



**United Nations  
Environment  
Programme**



Distr.  
Restricted

UNEP(WATER)/EAS IG.8/6  
24 December 1996

Original: ENGLISH

---

Twelfth Meeting of the Coordinating  
Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA)  
on the East Asian Seas Action Plan

Manila, Philippines, 3-4 December 1996

**REPORT OF THE TWELFTH MEETING OF THE  
COORDINATING BODY ON THE SEAS OF EAST ASIA**



## INTRODUCTION

1. The Intergovernmental Meeting on the East Asian Seas Action Plan which was held in Bangkok during 9-11 December 1981, *inter alia*, established the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) in order to serve as the overall authority to determine the contents of the Action Plan, to review the progress of the Action Plan and to approve its programme of implementation in the annual meetings of the governments (intergovernmental meetings) that participate in the action plan. The eleventh meeting of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) was held in Bangkok during 28-29 October 1994. This meeting was preceded by the Meeting of Plenipotentiaries on the East Asian Seas Action Plan (Bangkok, 27-28 October 1994). The meeting of plenipotentiaries decided on the enlargement of the geographical coverage of the Action Plan in order for Australia, Kingdom of Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Republic of Korea and Socialist Republic of Vietnam to join the activities in the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Coastal and Marine Areas of the East Asian Seas. The decision to revise the Action Plan, originally adopted by five countries of the region in 1981, was in order to:

- (a) bring it in line with the new developments, particularly with regards to the decisions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and its programme, Agenda 21;
- (b) allow the joining of the new member-states; and
- (c) take into consideration emerging environmental issues of the past thirteen years.

2. The Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in accordance with the above-mentioned institutional arrangements of the Action Plan, and in consultation with National Focal Points of the East Asian Seas Action Plan, convened the Twelfth Meeting of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia in Manila, Philippines, 3-4 December 1996.

3. Representatives of Australia, People's Republic of China, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Socialist Republic of Vietnam attended the meeting.

4. The meeting was also attended by the following observers: Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea (ACOPS), Asian Development Bank (ADB), International Atomic Energy Agency's Marine Environment Laboratory (IAEA-MEL), International Centre for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM), International Maritime Organization (IMO), Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and United Nations University (UNU).

5. The meeting was held at the Heritage Hotel, Manila, Philippines, on 3-4 December 1996.

6. This document is the report of the Twelfth Meeting of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA). The list of participants and observers appears as Annex I to this report.

### Agenda item 1. Opening of the meeting

7. Dr. H.N. El-Habr, Interim Coordinator of the Regional Coordinating Unit of the East Asian Seas Action Plan (EAS/RCU), welcomed the participants. He thanked the host Government of the Philippines for the excellent arrangements put at the disposal of the COBSEA.

8. Dr. M.S. Gaspay, Director, Environmental Management Bureau, the Philippines, on behalf of the Government of the Philippines welcomed the participants to the meeting. In his opening speech he welcomed the new direction that COBSEA was taking in the implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan, namely from a scientific enquiry based type of activities to action oriented management programmes which would seek to address the marine pollution issues in the region not only through the improvement of the environment in a biological sense, but also equally important, through the establishment of appropriate institutional mechanisms. He welcomed the delegates present at the meeting and wished them a productive and enjoyable meeting. The text of Mr. Gaspay's speech is attached as Annex II to this report.

9. Ms. Terttu Melvasalo, Director of the Water Branch of UNEP, on behalf of the Executive Director of UNEP, and the Secretariat, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. She expressed the appreciation of the Secretariat and the member-countries to the Government of the Philippines for so kindly hosting the meeting. She hoped that this very gratifying gesture of cooperation by a member government of COBSEA would initiate a new era of cooperation in which each of the COBSEA member-countries would be willing to host future meetings of COBSEA. She stressed that such an arrangement would further enhance the already close cooperation that exists among the member countries.

10. She highlighted the decisions of the National Focal Points Meeting (Bangkok, 23-24 July 1996) to redirect the focus on largely scientific based type of COBSEA past activities to that of a more comprehensive, holistic management and action-oriented approach to the implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan. Among the six priority areas for a strategic approach to implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan identified by the National Focal Points Meeting, she recalled that the most important and sectorally cross-cutting one, was the call for the establishment of integrated management and sustainable development of coastal and marine areas, which would include the establishment, where appropriate, of institutional and legal mechanism, policies and action plans in member countries. She also highlighted the decision of the meeting to recommend to COBSEA the proposal to develop a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the South China Sea within the scope of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA), which would include a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis, under the International Water Portfolio of the Global Environment Facility (GEF). In wishing COBSEA a very successful meeting, Ms. Melvasalo assured the meeting that UNEP would continue to support the Action Plan and the countries in the region in implementing it. The text of Ms. Melvasalo's speech is attached as Annex III to this report.

11. The representative of the P.R. of China on behalf of the delegates expressed warm appreciation to UNEP and the Government of the Philippines for the excellent organization of the meeting. He added that his country had increased its contribution to the East Asian Seas Trust Fund from US\$15,000 to US\$30,000 per annum starting from 1996. This was to show China's support for COBSEA and to ensure a more stable financial support for the implementation of its Action Plan. Nevertheless, he hoped that the Secretariat would, in turn, ensure the delivery of concrete benefits to

the region, and at the same time reduce unnecessary costs. The text of Mr. Liu Yukai, representative of the P.R. of China is attached as Annex IV to this report.

#### Agenda item 2. Organization of the meeting

12. The Secretariat reminded the meeting that, in the absence of any objections, as agreed by the first meeting of COBSEA (UNEP/IG.37/10), the rules of procedure of UNEP Governing Council, as applicable to the meetings convened by the Executive Director, would be applied *mutatis mutandis* for this meeting. The meeting accepted the proposal.

13. The meeting elected its Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur as follows:

Chairman: Mr. M. S. Gaspay (Philippines)

Vice-Chairman: Mr. Zhang Shigang (China)

Rapporteur: Ms. Muslina Sulaiman (Malaysia)

14. The meeting decided to carry out its work in plenary sessions and *ad hoc* working groups to be established if needed during the meeting.

15. The meeting was conducted in English.

#### Agenda item 3. Adoption of the agenda

16. The meeting adopted the Provisional Agenda [UNEP(WATER)/EAS IG.8/1 Rev. 1], the Provisional Annotated Agenda [UNEP(WATER)/EAS IG.8/2] and the Provisional List of Documents [UNEP(WATER)/EAS IG./INF.1]. The Adopted Agenda, as well as the Final List of Documents, appear respectively as Annex V and Annex VI to this report.

#### Agenda item 4. Report of the Executive Director

17. In order to facilitate the deliberation of the meeting, the Executive Director's Report to the Twelfth Meeting of COBSEA [UNEP(WATER)/EAS IG.8/3] was presented by the Secretariat under two separate agenda items: agenda item 5 on the review of 1994-1996 programme activities and agenda item 6 on the financial report for the period 1994-1996.

Agenda item 5. Review of 1994-1996 programme activities

**(A) On-going East Asian Seas projects**

18. The meeting, with reference to the relevant section of the Executive Director's Report [(UNEP(WATER)/EAS IG.8/3)], reviewed the status of the on-going East Asian Seas projects and wherever possible, the coordinators of the projects provided further details.

19. **EAS-20: Coastal and Marine Environment Management Information System (COMEMIS):** this project, funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and SIDA, was initially entitled, at the tenth COBSEA meeting, "*Establishment and management of a marine database and information exchange system in the East Asian Seas region*". However, the ADB funded an expanded version of the project, primarily focusing on Kingdom of Cambodia, P.R. of China and S.R. of Vietnam together with a regional training component, under the title "*Coastal and Marine Environmental Management in the South China Sea*". The overall project had three inter-linked components, where component B entitled "*Coastal and Marine Environmental Management Information System*" was implemented as the EAS-20 or COMEMIS. On the basis of the decisions of the tenth and eleventh meetings of COBSEA, [paragraph 48, UNEP(OCA)/EAS IG.4/7 and paragraph 55, [UNEP(OCA)/EAS IG.6/5 respectively], this component of the project was implemented by UNEP's Environmental Assessment Programme for Asia and the Pacific (EAP-AP), formerly GRID-Bangkok, with a total budget of US\$775,000.

20. The meeting was informed that within the framework of the EAS-20/COMEMIS, the following activities were undertaken:

- two cycles of GIS training programmes where 45 trainees have participated;
- case studies on various GIS applications;
- a directory of Institutions and Experts of the South China Sea Region;
- provision of GIS stations consisting of five sets of PC based ArcInfo and ArcView software, hardware and peripherals, to relevant institutions in each of the focal countries to assist in developing the National Coastal and Marine Environment (CME) database;
- sediment mapping of the South China Sea using NOAA/AVHRR data;
- a three-week long GIS training course for one representative at the professional level from each of the other participating countries, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand;
- Provision of hardwares and GIS softwares to these other participating countries; and
- a month-long training programme on specific applications and updating of hardware and software technologies.

21. The meeting was further informed that all the activities outlined in the project document are now completed and steps have been taken for the closure of the project.

22. The meeting, in asking for more details on the project activities, reminded the Secretariat that in the implementation of any project, all outputs of the project would need to be channelled through the National Focal Points, and, with reference to this particular case the softwares developed should be extended to all participating countries and not confined to one or two individual countries. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) being the coordinator of the project responded positively to both these requests. The Secretariat also assured the meeting that in the implementation of projects, it would ensure that all communications would be addressed to the National Focal Points.

23. **EAS-23 (Component 1): Oceanographic Features of the East Asian Seas Region - Development of Oil Spill Trajectory Models, ES/0401-94-02:** the meeting was informed that this project was coordinated by the Office of the Environmental Policy and Planning (OEPP), Royal Thai Government, at a cost of US\$60,000 to the EAS Trust Fund. The project proposal was signed on 6 May 1994 with the original completion date of April 1995. The project implementation took longer than expected, due to some technical problems in the development of the trajectory models. The project was completed with the holding of a regional training workshop in Bangkok, on 25-26 July 1996. The proceedings of the workshop, the final financial statement, terminal report and self-evaluation report would be submitted to UNEP Headquarters to initiate the closure of the project.

24. **EAS-23: Component 2 - Survey and Monitoring Oil Pollution in the East Asian Seas Region:** since the eleventh COBSEA meeting no progress had been made to locate possible financial support from bilateral donors. The meeting was informed that the EAS/RCU had approached DANIDA and was in the midst of a negotiation for the funding of the project and that it would report back to COBSEA the result of this effort.

25. **EAS-24: Quality Assurance for Non-Oil Pollution Monitoring:** this project, developed by the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), the Philippines [see Activity (d), Table I, UNEP(OCA)/ EAS IG.4/7], was to be presented for funding consideration to the donor community. The meeting was informed that on behalf of the COBSEA, the EAS/RCU contacted a number of donors but at the same time, however, two important initiatives related to the same objectives of the project were developed: one by the United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s Marine Environment Laboratory (MEL), Monaco together with UNEP; and the other by the United Nations University (UNU), Japan.

26. The IAEA/MEL Project entitled "*Improved Data Acquisition and Quality Assurance in Relation to Assessing Chemical Pollution in the Oceans*" was prepared in collaboration with UNEP for all the Regional Seas Programmes. It would be submitted to the GEF for possible funding under PDF-Block A. The meeting was informed that the main objective of this project proposal is to assist Governments, including those of the East Asian Seas, to conduct comparable assessments of marine pollution in coastal and ocean environments and to develop and implement strategies for marine pollution monitoring, control and abatement. The project would provide scientific support for the implementation of policies for integrated coastal area management and should contribute to global and regional networks for regular evaluation of the status and trends in marine pollution.

27. The meeting was further informed that in general, the project is structured to support the East Asian Seas Action Plan in the following areas: reference methods, inter-comparison exercises (laboratory performance study), reference materials and calibration standards, expert advice, and emergency assessment. Specifically, the project is to provide: capacity building (including instrument maintenance services) to enhance analytical capabilities to assess regional pollution problems and to create Regional Support Centres, training in analytical and environmental chemistry/marine pollution assessment and organization of workshops to enhance data quality assurance and address pollution issues. A Block A funding from the GEF would be obtained for a fact-finding mission in order to (i) discuss project formulation; (ii) identify facilities at national laboratories with the view to establish them as regional technical support centres; and (iii) assess the regional needs and institutional capacity for assessment of marine pollution. The chosen laboratory would be upgraded for regional training purposes for the long-term.

28. Endorsement of this activity was secured at the meeting of National Focal Points (Bangkok, 22-23 July 1996) and letters confirming the support of the participating countries in requesting for the fact-finding missions, were received from: K. of Cambodia, P. R. of China, Indonesia, R. of Korea, Singapore, Thailand and S.R. of Vietnam. In addition, the following countries nominated their National Laboratories as potential Regional Support Centres: P. R. of China, Indonesia, R. of Korea, Malaysia and Thailand.

29. Whilst, welcoming MEL's contribution, the meeting stressed that in the implementation of the proposed project, the existing capacity and facilities should be utilized to the maximum. The meeting also expressed the need to identify and make more transparent the mechanism for coordination and implementation of the proposed MEL's GEF project and that both COBSEA and the Secretariat must play a major role in its implementation.

30. The representative from MEL briefed the meeting of activities of MEL relevant to the implementation of the Action Plan. She further informed the meeting that about 60 laboratories in the East Asian Seas region have participated in intercalibration exercises for the determination of trace metals, pesticides, petroleum hydrocarbons, PCBs in sediments and biota. In addition, general training courses related to marine pollution have also been organized through the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programmes. The proposed MEL-UNEP/GEF project would strengthen and make the existing international quality assurance programme into a more specific one for the East Asian Seas region. However, the present draft proposal needed modification to meet the changed criteria of the GEF International Waters Operational Strategy. The IAEA-MEL and UNEP would undertake to pursue the matter further.

31. With regards to the UNU Project entitled "*Environmental Monitoring and Analysis in the East Asian Region: Technology Transfer and Environmental Governance*" the meeting was informed that the project was developed in support of the East Asian Seas Action Plan. This project implemented by UNU, is a three year programme on "environmental monitoring" sponsored by the Shimadzu Corporation, Kyoto, Japan, at a total cost of US\$3 million. In contrast to the IAEA/MEL project proposal, the UNU initiative involves laboratories which are non-government nominated and are associated with academic institutions. The UNU's project is nevertheless supporting and contributing to the enhancement of marine pollution management in the East Asian Seas region. The project was launched in February 1996 and, *inter alia*, it aims at:

- monitoring and analysis of hazardous substances in the East Asian region;
- raising the level of analytical methodologies in participating laboratories to state-of-the-art proportions;
- promoting the intercalibration of analytical methodologies and QA/QC practices to compile accurate regional data;
- undertaking policy research on issues of compliance with international environmental accords in the region; and
- developing an Environmental Monitoring database to promote further research, information for decision-making and sustained exchange of information.

32. The meeting was informed that environmental laboratories from P.R. of China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, R. of Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and S.R. of Vietnam are participating in the project. In 1996, pesticides and PCBs are being analyzed in rice and soils. Scientists would be trained in specialized techniques for the purpose of research, in particular in the preparation of reference materials to be used in the project. Participating scientists would be further provided with additional training as required. The national laboratories would be fitted with state-of-the-art analytical equipments for the purpose of inter-calibration under the project. Participants of the training workshops would be in a position to train others at their home laboratories. The meeting was informed that US\$3 million cost of the project is augmented with in-kind support from the participating laboratories, estimated at US\$600,000 over the three years duration of the project.

33. In response to a question from the representative of the Philippines Government on the criteria for selection of the participating laboratories in the UNU project and on the potential for these laboratories to work within the framework of the East Asian Seas Action Plan, UNU replied that these laboratories were selected on their potential to be developed into national and regional centres of excellence and that since several of these laboratories were already national centres, it would not be a problem to incorporate their activities to reflect the needs of COBSEA and to undertake these activities within the framework of the East Asian Seas Action Plan.

34. In addition, UNU assured the meeting that it would endeavor to contribute to the Mussel Watch programme for Asia and the Pacific, and that additional funds were being sought for this purpose. UNU would also coordinate with the activities of ECO ASIA proposed project on data acquisition.

35. **EAS-26: Conservation and Sustainable Development for the East Asian Seas** and **EAS-28: Coastal Resources Management Plan Project for the East Asian Seas Region**: the meeting was informed that these project proposals, were developed under a Letter of Agreement between UNEP and the Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment, Malaysia in association with Australia's Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA). Both projects were presented for funding to the donor community without any success to date. The meeting was informed that further development of these projects would be considered within the scope of the South China Sea project proposal for GEF-Block B funding.

36. **EAS-27: Programme of Action to Control Land-based Sources of Pollution in the East Asian Seas Region:** funding for this project in the total sum of US\$56,566 was received through both the Environment Fund of UNEP (US\$25,000) and Norwegian contribution (US\$31,566). It was completed on time by the Ministry of the Environment, Singapore. The output of the EAS-27 project under the title of "*Regional Programme of Action on Land-based Activities Affecting the Coastal and Marine Areas in the East Asian Seas (EAS/RCU's Technical Report No. 5)*" was presented and distributed at the Intergovernmental Conference to adopt a Global Programme of Action (GPA) for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities, Washington, 23 October - 3 November 1995. The meeting was briefed that the project's output provided important background materials for the establishment of a regional strategy and input into the Global Programme of Action (GPA) for the East Asian Seas region.

37. **EAS-28: Coastal Resources Management Plan Project for the East Asian Seas Region:** see paragraph 35 above.

38. **EAS-29: Enhancement of the Public Awareness and Participation on Environmental Issues Related to Coastal Marine Areas in the East Asian Seas Region: Phase I:** the implementation of this project, which was developed in cooperation with and funded by UNEP's Information and Public Affairs unit (IPA) through the Environment Fund for a total budget of US\$98,000, was coordinated by the EAS/RCU and the national activities were executed by government-nominated NGOs (except for Cambodia). The project which adopted the theme of *Save the East Asian Seas*, was completed in November 1995.

39. The meeting was informed that the project's major output was published as a guideline for the protection of the coastal and marine areas aimed at youth. In addition, five of the entries in the national poster competitions were printed and distributed by the EAS/RCU. The project was implemented only in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand as it was approved prior to the expanded membership of the East Asian Seas Action Plan in October 1994. However, at the invitation of EAS/RCU, the Intergovernmental Maritime Organization (IMO) under a cooperative Memorandum of Understanding with UNEP and through the resources of its IMO/UNDP/GEF project on the Regional Programme for Marine Pollution Prevention and Management in the East Asian Seas Region, provided funds for the participation of the K. of Cambodia in the project.

40. The meeting took note that, in addition to this cooperation between IMO and UNEP, one of the major successes of the EAS-29 project has been the generation of project activities in some of the participating countries, thus maintaining the initial momentum of the project. These activities included:

- establishment of "Save the East Asian Seas Clubs" in the schools in Singapore as well as a Regional Conference on the same theme;
- A National Conference held this year in the Philippines; and
- a series of environmental camps for youth in Thailand.

41. **EAS-30: Workshop on the Biological Effects of Pollutants:** the project, as reported to the Eleventh Meeting of the Coordinating Body of the Seas of East Asia, was completed on time by the

implementing agency: Phuket Marine Biological Centre, Thailand. It was funded through both UNEP's Environment Fund, US\$40,000 and EAS Trust Fund, US\$20,000. The proceedings of the Phuket Workshop was printed in the EAS/RCU's Technical Reports Series (No. 3). The meeting was informed that the recommendations of the Phuket Workshop had led to the development and the implementation of the EAS-33 and EAS-39 projects [see paragraphs 44 and 59 below respectively]. The meeting was informed that the project had been closed.

42. **EAS-31 Study of the Evaluation of the Percentage Contribution of Coastal Activities to the GNP:** the project concept was approved by the eleventh COBSEA meeting [activity (j), Annex IV, UNEP(OCA)/EAS IG.6/5], pending availability of funds. The EAS/RCU was informed by UNEP Headquarters that due to financial constraints no funds could be made available for this project. The meeting was informed that the EAS/RCU had also approached ADB and other donors, but the project did not meet their priority requirements. However, UNEP's Environment and Economics Unit (EEU) funded EAS-36 which is closely related to this project (see paragraph 44 below). The Secretariat assured the meeting that during the 1997/1998 biennium, the EAS/RCU would reassess, together with the experts of the participating countries, the usefulness of this particular project and reformulate it, if needed, before seeking again financial support.

43. **EAS-32: Feasibility Study on a Comprehensive Preparedness and Response Plan to oil and Chemical Spills, Integrating National, Sub-regional and Regional Plans:** under a Letter of Agreement between the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and UNEP, this project was implemented by IMO in cooperation with five of the National Focal Points of the East Asian Seas. UNEP provided US\$30,000 through the Environment Fund. The report would be published jointly by IMO and UNEP after its finalization by the implementing agency. The project would be closed after the submission of a terminal report and the financial statement by IMO.

44. **EAS-33: Training Workshops on Biological Effects of Pollutants: East Asian Seas Region:** this project is a follow-up to the COBSEA-approved concept of "Biological Effects of Pollutant" which was essentially a series of training workshops, with the objective of establishing a network of activities between scientists and research institutions of the countries of the region. The project was funded from the resources of the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP/ROAP) as a follow-up to the EAS-30 project. A total budget of US\$77,900 was provided for its implementation by the EAS/RCU: US\$62,900 through the Environment Fund and US\$15,000 through the EAS Trust Fund. The project's activities, namely the Singapore and the Townsville Workshops, were carried out in collaboration with the University of Singapore and Australia's GBRMPA. The proceedings of these workshops were published in the EAS/RCU's Technical Report Series (Nos. 7 and 8 respectively). The meeting was informed that the project had been closed.

45. **EAS-34: Development of Training Materials for Integrated Coastal Zone Management:** the meeting was informed that the project which was funded from the resources of the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP/ROAP) and the East Asia Seas Trust Fund, was implemented by the EAS/RCU. A total budget of US\$95,000 was provided for its implementation: US\$80,000 through the Environment Fund and US\$15,000 through the East Asia Seas Trust Fund. The project's activities were carried out under two Letters of Agreement between UNEP and the James Cook University and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority of Australia. The output of the project, the *Training*

*Materials for Integrated Coastal Zone Management*, was published and distributed as EAS/RCU's Technical Report Series No.12.

46. **EAS-35: Integrated Management of Watersheds in Relation to the Management and Conservation of Coastal and Marine (Nearshore) Areas of the East Asian Seas Region: Phase I - Assessment of the Effects of Sediments, Nutrients and Pollutant Discharges on Wetlands, Seagrasses and Coral Reefs:** this project was the first cooperative activity between EAS/RCU and UNEP's Freshwater Unit. The project was developed in response to the COBSEA-approved concept, linking the watershed (land-based) activities to impacts on selected ecosystems such as wetlands, seagrasses and coral reefs. A total budget of US\$469,000 was allocated for its implementation through UNEP's Environment Fund. The project was coordinated by the EAS/RCU and implemented through thirteen Letters of Agreement covering ten national institutions and three institutions functioning as resource centres. The Letters of Agreement with Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam were expanded to include activities that made these countries' outputs (inventories) as case studies.

47. The Secretariat stated that the project was successful in bringing, in some cases for the first time, decision-makers and scientists dealing with watershed activities together with those involved in coastal and marine areas. Unfortunately, the planned three outputs of the project were still in their preliminary drafts due to lack of funds. However, given the importance of this project and the potential use of the collected materials for the regional implementation of the GPA, the Secretariat proposed two possible options for the next biennium for the consideration of the meeting:

(i) provide US\$20,000 through the EAS Trust Fund in order to finalize the "Overview" output and leave the remaining two outputs in their draft form to be used as reference materials in the implementation of the GPA; or

(ii) provide US\$50,000 to finalize and publish all three outputs. Half of this amount (US\$25,000) will be provided through the EAS Trust Fund and the other half (US\$25,000) through UNEP's Environment Fund.

48. **EAS-36: Application of Methodologies for the Valuation of Environmental and Natural Resources with Particular Reference to Coastal and Marine Ecosystems of the East Asian Seas:** this project was funded from the resources of the UNEP's Environment and Economics Unit (UNEP/EEU) with a total budget of US\$75,000 and implemented by the EAS/RCU. The project document was developed by EEU in cooperation with the EAS/RCU. A training workshop was held in Bali during 27 November - 1 December 1995, where seventeen participants from nine countries of the region, with the exception of Singapore attended. The report of the workshop was jointly published and distributed by the UNEP's EAS/RCU and EEU. The training material used in the workshop would be published by the EEU. The meeting was informed that action had been taken by UNEP to close the project.

49. **EAS-37: Regional Symposium and Workshop on the Biology and Conservation of Small Cetaceans and Dugongs of the Southeast Asia:** this project was funded from the resources of UNEP's Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Management and Utilization of Marine Mammals, with a total budget of US\$44,500. The project approved by the eleventh COBSEA meeting was the first regional undertaking on the subject. In its implementation, the EAS/RCU was assisted by the

Silliman University Marine Laboratory, Philippines. The symposium and the workshop were held in Dumaguete, Philippines. The one day symposium was attended by over 120 scientists from ten countries in the region. The workshop was attended by 33 participants and resource persons.

50. The meeting was informed that the three main outputs of the workshop were:

- establishment of a small cetaceans interest group in southeast Asia, composed of the participants in the workshop as a core group;
- publication of a regional small cetaceans newsletter which Ocean Park Conservation Foundation of Hong Kong has agreed to publish at least three times a year for exchange of information on marine mammals; and
- identification of training on sampling and research methodologies on small cetaceans as a top priority with a proposal for convening a training workshop.

51. The meeting was also informed that the report of the workshop was printed and distributed by the EAS/RCU and that the Proceedings of the Symposium were being peer-reviewed and would be printed separately.

52. **Development of a project proposal on Assessment and Support to the Management of Marine and Coastal Biodiversity of the East Asian Seas:** the development of a project proposal on marine biodiversity of the East Asian Seas region was decided at the eleventh meeting of the COBSEA [paragraph 59, UNEP(OCA)/EAS IG.6/5]. In view of its high priority, COBSEA allocated US\$ 20,000 from the resources of the East Asian Seas Trust Fund for the development of the project proposal. It requested the EAS/RCU in collaboration with Australia's GBRMPA and in full consultation with the countries of the region, to develop the project proposal and submit it through UNEP's GEF Coordination Office for funding consideration by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The EAS/RCU with the assistance of UNEP's GEF Coordination Office managed to obtain a further US\$20,000 from the resources of the GEF (Block A Project Development Fund) and proceeded with the development of the proposal.

53. The Secretariat informed the meeting that three drafts were prepared incorporating comments received from government nominated experts and the GEF Unit at UNEP Headquarters. Unfortunately, the sub-operational strategy relating to Marine Protected Areas has not yet been approved and may not be approved for some time. In addition, the GEF Biodiversity portfolio is very tight and the chances to get financial support is minimal. The meeting was informed that it would therefore, be difficult to secure the funding required for the implementation of the project.

54. The meeting was informed that based on the above facts, the National Focal Points Meeting (Bangkok, 22-23 July 1996) agreed and directed the EAS/RCU:

- (i) to prepare a proposal to develop a Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the South China Sea within the scope of the GPA for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities. The meeting also recognized that the current project developed

under the Biodiversity portfolio be held in reserve as a possible component for inclusion within this SAP;

(ii) to apply for a Project Development Fund (PDF) Block B to develop the project proposal under the International Water Portfolio;

(iii) that this project proposal would include the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis together with the SAP and full scale projects. The whole process would take approximately 18 months and would require approximately US\$500,000; US\$350,000 coming from the GEF PDF Block B and US\$150,000 possibly coming from the East Asian Seas Trust Fund.

(iv) that all COBSEA member countries must be directly involved in the development of the PDF preparation.

(v) UNEP EAS/RCU would take the lead and coordinate the preparation of the PDF-B proposal, taking into account the priority of implementing the EAS Action Plan. The proposal would be circulated and agreed by the Twelfth COBSEA Meeting later this year. It would be despatched to the GEF Operational Focal Points in the countries concerned for their endorsement and would be steered through informal consultations with UNDP and the World Bank.

55. The Secretariat informed the meeting that UNEP had developed the proposal [(Annex IV/Rev 1, UNEP(WATER) EAS IG.8/3)] in accordance with the request of the National Focal Points Meeting and submitted to GEF for its consideration and that the GEF Secretariat had cleared the project proposal, subject to the endorsement of member countries of the East Asian Seas Action Plan. Mr. John Pernetta, Senior Programme Officer of UNEP's GEF Coordinating Unit UNEP Headquarters, Nairobi would introduce this paper under Agenda Item 7(a) for the consideration of the meeting.

56. **Second Symposium and the Third General Assembly of the Association of Southeast Asian Marine Scientists (ASEAMS):** the meeting was informed that ASEAMS has received UNEP support since its UNEP-sponsored establishment. Hence, UNEP through the EAS/RCU provided further support and assisted the Chairman of the ASEAMS in the convening of the Second Symposium and the Third General Assembly of that association on 30 August 1995. The proceedings of the symposium has been completed and published under the EAS/RCU's Technical Report Series No.10.

57. **EAS-38: Capacity Building Programme for Protection and Management of Marine and Coastal Areas of the K. of Cambodia:** the meeting was informed that after joining the East Asian Seas Action Plan in 1994, the National Focal Points of the K. of Cambodia requested the EAS/RCU to assist in (i) identifying the capacity building requirements and training needs of that country with respect to coastal and marine areas, (ii) developing a relevant project proposal for donor funding consideration, and (iii) on behalf of K. of Cambodia to negotiate with the donor community the funding requirements. In response, the EAS/RCU arranged for a consultant from the region (Singapore) to undertake a mission. The consultant's visit, work and contacts with relevant national institutions was coordinated by the Ministry of Environment of Singapore. The consultant's report, outlining the short-and medium-term training requirements, was presented to the National Focal Points. After its endorsement, the

EAS/RCU drafted a detailed project proposal document and directly and through UNEP's clearing-house presented it to the donor community.

58. The Secretariat further informed the meeting that the project proposal is being seriously considered by one of the donor countries, whereas adjustment to the project's budget and other details are being negotiated. Pending the usual considerations of the donor country, it seemed likely that the project might be funded in the near future.

59. **EAS-39: Ecological Consequences of Land-based Oil Discharges into Coastal and Marine Areas of the East Asian Seas:** the meeting was informed that within the framework of the COBSEA-approved concept of "Biological Effects of Pollutants", the EAS/RCU on behalf of the COBSEA continued its efforts for resource mobilization in order to continue with the organization and convening of training workshops [see paragraphs 37 and 40 above]. As a result, US\$80,000 were provided by the Bremen State Office for Development Cooperation (Germany) in support to the convening of the "*Training Workshop on the Ecological Consequences of Land-based Oil Discharges on the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems in the East Asian Seas*". With the support of the Malaysian National Focal Points and active involvement of the Centre for Marine and Coastal Studies, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, the training workshop was held in Penang, 22-26 April 1996. The proceedings of the workshop has been completed and published under the EAS/RCU's Technical Report Series No.9.

60. **EAS-40: International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) Regional Workshop for the East Asian Seas:** the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) was launched in December 1994 by eight partner governments in response to the issues addressed by the UNCED and its Agenda 21, Convention on Biological Diversity, Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Conference of Small Island Developing States and the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt a Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities. The aim of ICRI is conservation, sustainable use and effective management of the coral reefs and their associated ecosystems.

61. The meeting was informed that, in view of the significant concentration of the coral reefs in the region, at the invitation of the ICRI Coordinator, United States Department of State, the EAS/RCU represented the COBSEA at the launch of the ICRI as well as at the subsequent International Workshop hosted by the government of the Philippines, in May 1995 at Dumaguete. This workshop which attracted over 120 participants from around the world adopted a *Call to Action* and a *Framework for Action* which provided the basis for future international and regional action and cooperation. At the international workshop, the EAS/RCU was requested to review a regional report on the status of the coral reefs in the East Asian Seas and also to organize in consultation with the National Focal Points of the East Asian Seas, the government of Japan and the ICRI Coordinator, the *International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) Regional Workshop for the East Asian Seas*.

62. The Secretariat informed the meeting that contributions from the Governments of Denmark (US\$20,000) and Japan (US\$100,000) augmented that of UNEP's Environment Fund for the organization and the convening of a regional ICRI workshop. The ICRI Regional Workshop for the East Asian Seas region was convened in Bali, 18-22 March 1996 under a host country agreement with the Government of Indonesia, which hosted the workshop. Considerable support was provided to the EAS/RCU by the Indonesian Ministry of State for Environment. The workshop was attended by over 60

participants from twelve countries, NGOs, international and regional organizations and national institutions. The workshop through five Working Groups conceptualized a Regional Strategy for conservation and sustainable management of the coral reefs and the associated ecosystems of the region. The workshop also reviewed the regional report prepared by the EAS/RCU with input and collaboration of the National Focal Points and Marine Parks Centre of Japan. The report of the workshop was finalized, published and distributed by the UNEP's EAS/RCU.

63. The Secretariat stated that the COBSEA would have to consider the report of the meeting and to endorse the Regional Strategy developed in order for the EAS/RCU to undertake the necessary resource mobilization activities for its implementation. The Secretariat informed the meeting that the implementation of the strategy would be taken into account in the development of projects under the GEF Strategic Action Programme (SAP) [(Annex IV, UNEP (WATER) EAS IG.8/3)].

64. The Chairman invited the meeting to (a) review and evaluate the results of the projects and activities described in paragraphs [17-66] above and the relevant sections of the Executive Director's Report [(UNEP (WATER) EAS IG.8/3)]; and (b) make any recommendation or comment which it considered to be relevant to improve the implementation and the delivery of the ongoing and future projects, or enhance their cost-effectiveness.

65. The meeting expressed its general satisfaction on the implementation of these projects and activities. However, it specifically reiterated the point it made earlier in the meeting, that in the implementation of all COBSEA approved projects, all action must be channelled through the good offices of the National Focal Points.

#### **(B)Development of a Strategic Approach to Implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan**

66. The Secretariat reported to the meeting that a paper on Key Elements to be Considered in the Development of a Strategic Approach for Implementing the East Asian Seas Action Plan [UNEP(WATER)/EAS IG.7/7] which recommended measures which could be taken in the Region in response to Agenda 21, Chapter 17, and the revised COBSEA Strategy which calls for a paradigm shift in the approach to implementation of the Action Plan, was presented to the National Focal Points Meeting (Bangkok, 23-24 July 1996).

67. The meeting was informed that the National Focal Points Meeting agreed on the following priority areas for a strategic approach to implementation of the East Asian Seas Action Plan:

- i. Establishment of integrated management and sustainable development of coastal and marine areas, including the establishment where appropriate, of institutional and legal mechanisms, policies and action plans for integrated coastal management in member countries.
- ii. Combating degradation of the marine environment from land-based activities.
- iii. Establishment of a regular monitoring and assessment programme on the state of the region's marine environment, in particular coastal areas, to allow a more accurate

evaluation of EAS programme achievement, and review and modification of management.

- iv. Strengthening regional cooperation and coordination through increased collaboration between the EAS/RCU and other relevant agencies and organizations.
- v. Conservation and sustainable use of marine living resources under national jurisdiction, and high seas living resources.
- vi. Establishment of options for financial support of the programmes and activities of the East Asian Seas Action Plan including innovative economic mechanisms, and GEF Funds.

68. In addition the National Focal Points Meeting agreed on the following matters:

(i) that the Secretariat update the EAS Action Plan adopted in 1994, especially paragraph 26, to reflect recent developments in implementation of the GPA, and submit it to the Twelfth COBSEA meeting for adoption; and

(ii) that the Twelfth COBSEA should commence preliminary discussions on the revision of the EAS Action Plan to reflect a shift in the focus of EAS activities from a scientific basis to an action-oriented approach which addresses management and policy solutions to key issues.

69. The Secretariat in response to the request by the National Focal Points Meeting to update the EAS Action Plan adopted in 1994, in particular paragraph 26, introduced the following amendments to the paragraph for the consideration of the meeting:

Existing paragraph 26 of the EAS Action Plan:

"With respect to land-based sources of pollution and human activities, States are urged to take account of the on-going revision of the Montreal Guidelines for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Sources of Pollution (Agenda 21, Chapter 17, paragraph 17.24) and development emanating there from and the developments emanating therefrom"

Proposed new paragraph 26 of the EAS Action Plan:

"With respect to control of land-based activities affecting marine and coastal environments, States are urged to take into account the spirit of Agenda 21, Chapter 17 and 18 and implement the Global Programme of Action (GPA) for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities at both national and regional levels"

70. On this proposed new paragraph, the meeting agreed that there was insufficient time to consider the proposed revision in depth, and that the matter be considered in future COBSEA meeting.

**(C) Report of the Chairman of the Association of Southeast Asian Marine Scientists (ASEAMS)**

71. The Secretariat informed the meeting that the Chairman of the Association of the Southeast Asian Marine Scientist (ASEAMS) with reference to document UNEP(WATER)/EAS IG.8/4 was not present to brief the meeting of the activities of the Association since the last COBSEA meeting. The meeting took note of the progress of the activities of ASEAMS.

Agenda item 6. Financial arrangements

72. The Secretariat, referring to the relevant decision of the Eleventh COBSEA meeting, as well as the relevant sections of the Executive Director's report, presented the financial report for the period 1994-1996: an up-to-date status report of the financial arrangements in support of the Action Plan. This included:

- the status of the pledges to the East Asian Seas Trust Fund and monies received against the pledges and the expenditures made under the Trust Fund;
- the financial contribution from UNEP's Environment Fund; and
- options for the financial arrangements required to support the East Asian Seas Action Plan.

73. In presenting the financial report the Secretariat informed the meeting that the post of the Coordinator of the EAS/RCU, and the supporting general service staff of two secretaries and one administrative assistant were paid under the Environment Fund. However, due to the financial difficulties being faced by UNEP due to reduction in member countries contribution to the Environment Fund, UNEP had decided to delete the post of one of the secretaries. The Secretariat stressed that the post of this secretary was essential to the smooth functioning of the EAS/RCU and that beside secretarial duties, the prescribed activities of the post included the publication and dissemination of the EAS/RCU technical report series. The Secretariat proposed that the meeting consider paying for the salary of the post with contributions from the East Asian Seas Trust Fund. In response to a question from the meeting, the Secretariat informed the meeting that the requested contribution from the East Asian Seas Trust Fund would amount to US\$24,000 per annum.

74. The Chairman invited the meeting to take note of the financial report for the 1994-1996 period as outlined in paragraphs 9-29 of the Executive Director's report, and most importantly, to give due considerations to the proposed options for the financial arrangements required to support the East Asian Seas Action Plan as contained in document UNEP(WATER)/EAS IG.8/5. In addition the meeting would have to make a decision with respect to payment of one of the secretary's post under the EAS Trust Fund.

75. The representative of Australia informed the meeting that his government preferred an arbitrary arrangement in terms of the level of contribution to the EAS Trust Fund. The representative of Vietnam said his government preferred option 4. The Singapore representative expressed his appreciation to the Secretariat for a very well prepared comprehensive paper. He said his government was prepared to pay at the UN scale of assessment and that he preferred option 2. The representative of the P.R. of China stated that his government joined COBSEA in 1994 and had contributed US\$15,000 per annum in the initial stages. Since then his government had increased the contribution to US\$30,000 starting from 1996. He added that his government is also a member of another regional seas programme, namely the North West Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP). He suggested that the proposed options could be discussed at the next COBSEA meeting. The representative of the R. of Korea informed the meeting of his government's decision to maintain the present level of contribution, whilst the representative of the Philippines said his government preferred option 4. Both the representatives of Indonesia and Malaysia said they preferred to maintain their present levels of contribution.

76. The representative of Australia informed the meeting that the Australian Government has agreed to increase its contribution to US\$30,000, if other COBSEA governments agreed to increase, or at least maintain their 1996 levels of contribution. He informed the meeting that the decision of his Government to increase its contribution was because of its support for the GPA which would be implemented at the regional level through the regional seas programme.

77. After some deliberations, without coming to common agreement to adopt one of the options spelled out in the paper, the meeting agreed that representatives would go back to their respective governments to establish firm commitments for contributions at least at the present level of contributions.

78. The meeting requested the Executive Director to make the necessary arrangements for the extension of the East Asian Seas Trust Fund through December 1998 on the basis of the level of pledges agreed to. The meeting also requested UNEP, through the EAS/RCU, to continue to provide the Secretariat functions for the Action Plan which included overall technical coordination and supervision on the implementation of its projects and the continuation of the management of the Trust Fund during 1997-1998.

#### Agenda item 7. Workplan and Budget for the biennium 1997-1998

##### a. Formulation of a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Preliminary Framework of a Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea

79. Mr. John Pernetta briefed the meeting on the Draft Proposal for a Project Development and Preparation Facility (PDF) Block B Grant [(UNEP(WATER)/EAS IG.8/3: Annex IV/Rev.1)] which has been cleared by the GEF Secretariat subject to the endorsement of participating member countries.

80. In response to the request from the representative of Malaysia to elaborate on the differences between the existing GEF/UNDP/IMO and ASEAN/ASPEN project on marine pollution management in the East Asian Seas as opposed to the proposed GEF South China Sea project, Mr. Pernetta explained to the meeting the following points:

- (i) the GEF/UNDP/IMO project is more narrowly focussed geographically since it involves only three countries in the region; and consist of pilot demonstration sites to develop a methodology that can be applied widely to other areas. The activities undertaken under this project does not cover fisheries, biodiversity and other environmental issues in the South China Sea;
- (ii) the South China Sea GEF (SCS GEF) proposed project that might result from this PDF activity will take a much broader perspective: a large scale analysis of sites and issues to identify priority areas for intervention through the review of existing data and projects to identify these priorities across the sectors. It will look at a combination of problems which have not been addressed in a holistic and comprehensive manner during past assessments. The priorities will reflect the magnitude and scale of problems with respect to the environmental benefits that may be derived from concrete actions;

(iii)the intention of the SCS GEF PDF-B activities is to build internal structures within participating governments that will strengthen the relationship and linkages between the environment sector and the other sectors;

(iv)the planned activities will result in a costed and targeted programme of concrete actions and projects for potential funding by the GEF and other potential donors, and from the private sector. The Transboundary Analysis will provide the justification for GEF and private sector funding that could be very substantial.

81. The representative of IMO informed the meeting of the background of the GEF/UNDP/IMO project on the management of marine pollution in the East Asian Seas. He said that the GEF/UNDP/IMO project had different geographical coverage, including pilot demonstration sites to develop a methodology that can be applied widely to other areas. The activities undertaken do not address environmental issues relating to fisheries and biodiversity of the South China Sea as a whole.

82. The representative from Malaysia commented that the project proposal was too broad in scope, too general in approach and non-specific and not focussed in its output. It would therefore need to be reviewed and amended. He added that the scope of the project should be reduced to a manageable size to achieve a meaningful output and be implementable upon completion. He further informed the meeting that based on past decade of similar proposals for COBSEA which ended up as non-action-oriented academic studies, Malaysia was deeply concerned that the precious but limited resources available to COBSEA would be wasted on such proposal of which the final results could not be utilized by the governments for project implementation.

83. The representatives of Australia said that his government would support the decision of the COBSEA governments. The representatives of the P. R. of China, Indonesia and the Philippines expressed support to the GEF project since it would serve the purpose of setting priorities and actions to address the issues in the management of the marine environment in the South China Sea and the region and create opportunities for funding. The representative of the S. R. of Vietnam informed the meeting that in principle he was supportive of the project proposal but he might have difficulty convincing his government on the merits of the project as the outputs of the project seemed to be very general. The representative of Thailand expressed his government's support for the GEF project. However, he wanted to know whether Thailand was eligible for the GEF funding provided in the project since Thailand has yet to ratify the Biodiversity Convention. In response to this, Mr. Pernetta clarified that the project is under the GEF International Waters portfolio and not under the Biodiversity portfolio and Thailand's full participation in the proposed GEF project would not be affected.

84. The meeting after extensive discussions and clarifications provided by the Secretariat, endorsed the South China Sea Project. The meeting agreed that the project be allowed to proceed. However, the project would need to be modified to make it more focussed and manageable. The project must also show specific outputs with identified means of implementation that could be utilised by member governments of COBSEA.

b. Regional Implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities in the East Asian Seas Region

85. The Secretariat briefed the meeting on the proposed programme for the implementation of the Global Programme of Action from Land-Based Activities in the East Asian Seas Region [(UNEP(WATER)/EAS IG.8/3 Annex IV)]. An important action to be taken by member countries in the implementation of the GPA Regional Programme was to identify the national contact person and the institution which would be responsible for the collation of the data required. Several delegates in the meeting commented that the time-frame proposed for the project was very tight. The Secretariat in response explained that the time-framework had to be followed as the progress of the implementation of the regional component of the GPA had to be reported to the Fifth Meeting of the Committee on Sustainable Development (CSD) Meeting in February 1997 and then the special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in June 1997. Moreover the budget provided by UNEP in 1996 had to be utilized.

86. The representative of Malaysia pointed out that the proposal was confined only to land-based sources of pollution whilst sea-based sources of marine pollution contribute significantly to the degradation of the marine environment. He suggested the need for UNEP to ensure balance in its approach. He added that he was supportive of the proposed programme provided the following considerations were taken into account:

- (i) existing information should be utilized;
- (ii) the relative importance of sea and land base activities be defined;
- (iii) the existing capacity of the region and its relative importance to the economic growth of each country be reported;
- (iv) identify the financial needs, the possible sources of funding required to address the issues; and
- (v) access the possibility of implementing the control measures bearing in mind the above factors.

87. The representative of IOC informed the meeting of the activities of the Health of the Ocean Panel (HOTO) established by GOOS. He said it was in the midst of finalizing its Strategic Plan. He also informed that the GPA and LBA related activities of IOC/WESTPAC were being strengthened. He also drew the attention of the meeting to the proposed project on monitoring marine debris in the region which had been approved by the IOC Sub-Commission at its Third Session, as a cooperative project with UNEP. The Secretariat confirmed the statement of the representative of IOC and informed the meeting that the HOTO assessment would be ready by the year 2002.

88. The representative of IMO briefed the meeting with respect to the strategies and approaches of the GEF/UNDP/IMO Regional Programme for the Prevention and Management of Marine Pollution in the East Asian Seas. He said that with active participation of the eleven countries in the region, the Regional Programme had been successful in its demonstration projects with application of ICM system in addressing marine pollution by land-based sources in particular, and strengthening subregional cooperation in marine pollution risk management. He added, that building on its demonstration experience, the Regional Programme had assisted other national demonstration sites and embarked on the networking of these sites. Further, within the framework of the Regional Programme, the networks on marine pollution monitoring and legal aspects of marine pollution have been established. The Regional Programme had also devoted its efforts to developing sustainable financing mechanisms and options for marine pollution prevention and control. He pointed out the complementarity between the Regional Programme and the COBSEA activities and looked forward to the increased cooperation between the two.

89. The representative of Australia congratulated the Secretariat in moving the decisions of the Washington Conference to implementation stage at the regional level. He said he foresees that the next two years would be concerned with actions to address the issues on biodiversity, coral reefs etc, using integrated coastal zone management as a tool. In support of the proposed GPA regional programme, he informed the meeting of his government's offer to host the workshop at Cairns to further develop the action programme for regional implementation of the GPA including the review of the first draft of the regional overview.

90. The representatives of the R. of China and Singapore welcomed the Australian Government for their kind offer to host the workshop. The meeting accepted the offer of Australia to host the workshop. The representatives of the P.R. of China, Singapore, Thailand, S.R. of Vietnam and other delegates, all informed the meeting of their support for the project.

91. The meeting agreed to the proposed GPA regional programme and that the draft proposal be amended to accommodate Malaysia's concerns. The meeting also called upon member countries to submit the names of possible consultants from the region to undertake the regional overview to the EAS/RCU.

Agenda item 7. Workplan and Budget for the biennium 1997-1998

92. The Secretariat presented the Executive Director's recommendations and proposals for the 1997-1998 workplan and budget as outlined in Annex I of the document UNEP(WATER)/EAS IG.8/3. The Chairperson invited the meeting to review the proposals for the 1997-1998 biennium and decide on its workplan and budget.

93. The meeting on the basis of these recommendations and the available Environment Fund and East Asian Seas Trust Fund resources, adopted the 1997-1998 workplan and budget with modification as shown in Annex VII to this report.

94. Several delegates to the meeting commented in general on the workplan and budget. Both the representatives of Indonesia and the Philippines were concerned that some projects which were not successful in getting funding from potential donors had to be kept in abeyance due to the lack of funds. The representative of Malaysia also expressed his concern that on-going projects were held back in preference for newly developed projects. The representative of the P.R. of China commented that there was no set priority in the workplan and budget and the areas covered by the projects approved by COBSEA are too wide. There was therefore a need to set priorities in the approval of projects for the biennium.

Agenda item 8. Other business

95. The Chairman invited the meeting to raise any other issues relevant to the future development of the Action Plan.

96. On the matter on increase in the proposed contributions to the East Asian Seas Trust Fund, the representative of Malaysia recommended that the Executive Director of UNEP be invited to write a letter to member governments informing of the workplan and budget and the problem of funding it, and at the same time to ask for an increase in contribution to the EAS Trust Fund.

97. The Secretariat informed the meeting that the post of the Coordinator for the Regional Coordinating Unit on the East Asian Seas Action Plan had been advertised and applications were received from candidates within the region and also outside the region. The selection process is underway and the Secretariat would inform the member countries once a decision has been made.

98. The ACOP's representative reminded the participants of the scheduled Ministerial Meeting for the National and Regional Implementation of the GPA which was being jointly organized by ACOPS and the Government of the Philippines on 6-8 December 1996 at Shangri-la Hotel, Manila, Philippines.

Agenda item 9. Adoption of the report

99. The Rapporteur presented the draft report and its annexes to the meeting and they were adopted, with amendments, as they appear in this document.

Agenda item 10. Closure of the meeting

100. The representative of Malaysia thanked the Government of the Philippines for the kind hospitality extended to the delegates. He also thanked the Secretariat for its hard work and the delegates for being so patient in the deliberation of the meeting.

101. The representative of China said that his government had looked for long-term cooperation in joining COBSEA and that he had attended COBSEA's meeting in the spirit of cooperation and understanding for the protection of the marine and coastal environment. COBSEA's meetings had been gatherings in a family-like atmosphere. He concluded, by expressing his appreciation to the Government of the Philippines and the support provided by the Secretariat.

102. The representative of Singapore thanked the host government for the excellent arrangements for the meeting. He said that his government was very supportive of COBSEA as it was one of the founding member of COBSEA. The representative of Indonesia also expressed support for COBSEA being also one of its founding member. The representative of the Philippines said he appreciated the frankness, and candid expressions and opinions of the participants to the meeting. He supported the statements made by the representatives of the P.R. of China , Indonesia and Singapore in support of the programmes of COBSEA. The representative of Thailand thanked the host government for its hospitality. He also informed the meeting that his government was also a founding member of COBSEA.

103. In conclusion the Chairperson of the meeting thanked all the participants of the meeting. He said he enjoyed chairing the meeting. He expressed his appreciation to the Secretariat for the support they provided to the meeting.