



**UNDP/GEF PROJECT ENTITLED “REDUCING ENVIRONMENTAL STRESS IN THE
YELLOW SEA LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEM”**

UNDP/GEF/YS/PSC.1/3
Date: 8 March 2005
English only

**First Project Steering Committee Meeting
for the UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project**
Seoul, Korea, 7-8 March 2005

Meeting Report

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1 OFFICIAL LAUNCHING CEREMONY FOR YSLME PROJECT

1.1 An Official Launching Ceremony for the Project was held together with the First Project Steering Committee Meeting. On the afternoon of 7 March 2005, the Launching Ceremony was organised in Seoul, Korea, and broadcast on Arirang TV, the Korean English-language television station. High-level officials from Government of Korea, Government of China, representatives from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), and eminent scientists involved in the Project gave congratulatory speeches and scientific presentations at the Ceremony. Speeches were given by:

- **Mr. KANG Moo-Hyun**, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MOMAF), Republic of Korea;
- **Mr. SUN Zhihui**, Deputy Administrator, State Oceanic Administration, People's Republic of China;
- **Ms. Anne-Isabelle Degryse-Blateau**, UNDP Resident Representative, UNDP Seoul; and
- **Mr. JE Jong-Geel**, Member of the National Assembly, R. Korea.

Scientific presentations were given by:

- **Dr. Andrew Hudson** - Global Perspectives of the YSLME Project in the GEF International Waters Portfolio;
- **Mr. Haiqing LI** – Potential Contribution of YSLME to SDS-SEA;
- **Dr. YOO Shinjae** - Contributions of YSLME Project to the National Policies in Protection of the Marine Environment and Sustainable Use of Coastal Resources in the Yellow Sea; and
- **Dr. CHUA Thia-Eng** - Sustainable Development in the Seas of East Asia.

The programme and speeches are attached as Annex 1 to this report. Copies of the presentations are available from the Project Management Office.

2 OPENING OF THE MEETING

2.1 On behalf of the UNDP, Ms. Anne-Isabelle Degryse-Blateau, opened the Meeting, and welcomed all participants. Ms. Degryse-Blateau reviewed the objectives of the Meeting and Project, and commended all partners for their efforts in reaching the current stage of the Project's progress. She reminded participants that the Project is "a work in progress." As such, the Implementation Plan and budget need to be reviewed each year, based on the results achieved and changes in environment, and if appropriate, be adjusted.

2.1 Welcome addresses

2.1.1 On behalf of the Government of Korea, Mr. Yeon-chul Yoo from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) welcomed all participants to Korea to participate in the 1st Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting of the UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project. Mr. Yoo thanked the Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute (KORDI) for hosting the Meeting, and the Project Management Office (PMO) for organising the Meeting. He complimented all partners for their efforts in bringing the Project to its current stage. He introduced a Korean proverb, "Well begun is half done," saying that indeed we have literally worked through the first "half" by

launching the YSLME Project, and despite difficult challenges we might face ahead, it was his wish that the “remaining half” will also make favourable headway.

- 2.1.2 On behalf of the Government of China, Mr. Haiqing Li from the State Oceanic Administration (SOA) expressed his appreciation to the Government of Korea for hosting the Meeting. He congratulated the Project Manager for establishing the Project Management Office, and thanked the Global Environment Facility (GEF), UNDP, UNOPS, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and all partners for their preparation of, and support to the Project.
- 2.1.3 On behalf of UNDP/GEF, Mr. Andrew Hudson welcomed all participants to the Meeting. He congratulated China and Korea for their co-operative efforts to fulfil the objectives of the Project. He also congratulated all partners for their joint efforts in working towards addressing the problems of the Yellow Sea.
- 2.1.4 On behalf UNOPS, Mr. Andrew Menz thanked the Governments of Korea and China and all partners for their collaborative efforts on Project implementation. Mr. Menz also explained the role of UNOPS as Executing Agency for the Project. UNOPS will oversee the administrative aspects of project implementation, and together with the PMO, will formulate strategies for implementation, prepare action plans, find the best goods at the best prices, draw up contractual agreements, organise and administer training, manage financial resources, and monitor progress after a project gets under way.

2.2 Introduction of the members

- 2.2.1 The participants were invited to give self-introductions. The list of participants is provided as Annex 2 to this report.

3 ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING

3.1 Election of Officers

- 3.1.1 Mr. Haiqing Li nominated Mr. Yeon-chul Yoo to be the Chairperson of the Meeting. The Meeting agreed, and Mr. Yoo was duly elected.
- 3.1.2 Mr. Dong-sik Woo nominated Mr. Haiqing Li to be the Vice Chairperson of the Meeting. Mr. Yeon-chul Yoo seconded the nomination, and Mr. Li was elected as Vice Chairperson.
- 3.1.3 Mr. Haiqing Li nominated Mr. Seong-Hwan Pae to be the Rapporteur. The Meeting agreed, and Mr. Pae was duly elected.

3.2 Documentation Available to the Meeting

- 3.2.1 The Chairperson invited the Project Manager, Mr. Yihang Jiang, to introduce the meeting documents. Mr. Jiang noted that the 2nd Regional Technical Meeting (2nd RTM) Report and the Revised Implementation Plan were agreed and adopted during the 2nd RTM. He thanked all 2nd RTM participants for their efforts in bringing these two documents to fruition.

3.3 Organisation of Work

- 3.3.1 The Chairperson informed the meeting about the organisation of work. It was agreed that the meeting would be organised in plenary.
- 3.3.2 The meeting was conducted in English.

4 ADOPTION OF THE MEETING AGENDA

- 4.1 Following the introduction of the agenda and annotated agenda, Mr. Jiang suggested that Mr. Kenneth Sherman, one of the major contributors to project development, could give a presentation on the indicators of the success of the Project. The Meeting agreed to this addition, and the agenda was adopted, and is attached as Annex 3 to this report.

5 CONSIDERATION & APPROVAL OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 2ND REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING

- 5.1. The Chairperson invited Mr. Jiang to give a brief introduction on the Project objectives and PMO developments to-date. Although the PMO is operational, the Project urgently requires an Environment Economics Officer, as this position is quite important for developing the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Programme (TDA/SAP).
- 5.2 Mr. Jiang expressed his appreciation to KORDI for providing office space, then gave a brief overview of the Project progress, highlighting the outcomes of the 1st and 2nd RTMs:
- The two Meetings discussed project activities and implementation;
 - The 2nd RTM reviewed agreements from 1st RTM;
 - The 2nd RTM agreed on pending issues from the 1st RTM; and
 - The 2nd RTM agreed to recommend that the PSC approve the implementation plan.

Mr. Jiang explained the Project implementation steps, which are to: 1) prepare the TDA; 2) prepare the SAP; and 3) demonstrate the SAP, and described the expected outcomes of the Project, i.e. formulation of TDA, approval of SAP and National Yellow Sea Action Plans (NYSAPS), capacity building, and enhanced regional co-operative frameworks.

- 5.3 Mr. Jiang summarised the outcomes from the Second Technical Meeting. He reviewed the revised draft Implementation Plan (Document UNDP/GEF/YS/PSC.1/4), and explained the responsibilities of the Regional Working Groups (RWG), noting the table of milestones and outcomes listed in the Implementation Plan. Mr. Jiang mentioned that the budget was revised according to the new priorities agreed at the 1st and 2nd RTMs. The first round of Regional Working Group Meetings will finalise these activities. Mr. Jiang reminded the partners that the national and regional implementation mechanisms, particularly the Inter-ministry Committees, Regional Scientific and Technical Panel, and National Project Co-ordinator, will play important roles in the Project.

- 5.4 Mr. Jiang also gave a brief overview of GEF monitoring and evaluation procedures. Mr. Hudson clarified the types of indicators used in GEF Projects, which were included in the Revised Implementation Plan.
- 5.5 Mr. Jiang then presented the recommendations from the 2nd Regional Technical Meeting to the Project Steering Committee. He emphasised that all partners should consult local populations and stakeholders during research and analysis of priorities and definitions of options.
- 5.6 Mr. Haiqing Li emphasised that, in particular, the experiences obtained from YSLME would be applied to the East China Sea in a later stage, and that as the Yellow Sea is physically linked to the East China Sea, the implementation of the YSLME Project should keep in mind the on-going projects in the East China Sea, and whenever possible, co-ordinate the activities.
- 5.7 Following congratulatory remarks from the participants for achieving the outcomes, and finalising pending issues, **the Meeting approved the Revised Implementation Plan, which includes the revised budget and project structure** (Annex 4).

6 FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Approval of proposed national co-financing commitments

- 6.1.1 Based on the information provided to the 2nd RTM, Mr. Haiqing Li and Mr. Wenxi Zhu expressed their appreciation to the Government of Korea for their increased co-financing to the Project. Mr. Wenxi Zhu gave an overview of China's co-financing commitment. Given the long development process of the Project, China has reviewed and revised their co-financing commitment, which is now close to USD 7 million. China stated their pledge to fulfil this commitment.
- 6.1.2 Mr. Dong-sik Woo mentioned that the Government of Korea had increased their co-financing commitment to close to USD 6.2 million, as the Project objectives are fully compatible with its national marine policies. He also mentioned that the exact figures of co-financing will be subject to PMO's review and discussions in the RWGs.
- 6.1.3 Mr. Sadayosi Tobai stated that World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)-Japan will commit USD 63,636 for the habitat and vulnerable species TDA, while staff time contributions will be in the region of USD 71,364, for a total of USD 135,000.
- 6.1.4 On behalf of NOAA, Mr. Sherman expressed his gratitude to join China and Korea in this Project. NOAA will maintain its original contribution of USD 600,000, providing remote sensing information on fish stocks, biodiversity, and physical and biochemical parameters for ocean monitoring. He invited the countries to participate in two NOAA-sponsored training workshops: 1) Biogeochemical cycling in large marine ecosystems; and 2) Modelling ecosystem functions.
- 6.1.5 Ms. Degryse-Blateau expressed her happiness at hearing the positive news from the various co-financing sources. She commended the countries, WWF, and NOAA for their contributions to the Project.
- 6.1.6 Mr. Jiang expressed his appreciation on the increased co-financing. He reminded the participants that it would be useful for the PMO if both countries could provide a brief on specific projects that will be providing co-financing to the Yellow Sea Project.

This information would help the PMO in the planning of the first round of RWG meetings.

- 6.1.7 Mr. Hudson noted that since the GEF Council approved the Project Document some ten years ago, there have been new requirements for a 1:1 ratio of co-financing from the participating countries. He expressed his gratitude to the countries and organisations for their contributions which certainly meet the new requirement.
- 6.1.8 Ms. Degryse-Blateau, Ms. Naobi Okayasu, as proxy for Ms. Isabelle Louis (Regional Director of WWF Asia-Pacific), Mr. Jiang, and Mr. Tobai participated in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Signing Ceremony between the UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project and WWF/KORDI/KEI Yellow Sea Eco-region Planning Programme (YSEPP).
- 6.1.9 Ms. Okayasu stated that the Yellow Sea Eco-region Planning Project is an important agenda for WWF. Today was a special day in WWF's history in developing their regional co-operative activities to assist in protecting and managing this important ecosystem.
- 6.1.10 Mr. Tobai expressed his appreciation for concluding this MOU. He hoped that the MOU will be a catalyst for more partnerships in the Yellow Sea region. He emphasised that the co-operation will be: 1) on-the-ground co-operations; 2) had already been discussed with experts and the PMO on joint RWG Meetings; and 3) preparing joint governance analyses. He hoped that the YESPP could provide some co-financing support in funds and staff time for TDA development.
- 6.1.11 Various participants gave congratulatory remarks to the two projects for signing the MOU. The Meeting felt that this MOU will serve as a model for co-operation between this Project and other relevant organisations and projects.

6.2 Discussion and adoption of the project budget

- 6.2.1 Mr. Rusong Li, UNDP-Beijing, inquired about the change of budget structure from the old UNDP format to the new ATLAS format. Mr. Menz explained that this had been done. He noted, however, that a shadow budget would be maintained for project management purposes, as ATLAS does not permit the required level of detail.
- 6.2.2 The Meeting noted with great appreciation the agreements reached at the 2nd RTM , and, **approved the revised project budget and all issues discussed and agreed at the 2nd RTM (Annex 4).**

7 CO-OPERATION BETWEEN YSLME PROJECT AND OTHER REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND PROJECTS

- 7.1 On behalf of the Partnership in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia Project (PEMSEA), Mr. Thia-Eng Chua congratulated the Project for its launch. Mr. Chua mentioned that PEMSEA could collaborate in capacity building, information exchange activities, regional ministerial and technical conferences, investment opportunities, and communication with Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). He invited the YSLME to consider co-sponsoring a workshop during the next East Asian Seas Congress to be held in China, in December 2006. Mr. Chua suggested that the collaborative efforts could be formalised through an MOU. The Project partners responded positively.

- 7.2 On behalf of WWF, Mr. Tobai described the collaborative efforts between WWF and the Yellow Sea Project, particularly the development of the Yellow Sea Project's SAP. He mentioned that WWF could share their databases, their experiences in enhancing public awareness, and their experiences in public communication.
- 7.3 Mr. Xiaodong Zhong gave a brief presentation on the Northwest Pacific Action Plan's (NOWPAP) activities. He stated that NOWPAP could collaborate in data sharing, share expertise, training events, and contribute to the implementation of the SAP. The mechanisms for co-operation will be discussed between the NOWPAP Regional Co-ordinating Unit and the PMO.
- 7.4 Ms. Degryse-Blateau mentioned the UNDP/GEF/MOE project in Korea to protect significant wetlands, in particular, the Geum River basin and estuary on the west coast. She mentioned that the project Chief Technical Advisor had not yet taken up the post, but would co-operate with the Yellow Sea Project in the near future.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 8.1 Mr. Won Jang reiterated the importance of involving DPRK in the Project. He expressed his appreciation to the Government of China and PMO for supporting this issue. Mr. Jang suggested that the 2nd PSC Meeting should review a proposal prepared by the PMO on the strategy to involve DPRK.
- 8.2 On behalf of NOAA, Mr. Sherman gave a statement of support to the YSLME Project (Annex 5). Mr. Sherman also gave a presentation on the indicators of change in large marine ecosystems. The presentation described methods and indicators used to assess ecosystem-based management.

9 VENUE FOR NEXT PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

- 9.1 The Chairperson invited participants to offer to host the Second PSC Meeting in December 2005. On behalf of China, Mr. Haiqing Li offered to host the next PSC Meeting. The PMO and participating countries will discuss the specific venue and date.

10 ADOPTION OF THE MEETING REPORT

- 10.1 The Chairperson and Rapporteur led the discussion of the Draft Meeting Report prepared by the Secretariat. The draft report was discussed, amended and adopted by the Meeting.

11 CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

- 11.1 The Chairperson invited participants to give their closing remarks.
- 11.2 On behalf of China, Mr. Haiqing Li expressed his appreciation to all the 2nd RTM participants for their efforts in producing the excellent results from their fruitful discussions. Mr. Li thanked the Chairperson for conducting the Meeting under a friendly atmosphere, which achieved the desired results under the capable leadership. Mr. Li thanked the Government of Korea for the meeting arrangements,

which led to its success. He thanked UNDP/GEF, UNDP-Korea, UNOPS, Mr. Jiang and his team, and all participants for their hard work in producing the successful results of the Meeting. He welcomed everyone to China for the next PSC Meeting.

- 11.3 On behalf of the Government of Korea, Mr. Dong-sik Woo expressed his pleasure in seeing the successful results of the Meeting, which resulted in a clearer future for the Project. Mr. Woo thanked the Chinese delegation for their co-operation in the Project. He thanked UNDP and PMO for organising the Meeting, UNOPS for its administrative support, WWF for their generous co-financing and co-operative spirit, PEMSEA for sharing their experiences, and Mr. Sherman for NOAA's contribution to the Project. Finally, Mr. Woo thanked the Chairperson for his efficient style in chairing the Meeting.
- 11.4 On behalf of UNDP, Ms. Degryse-Blateau thanked the two delegations for playing such a driving role in coming to agreements on many key issues of the Project, and for finding a common ground for the Project. She thanked all participants and the Chairperson for moving through the agenda items in an efficient way. She thanked the PMO for their wonderful job and team work. Special thanks were expressed to Ms. Hyun-Shin Lee for assisting in project development and implementation. Ms. Degryse-Blateau was excited at seeing the possibilities for new partnerships. She mentioned that the Launching Ceremony gave the Project a higher profile, and showed the importance of the Project.
- 11.5 Mr. Hudson thanked the Government of Korea for hosting the PSC Meeting. He thanked China and all partners for their co-operation in achieving the desired results from the 2nd RTM. He mentioned that the YSLME Project has started on a very smooth path which is a good sign for implementation. The increase in co-financing also bodes well for implementation.
- 11.6 The Chairperson thanked all participants for their hard work and active participation in the Meeting, which were essential for the success of the Meeting and Project. This mission was accomplished through UN agencies, two governments, regional organisations, and the PMO. The Chairperson mentioned that the Project is at a commencement point, and noted that all partners should meet the challenges to make the Yellow Sea "a sea of friendship, a sea of co-operation, a sea of peace, and also a sea of prosperity."
- 11.7 The meeting was closed at 12 noon on 7th March 2005.

Annex I

Programme and Speeches for the Launching Ceremony of the YSLME Project

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Gloria Hall, Koreana Hotel
Seoul, Korea, 7 March 2005

13:30 -14:00	Arrival of All Participants
Master of Ceremony	Dr. Andrew Menz
14:00 – 15:00	Speeches and Addresses
	Speakers:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr. KANG Moo-Hyun, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MOMAF), Republic of Korea 2. Mr. SUN Zhihui, Deputy Administrator, State Oceanic Administration, P.R China 3. Ms. Anne-Isabelle Degryse-Blateau, UNDP Representative, UNDP Seoul 4. Dr. JE Jong-Geel, Member of the National Assembly, R. Korea
15:00 – 15:15	Group Photo
15:15 – 15: 30	Coffee Break
	Keynote Speeches
Master of Ceremony	Mr. Yihang Jiang
15:30 – 16:00	Global Perspectives of the YSLME Project in the GEF International Waters Portfolio, by Dr. Andrew Hudson
16:00 – 16:30	Potential Contribution of YSLME to SDS-SEA, by Mr. Haiqing LI
16:30 - 17:00	Contributions of YSLME Project to the National Policies in Protection of the Marine Environment and Sustainable Use of Coastal Resources in the Yellow Sea, by Dr. YOO Shinjae
17:00 – 17:30	Sustainable Development in the Seas of East Asia, by Dr. CHUA Thia-Eng
17:30	Closure of the Ceremony
18:00 – 20:00	Reception

Congratulatory Address

Mr. Moo-Hyun Kang

Vice Minister

Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

Republic of Korea

Mr. Sun, Zhihui, Deputy Administrator of the State Oceanic Administration of the Peoples' Republic of China, Dr. Andrew Hudson, Chief Technical Advisor of UNDP/GEF(United Nations Development Programme/Global Environment Facility), Ms. Anne-Isabelle Degryse-Blateau, Resident Representative of UNDP Korea Office, Dr. Kenneth Sherman of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the United States,

Distinguished guests, and ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Korean government, I would like to extend my warmest welcome and express my sincerest thanks to you all for taking time to be here for the launching of Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem(YSLME) Project, particularly those who have travelled a long distance from Europe, US, China and Japan.

Today, we are gathered together at a historic moment for the preservation of Yellow Sea ecosystem.

For the past thousands of years, the Yellow Sea has provided Koreans, Chinese and Japanese with the grounds crucial for living: our ancestors harvested a variety of fishes from this sea, through which they exchanged goods, technologies and cultures with one another, and dreamed for their prosperous future.

Even such distant states as the Southeast Asian countries, India and the Arabian countries made visits by way of the Yellow Sea.

Recently, however, the Yellow Sea is endangered due to rapid industrialization and huge population in the basin in both Korea and China.

Marine habitats have been destroyed by the extensive development in coastal areas; water pollution worsened, and fishery resources and marine life dwindled with an increase in inflow of household sewage, industrial waste water, marine litter and various persistent organic pollutants(POPs).

In order to improve these situations, Korea and China have made various efforts to enhance water quality by setting up waste water/sewage treatment plants, to recover fishery resources by discharging fingerlings and cleaning fish farms, to restore tidal flats to their original conditions.

However, such endeavor had limitations.

The ocean is one vast space with no boundary, and the whole Yellow Sea comprises one ecosystem as it is semi-closed in nature.

Given that, it would be futile to limit fishing and discharge fingerlings in the sea to recover fishery resources if the quality of water gets deteriorated, and marine litters from one side of the sea is bound to arrive at the other side.

Furthermore and admittedly, the policies that was not based on sufficient and accurate scientific data fell short of being as effective as was expected.

Under these circumstances, it means significant for Global Environment Facility through United Nations Development Programme to aid and support the Large Marine Ecosystem under which the ocean is divided into 64 ecologically related areas to preserve our ocean by ensuring the efficient and systematic management.

Moreover, it gives me a great pleasure that the Yellow Sea, one of the most productive ocean in the world that suffers from great human stress, is chosen as one of the LME projects funded by Global Environmental Facility and today we have the launching ceremony of the YSLME.

Since the YSLME shares the goal with one of the policy initiatives of the Korean government titled "Make our ocean clean and full of life", the Korean government will not spare its effort and support to ensure the success of the project.

It is my firm belief that the relevant government officials, researchers and private sector specialists from both countries will do their best for the success of the project in collaboration with specialists from UN and other international organizations.

Should any difference in opinion arise in the process of the implementation due to cultural, institutional or methodological differences, I would like to ask you earnestly to sublimate it constructively with the spirit of collaboration and mutual understanding under our common goal of the preservation of the Yellow Sea ecosystem, so that our descendants may remember us as their proud ancestors.

Let us pool our wisdom and join forces to make the Yellow Sea clean and abundant, and a symbol of peace and collaboration. Again, I congratulate on the commencement of the Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem Project.

Thank you very much.

Congratulatory Address

Mr. SUN Zhihui

Deputy Administrator

State Oceanic Administration, China

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very honored to participate in the official launching ceremony for the project on the Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem, on behalf of the Chinese government. It is a great event in the China-Korea ocean sector, and a good beginning of multilateral ocean cooperation among countries around the Yellow Sea in opening. The Chinese government attaches great importance to the project and send me here to participate in and witness the official launching of the Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem project. Hereby, please allow me, on behalf of the Chinese government, to express the warmest congratulations on the launching of the project and sincere gratitude to Mr. Jiang Yihang, the project CTA for inviting me here.

The Yellow Sea is a Semi-enclosed shelf sea lying between mainland China and the Korean Peninsula. More than 20 rivers namely the Yangtze River, Yellow River and Yalujiang River etc. , big or small, flow into the Yellow sea, making the Yellow Sea an enriched sea with abundant marine resources, and makes great contributions to the development of coastal economy and society, and the improvement of people's life.

However, in recent years, with rapid development of population and economy, the Yellow Sea is facing more and more serious problems. Damages to the marine ecosystem caused by pollution, over-fishing, and ocean and coastal engineering are more severe. Human activities together with natural environmental changes brought a series of problems to the Yellow Sea, which include small-scale phenomenon like occurrences of red tide and death of marine lives, as well as large-scale phenomenon like decreasing of living species, reduction and deterioration of marine resources. All these threatened the ecological circulation and sustainable utilization of the whole large marine ecosystem.

Meanwhile, lots of environmental problems that the Yellow Sea is facing have a trans-boundary nature, and have to be solved through international cooperation. It is under this background that the Yellow Sea project was initiated. Its objective is, through close cooperation and joint efforts, to reduce the stress of development on environment, promote sustainable management and use of the ecosystem, and promote the social and economical development of the countries around the Yellow Sea, and make benefits for the coastal people.

The countries around the Yellow Sea have a tradition of friendly relationship, and had frequent and close political, economical and cultural communication in the history. With the end of the Cold War and the development of economical globalization, the political, economical, cultural, scientific, technological and marine cooperation between China and Korea have made great progress. In 1994, the Chinese and Korean government signed the agreement on marine scientific and technological cooperation, and established the China-Korea Joint Research Center on Marine Science in the following year, which played a significant role in promoting marine cooperation between the two countries, and laid an important foundation for the preparation and implementation of the Yellow Sea project. We believe that, through the joint efforts of the surrounding countries, the Yellow Sea, although a geographical barrier separating the countries on both sides, will become a sea of peace, a sea of friendship, and a sea of cooperation. While in this process, the Yellow Sea project will play a significant accelerating role.

As everybody knows, the way to success never runs smooth. It took some 11 years for us to prepare for the Yellow Sea project and finally launch it. In the project preparation phase, all participating parties engaged in great amount of time and energy and did hard work. Their efforts are eventually repaid today. Hereby, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere respect and appreciation to the officials and experts from GEF, UNDP, especially its Beijing and Seoul Office, UNOPS, NOAA, and the Chinese and Korea governments. At the same time, I would like to point out that, presently, China and Korea are the only participating countries of the project. We should try to make all the countries around the Yellow Sea taking part in this project, and make benefits for all these countries.

We have great expectation on the Yellow Sea project, and hope to see a successful and effective implementation of the project. The State Oceanic Administration, as the organizer of the Chinese participants, is willing to strengthen organization and management, and to enhance the coordination and cooperation with MOMAF and the PMO. We will try our best to make due contribution to the successful implementation of the project. We are happy that Mr. Jiang Yihang has officially taken the post of CTA for the project. Mr. Jiang is an experienced oceanographer, and has a profound understanding of the history, culture and language of the countries around the Yellow Sea. He has great ability in management and rich experiences in implementing international projects, especially the GEF projects. We believe that, under the instruction of GEF, UNDP, UNOPS and the Chinese and Korean Government, and with the active efforts of the PMO under Mr. Jiang's leadership, the YSLME project will make a full success.

Thank you!

Congratulatory Speech

Ms. Anne-Isabelle Degryse-Blateau

UNDP Resident Representative

UNDP-Korea

Mr. Kang Moo-Hyun, Vice-Minister of MOMAF, Republic of Korea

Mr. Sun Zihui, Deputy Administrator of SOA, People's Republic of China

Dr. Je Jong-Geel, Member of the National Assembly, Republic of Korea

Dear Colleagues from the UN system

Ladies & Gentlemen,

Today is a special day.

It is special because of all of you in this room. And especially all of you, who through your advice, your support and your relentless efforts, in true partnership, throughout the years and from every part of the world have made this moment possible.

Our Korean and Chinese partners from government & research institutions, our friends and colleagues from UNDP/GEF New York & Malaysia, from UNDP China, UNOPS, PEMSEA, our friends from WWF Japan, who never gave up on us in the last years of project finalization, Dr. Sherman from NOAA, not to forget our Project Manager, Mr. Yihang Jiang and his team, my UNDP/ROK colleague Ms. Hyun-shin Lee and all the members of the technical working groups from China & ROK, who since October last year and in the past days, until Saturday, have brainstormed and worked until early morning hours to present their implementation plan to the Project Steering Committee this morning. Thank you to all of you.

Please allow me to address our very special thanks to persons who have been the pillars of this project over the years: Mr. Li Haiqing, Director-General of SOA, Dr. Huh Hyung Tack, former director of KORDI, Andrew Hudson & Tim Clairs from UNDP GEF. A special thanks also goes to KORDI and its president for hosting the Project Management Office and to our friends and partners at MOFAT & MOMAF who have been instrumental to today's event.

And today is also a historic moment in many ways.

After so many years of hard work and discussions, the project is finally ready to roll out and sail off on what we hope will be calm and bountiful seas.

Today marks one more decisive step in the collaboration between the Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China in general, and in particular around this very vital common water body. We know the National Assembly of Korea has put a priority of the Yellow Sea agenda and the presence of senior government officials from both China and Korea clearly highlights the importance of this agenda and of the project for both parties.

By committing to implement this project, PRC & ROK are also affirming their engagement to help achieve the worldwide-adopted Millennium Development Goals. Goal 7, which calls for incorporating the principles of sustainable development and environment management in policies and programs; reversing the loss of environmental resources and engaging in Integrated Water Resources Management. Goal 1: by exploring the root causes of sharp decreases of fish stock, seashells and other sea products and proposing joint measures to redress the situation, Korea and China will be responding to the concerns of the coastal populations and thereby contributing to reducing poverty and enhancing livelihoods of these populations.

Through this project, PRC & ROK are also confirming their respective commitment as active players in the worldwide agenda of Large Marine Eco Systems and International Water projects of the Global Environment Fund (GEF), and UNDP/GEF is committed to supporting both countries' efforts to turning the Yellow Sea back into a sound water body for the prosperity of all stakeholders.

Such an ambitious project offers a mix of opportunities & challenges.

- Challenges will be to keep the eyes focused on what this project is about : a joint Trans-boundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA in our jargon) by the end of the second year, which will bring out the real root causes of the key issues for the sound management of the yellow Sea, and by year 4, the definition of a solid , mutually agreed, prioritized common Strategic Action Program (or SAP) for remedial actions.
- Challenges will be to keep focusing at the issues, which are of trans-boundary nature rather than on respective national issues.
- Challenges will be to ensure solid consultations with key stakeholders.
- Challenges will be to expand the partnerships, gvt, NGOs, civil society, private sector, cross-sectoral, across the borders and keep them strong, alive and effective.
- Challenges will be to keep the pace.
- Opportunities will be to build and reinforce long lasting partnerships that will benefit all, within each country and across the borders.
- Opportunities will be to strengthen the cooperation between the two countries and their respective institutions.
- Opportunities will be to become a model of environmentally sound & sustainable trans-boundary Water management.
- Opportunities will be to make a difference for all the people who depend so heavily on the good health of the Yellow Sea and to provide them new hope.

The door for the participation of DPRK will always remain open and they are welcome at any time to come and join in the project activities. Their participation can only enhance the project's relevance.

For now, looking around this room, I feel confident that together we will raise to the challenges and grab every opportunity to make this project a turning point in our relationships, in the sound management of the Yellow Sea and in the lives of the people who count on us to provide them the choices for a better life.

Official Launching Ceremony for the UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem Project

Dr. JE, Jong-Geel
Member, National Assembly
Republic of Korea

(Thank you for the wonderful introduction, chairman)

Mr. Kang Moo-Hyun, Vice-Minister of MOMAF, Republic of Korea

Mr. Sun Zihui, Deputy Administrator of SOA, People's Republic of China

Ms. Anne-Isabelle D. Blateau, UNDP Representative

Dr. Chua Thia-Eng, Regional Programme Director of PEMSEA

Dear Colleagues from the UN system and GEF.

Ladies and gentlemen... good afternoon to you all!

On behalf of National Assembly, Republic of Korea, let me extend a warm welcome to all for attending today's ceremony. I would also like to extend a special welcome to our distinguished guests from Korean and Chinese government & research institutes, as well as to my friends from KORDI, NFRDI, WWF Japan, and PEMSEA. It is my great pleasure to be with you to celebrate the launching ceremony of Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem project. It gives me great honor to have the opportunity to address such a distinguished audience.

Ladies and gentlemen...

Among the large marine ecosystems (LMEs) in the world ocean, the Yellow Sea LME has been one of the most significantly affected by human development. Today the Yellow Sea faces serious environmental problems, many of a transboundary nature, that arise from anthropogenic causes, especially, comes from industrial and agricultural wastes. The Yellow Sea LME is an significant global resource. This international waterbody supports substantial populations of fish, invertebrates, marine mammals, and migratory waterbirds. Many of these resources are threatened by both land and sea-based sources of pollution and loss of biomass, biodiversity, and habitat resulting from extensive economic development in the coastal zone, and by the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources.

Three countries (Democratic People's Republic of Korea - DPRK, People's Republic of China -PRC, and Republic of Korea - ROK), with their massive populations living in the Yellow Sea drainage basin, share common problems with pollution mitigation and control in the Yellow Sea basin, as well as reduction of non-point source contaminants from agricultural practices. All of the countries are urgently seeking to address problems of reduced fish catch and shifts in species biomass and biodiversity, red tides outbreaks, degradation of coastal habitats caused by explosive coastal development, and effects of climate variability on the Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem.

Such a various related reason bring out the objective of the project:

- Ecosystem-based, environmentally-sustainable management and use of the YSLME and its watershed:
- Reducing development stress and promoting sustainable exploitation of the ecosystem from a densely populated, heavily urbanized, and industrialized semi-enclosed shelf sea.

In order to achieve this objective, we are expected to actively contribute to prepare a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA), National Yellow Sea Action Plans (NYSAPs), and a regional Strategic Action Programme (SAP). This project will also initiate and facilitate the

implementation of the SAP. The SAP will consist of a series of legal, policy and institutional changes and investments to address the priority transboundary issues identified in the TDA/SAP formulation process.

In particularly, it is certainly coordinated to

- Develop Regional Strategies for Sustainable Management of Fisheries, and Mariculture
- Propose and Implement Effective Regional Initiatives for Biodiversity Protection
- Propose and Implement Actions to Reduce Stress to the Ecosystem, Improve Water Quality, and Protect Human Health
- Develop and Pilot Regional Institutional and Capacity Building Initiatives

Let us also mobilize public support to protect our marine and coastal resource and ensure their sustainable use. I hope YSLME will work smoothly with all of you toward the achievement of noble objective.

Now, on this day of March 7th, 2005, we are gathered here to witness the first step of our common pursuit in protection of Yellow Sea by sharing the long term vision. We look forward to the future as we begin our journey into brighter future. The challenge ahead of us may be a required procedure to make a proceed and progress but strong partnership and coordinated approaches will surely bear the abundant fruits for all of us.

Ladies and gentlemen. We are sailing in the same boat in the Yellow Sea. I believe YSLME contribute to creating and enabling the environment for environmental investment, thus converting assured environmental management measures into economic investment opportunities.

Finally, I look forward to all of your active participation in the YSLME activities to follow. I wish you all of you a pleasant and enriching stay in this beautiful and morning calm country.

Thank you very much.

Annex II

List of Participants

People's Republic of China	
<p>Mr. SUN Zhihui Deputy Administrator State Oceanic Administration 1 Fuxingmenwai Avenue Beijing 100860 Tel: 86-10-6804-2695 Fax: 86-10-6803-0799</p>	<p>Mr. HE Wenping Counsellor Science & Technology Chinese Embassy in ROK 54 Hyoja-dong, Jongno-gu Seoul, Republic Of Korea 110-033 Tel: 82-2-738-1037 Fax: 82-2-738-1045</p>
<p>Mr. LI Haiqing Director-General Department of International Co-operation State Oceanic Administration 1 Fuxingmenwai Avenue Beijing 100860 Tel: 86-10-6804-2695 Fax: 86-10-6803-0799 Email: hqli@soa.gov.cn</p>	<p>Mr. YUAN Yeli, Honorary President for the First Institute of Oceanography (FIO) Qingdao Tel: 86-532-896-7908 Mobile: 86-139-0642-6335 Email: ylyuan@public.qd.sd.cn</p>
<p>Mr. TANG Qisheng Director-General Yellow Sea Fisheries Research Institute 106 Nanjing Road Qingdao 266071 Tel: 86-532-583-6200 Fax: 86-532-581-1514 Email: ysfri@public.qd.sd.cn</p>	<p>Mr. ZHU Wenxi Department of International Co-operation State Oceanic Administration 1 Fuxingmenwai Avenue Beijing 100860 Tel: 86-10-6804-8051 Fax: 86-10-6803-0799 Email: wxzhu@soa.gov.cn</p>
<p>Mr. WEN Quan SOA Key Lab of Coastal Ecosystem and Environment Research National Marine Environment Monitoring Centre 42 Linghe Street Dalian 116023 Tel: 86-411-8478-2522 Fax: 86-411-8478-2522 Email: gwen@nmemc.gov.cn</p>	<p>Ms. WEI Yan Department of International Co-operation State Oceanic Administration 1 Fuxingmenwai Avenue Beijing 100860 Tel: 86-10-6804-8051 Fax: 86-10-6803-0799 Email: shb@soa.gov.cn</p>
<p>Mr. ZHANG Nan Third Secretary Science & Technology Chinese Embassy in ROK 54 Hyoja-dong, Jongno-gu Seoul, Republic Of Korea 110-033 Tel: 82-2-738-1037 Fax: 82-2-738-1045</p>	

Republic of Korea	
<p>Mr. Moo Hyun KANG Vice Minister Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MOMAF) 140-2 Gye-Dong, Jongno-Gu Seoul, 110-793 Tel: 82-2-3148-6544 Fax: 82-2-3148-6545</p>	<p>Mr. Jong Geel JE Member of the National Assembly 731 National Assembly Bldg 1 Yoido-dong Youngdeungpo-Gu 150-702 Seoul Tel: 82-2-788-2608 82-2-784-4187 Fax: 82-2-788-3731 Email: jgje@assembly.go.kr</p>
<p>Mr. Yeon-Chul YOO Director, Environment and Science Division Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) 95-1 Doryeom Dong Jongro-Gu Seoul 110-051 Tel: 82-2-2100-7745 Fax: 82-2-2100-7991 Email: ychoo87@mofat.go.kr</p>	<p>Mr. Won JANG Deputy Director Environment and Science Division Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) 95-1 Doryeom Dong Jongro-Gu Seoul 110-051 Tel: 82-2-2100-7750 Fax: 82-2-2100-7991 Email: wjang@mofat.gov.kr</p>
<p>Mr. Dong Sik WOO Deputy Director Marine Environment Division Marine Policy Bureau Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MOMAF) 140-2 Gye-Dong, Jongno-Gu Seoul, 110-793 Tel: 82-2-3674-6544 Fax: 82-2-3674-6545 Mobile: 82-10-3100-7930 Email dwoo0047@momaf.go.kr</p>	<p>Mr. Dae-Ho WOO Assistant Director Marine Environment Division Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MOMAF) 140-2 Gye-Dong, Jongno-Gu Seoul, 110-793 Tel: 82-2-3674-6544 Fax: 82-2-3674-6545 Email: woodh@momaf.go.kr</p>
<p>Ms. In Ja YEON West Sea Fisheries Research Institute National Fisheries Research & Development Institute (NFRDI) 707, Eulwang-dong, Jung-gu Incheon 400-420 Tel: 82-32-745-0551 Fax: 82-32-745-0549 Email: ijyeon@nfrdi.re.kr</p>	<p>Mr. Sinjae YOO Director Marine Living Resources Research Division Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute (KORDI) 1270 Sa-dong Sangnok-gu Ansan-si Gyeonggi-do 426-744 Tel: 82-31-400-6221 Fax: 82-31-408-5934 Email: sjyoo@kordi.re.kr</p>

<p>Mr. Jae Ryoung OH Principal Research Scientist Environmental Science Lab, South Sea Institute Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute (KORDI) Tel: 82-55-639-8670 Fax: 82-55-639-8509 Email: jroh@kordi.re.kr</p>	<p>Mr. Yoon LEE Senior Researcher National Fisheries Research & Development Institute (NFRDI) 408-1, Sirang-Ri, Gijang-Ep, Gijang-Gun Busan 619-902 Tel: 82-51-720-2240 Fax: 82-51-720-2266 Email: yoonlee@momaf.go.kr</p>
<p>Mr. Seong-Hwan PAE Korean Ocean Research and Development Institute(KORDI) 1270 Sa-dong Sangnok-gu Ansan-si Gyeonggi-do 426-744 Tel: 82-31-400-6228 Fax: 82-31-408-5934 Mobile: 82-11-897-9821 Email: shpae@kordi.re.kr</p>	<p>Mr. Hyung- Tack HUH Sr. Scientist Emeritus, KORDI 253, Yonghyun-Dong, Nam-Gu Incheon 402-751 Tel: 82-31-400-6201 Fax: 82-31-408-5934 Email: hthuh@kordi.re.kr</p>
<p>World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)</p>	
<p>Ms. Naobi OKAYASU Conservation Director Director of WWF Coral Reef Conservation & Research Centre WWF Japan Nihonseimei Akabanebashi Bldg., 6Fl. 3-1-14 Shiba Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-0014 , Japan Tel: 81-3-3769-1713 Fax: 81-3-3769-1717 Email: naobiok@wwf.or.jp</p>	<p>Mr. TOBAI Sadayosi Yellow Sea Ecoregion Planning Programme Ecoregion Coordinator WWF Japan Nihonseimei Akabanebashi Bldg., 6Fl. 3-1-14 Shiba Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-0014 , Japan Tel: 81-3-3769-1783 Fax: 81-3-3769-1717 Email: tobai@wwf.or.jp</p>
<p>Partnership in Environmental Management of the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA)</p>	<p>National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)</p>
<p>Mr. Chua Thia-Eng Regional Programme Director PEMSEA DENR Compound, Visayas Avenue Diliman, Quezon City Philippines Tel: 63-2-426-3849, 920-2211 Fax: 63-2-926-9714 Email: chuate@pemsea.org</p>	<p>Mr. Kenneth Sherman Director National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Northeast Fisheries Science Center Narragansett Laboratory 28 Tarzwell Drive Narragansett, RI 02882-1199 USA Tel: 1-401-782-3211 Fax: 1-401-782-3201 Email: kenneth.sherman@noaa.gov</p>

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	
<p>Mr. Andrew HUDSON Principal Technical Advisor International Waters/POPs Global Environment Facility United Nations Development Programme FF-914 1 United Nations Plaza New York, NY 10017 USA Tel. 1-212-906-6228 Fax 1-212-906-6998 Email: andrew.hudson@undp.org</p>	<p>Ms. Anne-Isabelle DEGRYSE-BLATEAU Resident Representative UNDP Korea Office Hannam Tower 730, Hannam 2-Dong, Yongsan-ku, Seoul Republic of Korea Tel: 82-2-790-9562/5 Fax: 82-2-749-1417 Email: anne-isabelle.degryse-blateau@undp.org</p>
<p>Ms. Hyun-Shin LEE UNDP Korea Office Hannam Tower 730, Hannam 2-Dong, Yongsan-ku, Seoul Republic of Korea Tel: 82-2-790-9562/5 Fax: (82-2-749-1417 E-mail: hyun-shin.lee@undp.org</p>	<p>Mr. LI Rusong UNDP China Office Programme Manager/Environment & Energy No. 2, LiangMaHe Nan Lu Beijing 100600 China Tel: 86-10-6532-3731-245 Fax: 86-10-6532-2567 Email: rusong.li@undp.org</p>
United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)	United Nations Environment Programme, Northwest Pacific Action Plan (UNEP/NOWPAP)
<p>Mr. Andrew MENZ Senior Portfolio Manager Global & Interregional Division UNOPS 11-13 Chemin des Anemones 1219 Chatelaine, Geneva Switzerland Tel: 41-22-917-8556 Fax: 41-22-917-8062 Email: AndrewM@unops.org</p>	<p>Mr. Xiaodong ZHONG Deputy Coordinator UNEP/NOWPAP Busan Office 408-1 Shirang-ri, Gijang-eup, Gijang-gun Busan 619-902, Republic of Korea Tel: 82-51-720-3000 Fax: 82-51-720-3009 E-mail: zhongxd@yahoo.com</p>

Project Management Office (PMO)	
<p>Mr. Yihang JIANG Project Manager UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute 1270 Sa-dong Sangnok-gu Ansan-si Gyeonggi-do 426-744 Republic of Korea Tel: 82-31-400-7825 Fax: 82-31-400-7826 email: yihang@yslme.org</p>	<p>Ms. Connie CHIANG Environment Officer UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute 1270 Sa-dong Sangnok-gu Ansan-si Gyeonggi-do 426-744 Republic of Korea Tel: 82-31-400-7833 Fax: 82-31-400-7826 email: connie@yslme.org</p>
<p>Mr. Jeffrey ARCHER Fisheries Officer UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute 1270 Sa-dong Sangnok-gu Ansan-si Gyeonggi-do 426-744 Republic of Korea Tel: 82-31-400-7832 Fax: 82-31-400-7826 email: jeff@yslme.org</p>	<p>Mr. Sung-Jun PARK Finance & Administrative Officer UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute 1270 Sa-dong Sangnok-gu Ansan-si Gyeonggi-do 426-744 Republic of Korea Tel: 82-31-400-7828 Fax: 82-31-400-7826 email: sungjun@yslme.org</p>
<p>Ms. Kyung-Suk LEE Administrative Assistant UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute 1270 Sa-dong Sangnok-gu Ansan-si Gyeonggi-do 426-744 Republic of Korea Tel: 82-31-400-7827 Fax: 82-31-400-7826 email: kyungsuk@yslme.org</p>	<p>Ms. Jung-Hwa KIM Secretary UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute 1270 Sa-dong Sangnok-gu Ansan-si Gyeonggi-do 426-744 Republic of Korea Tel: 82-31-400-7829 Fax: 82-31-400-7826 email: junghwa@yslme.org</p>
<p>Mr. Kap-Sung SONG UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute 1270 Sa-dong Sangnok-gu Ansan-si Gyeonggi-do 426-744 Republic of Korea Tel: Fax: 82-31-400-7826 email: kapsung@yslme.org</p>	<p>Ms. Eui-Dea YUN IT Supporting Staff UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute 1270 Sa-dong Sangnok-gu Ansan-si Gyeonggi-do 426-744 Republic of Korea Tel: 82-31-400-7830 Fax: 82-31-400-7826 email: euidea@yslme.org</p>

Annex III

Agenda

1. OFFICIAL LAUNCHING CEREMONY FOR YSLME PROJECT
2. OPENING OF THE MEETING
 - 2.1 Welcome addresses
 - 2.2 Introduction of the members
3. ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING
 - 3.1 Election of Officers
 - 3.2 Documentation Available to the Meeting
 - 3.3 Organisation of Work
4. ADOPTION OF THE MEETING AGENDA
5. CONSIDERATION & APPROVAL OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 2ND REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING
6. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS
 - 6.1 Approval of proposed national co-financing commitments
 - 6.2 Discussion and adoption of the project budget
7. CO-OPERATION BETWEEN YSLME PROJECT AND OTHER REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND PROJECTS
8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
9. VENUE FOR NEXT PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
10. ADOPTION OF THE MEETING REPORT
11. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

Annex V

Statement of Support from US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

As has been made abundantly clear during this launching of the YSLME project, and the first deliberations of the Steering Committee, that the leaders of Stewardship Agencies from both countries have come together to turn-the-corner, from degradation to sustainability of the shared-goods and sources of the ecosystem. The tasks to be undertaken will require a sharp focus to close the gap between science-based assessments and ecosystem-based management actions. The challenge is large. The science, technology and management experience you bring to the task is equally formidable. And it is in this spirit of meeting-the-challenge of ecosystem productivity and sustainability that NOAA is pleased and honored to support the YSLME project.