with the countries' high level representatives the need for increased financial support and engagement from COBSEA countries during the meeting. At the Executive Director's suggestion, it was agreed that an external and independent consultant would be hired to analyze the options for the future of COBSEA and to consult with countries on these options.
124. The process took more time than envisaged, and the international consultant submitted the final report to UNEP in March 2012. The consultant's report is annexed to the Sustainability Options for COBSEA document of this IGM as Annex 3 (UNEP/DEPI/COBSEA IGM 21/4)
125. Based on the consultant report, UNEP developed a more comprehensive document that outlines the practical options that COBSEA countries have. The options in this document will be the basis for discussions during the 21st IGM with the expectation that a decision by member countries on the future of COBSEA will be taken.

8.2 Current Financial Sustainability

126. The Trust Fund was depleted in early December 2010. The Secretariat salaries exceeded the annual income of countries contributions to the Trust Fund, and UNEP, as an interim emergency measure, pays for the difference. A portion of staff salaries are also charged to projects funded by external sources (the Sida and the Yeosu projects) where possible.

127. The COBSEA Secretariat closely monitors the Trust Fund situation and continues to send reminders to countries in arrears.

9. Financial Report

128. This part of the report summarizes various aspects of COBSEA's Trust Fund situation and activities. Please note that due to the fact that COBSEA financial activities are handled and monitored by three different financial administrations (ROAP and ESCAP in Bangkok and UNON/UNEP HQ in Nairobi), small discrepancies in figures may exist between reports of these three administrations; Figures are adjusted at the end of every biennium).

9.1 Status of the COBSEA Trust Fund and contributions of member countries

129. As of 1999 the total annual pledges by member countries to COBSEA Trust Fund have been USD 171,600. With the withdrawal of Australia from COBSEA in 2010, this amount was reduced to USD 154,600, as shown in Table 2.

COUNTRY	%	Pledges for 2013 (in USD)
Cambodia	3.2%	5,000
People's Republic of China	19.4%	30,000
Indonesia	12.9%	20,000
Republic of Korea	9.7%	15,000
Malaysia	12.1%	18,700
Philippines	16.2%	25,000
Singapore	6.5%	10,000
Thailand	13.5%	20,900
Vietnam	6.5%	10,000
TOTAL	100%	154,600

Table 2: The present status of annual pledges to the Trust Fund.

130. The 18th, 19th and 20th IGMs have continuously discussed the need to increase the level of contributions of member countries to the Trust Fund but no decisions have been taken. The 19th IGM (January 2008, Cambodia) decided that *“considering the member countries’ difficulties in increasing their contributions at present, COBSEA will continue operation at the current size of the secretariat and the present level of member country contributions, noting that in 2012 the current balance of the Trust Fund would be depleted (according to the calculations provided). The pledges to the East Asian Seas Trust Fund will be reviewed at the 20th Meeting of COBSEA”*.
131. The 20th IGM (November 2009, Viet Nam) approved the COBSEA Workplan and Budget for 2010-2011 as detailed in table 3 below and requested the COBSEA Secretariat to implement it accordingly. As indicated, no budget was allocated to activities.

Planned Expenditures In X 1,000 USD	Used in 2008	Used in 2009	Planned 2010	Planned 2011	Comments
Personnel					
Coordinator	176	270	185	190	
Programme Officer	144	154	160	180	Increased costs in 2011 due to repatriation and new recruitment;
Administrative Assistant	68	33	70	72	
Senior secretary	55	53	*	-	* Post becomes vacant and frozen until better times for COBSEA.
Sub Total - Personnel	443	510	415	435	
Activities					No activities
COBSEA IGM		20		25	
Sub Total - Activities		20		25	
Operational costs					
Rent	12	12	14	14	
Office equipment, supply, communication, print, and misc.	2	10	6	6	
Sub total - Operational	14	22	20	20	
Total	457	552	435	480	According to estimates, Trust Fund will become fully depleted in early 2011

Table 3: COBSEA Workplan and Budget for 2010-2011 as approved by the 20th IGM (Nov. 2009).

132. Table 4 presents the status of countries contributions to the Trust Fund as of 31 December 2012:

COUNTRY	Unpaid pledges for 2011 and prior yrs	Adjustments	Pledges for 2012	Collections during 2012 for 2012 & fut. yrs.	Collections during 2012 for prior yrs	Unpaid pledges for 2012 and prior yrs
Cambodia	0	0	5,000	0	0	5,000
People's Republic of China	0	0	30,000	30,000	0	0
Indonesia	0	0	20,000	20,000	0	0
Republic of Korea	0	0	15,000	0	0	15,000
Malaysia	0	0	18,700	18,700	0	0
Philippines	(1,257)	0	25,000	23,743	0	(0)
Singapore	0	0	10,000	10,000	0	0
Thailand	0	0	20,900	20,900	0	0
Vietnam	0	0	10,000	10,000	0	0
TOTAL	(1,257)	0	154,600	133,343	0	20,000

Table 4: Status of the East Asian Seas Trust Fund as of 31 December 2012.

133. A number of reminders have been sent to countries in arrears as of June 2012.
134. Table 5 below reflects the flow of income and expenditure over the period 2008-2012. During the period the biennium 2011-2012, the COBSEA secretariat received significant support from the Environment Fund of UNEP and other funding sources. This is reflected in the reduced level of expenditures that was charged to the trust fund, a reduction of approximately 75%, during the years 2011 and 2012.
135. UNEP's financial support to the COBSEA Secretariat salary ceased with the retirement of the Coordinator at the end of January 2013. Funding of salary costs to transition to the option selected by member states will be sourced from member states pledges and extra-budgetary funds.

REGIONAL TRUST FUND FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT AND COASTAL AREAS OF THE EAST ASIAN SEAS (ESL)						
STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AND CHANGES IN						
RESERVE AND FUND BALANCE FOR THE YEARS 2008 - 2012 (in USD)						
	INCOME	2008	2009	2010	2011	Interim 2012
	Voluntary contributions	174,600	174,600	174,600	133,700	154,600
	Interest income	20,407	13,171	4,353	(782)	415
	TOTAL INCOME	195,007	187,771	178,953	132,918	155,015
	EXPENDITURE					
	Staff and other personnel costs	472,995	504,253	394,068	100,871	109,348
	Contractual services	-	20,000	(8,000)	-	-
	Travel	(1,453)	76	1,877	(5,201)	-
	Operating expenses	1,094	23,839	-	-	-
	Acquisitions	12,213	9,631	13,576	-	-
	Programme support costs	63,030	72,514	52,198	12,437	14,215
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	547,879	630,313	453,719	108,107	123,563
	EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	(352,872)	(442,542)	(274,766)	24,811	31,452
	Prior years' adjustment	-	-	(100,000)	-	20,900
	FUND BALANCE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PERIOD	1,195,966	843,094	400,552	25,786	50,597
	FUND BALANCE AT THE END OF THE PERIOD	843,094	400,552	25,786	50,597	102,949
	UNPAID PLEDGES	68,467	61,700	20,000	-	20,000
	DEFFERED PLEDGES	-	-	-	1,257	-
	FUND BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD	774,627	338,852	5,786	50,597	82,949

Table 5: COBSEA Trust Fund used expenditures from 2008 to 2012. The figures for 2012 are interim figures pending financial closure of UNEP Accounts in February 2013.

10. Recommendations to the 21st IGM

The IGM is invited to –

Review, discuss and adopt the report of the Executive Director on the status of COBSEA and on the implementation of its various activities since the last IGM.

Discuss and decide on the preferred option for COBSEA with UNEP representatives and guide the Secretariat on implementing the preferred option.