



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

UNDP/GEF/YS/RSP-PSC.6/9
Date: 30 October 2009
English only

**Sixth Meeting of the Regional Scientific and Technical Panel
And Project Steering Committee
For the UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project
*Xian, China, 17-19 November 2009***

Proposed Activities and Workplan for 2010

1. Although almost all planned project activities planned have been completed, and the project’s current phase is drawing to a close, there are still a number of activities that continue to be implemented and will be implemented in 2010. All of the SAP (Strategic Action Programme) demonstration activities will be completed by the end of 2009. There are some funds saved from previous activities, and some activities approved in line with the SAP demonstration activities which need to be implemented. Savings from project implementation have allowed some new activities to be proposed (see “New Activities” section). Collaborative activities with partner organisations will also be carried out as appropriate.

CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

2nd Regional Science Conference

2. This activity has been listed in the project’s workplan since 2008, budget has been allocated, and the 5th PSC Meeting approved the activity. In order to ensure that the outcomes of the SAP demonstration activities would be completed with full results to report, this activity was postponed to spring 2010. Through consultation with the National Project Co-ordinators and Project Focal Agencies, the confirmed dates are 24th to 26th February 2010, with the venue in Xiamen, China.
3. Further information on this event is provided in Document UNDP/GEF/YS/RSP-PSC.6/4c.

Co-operative Cruises Regional Report

4. At the “5th Technical Meeting for the Co-operative Cruises” (10-12 June 2008, Yantai, China) and Cruise Summary Workshop (17-18 June 2009, Seokcho, ROK), the scientists agreed that a Regional Report for the studies should be produced, under the overall leadership of the 3 Chief Scientists. One report containing both winter and summer data will be produced around the end of the year. Lead authors/chapter

co-ordinators were delegated for each chapter, with a first draft report expected during November.

NSAP Final Versions in English

5. The final version of National Strategic Action Plans (NSAPs) will be completed and published in 2010, and national management actions will be initiated according to the Plans. The effort to integrate the NSAPs into national plans and strategies will continue in the participating countries individually. Detailed actions and implementation plans will further be developed by national agencies, and the implementation of those activities will be initiated in co-operation with relevant stakeholders, including research institutes, academia, and NGOs.

Public Awareness and Stakeholder Involvement Activities

6. The fourth workshop of Yellow Sea Partnership will be organised in 2010 to update members on their individual and joint activities in the Yellow Sea and to share data, information, and any other resources. Exploring the possibility of implementing co-operative joint activities for 2010 and onwards, the workshop will enable the participants to strengthen the co-ordination and effectiveness of individual conservation efforts. The meeting will discuss administrative issues of the Partnership, including the registration of membership and the operation and maintenance of the website.

Workshop on Financial Sustainability of Management Plans

7. The "Workshop for Sustainable Implementation of Conservation Plans" will be organised in 2010. Targeting those who are in charge of conserving marine and coastal ecosystems, the Workshop will provide a combination of lectures and hands-on activities. Through the Workshop, it is expected that the participants will develop a good understanding of the rationale and steps to pursue long-term and sustainable implementation of conservation plans. The participants will learn how to put conservation plans into action from the perspective of sustainable financing.

Documents for Project Phase 2

8. The draft Project Document and Project Identification Form (PIF) will be presented under Agenda 7. Following the decisions of the 6th RSTP/PSC Meeting, these documents will be finalised, distributed to countries for a final review, and then submitted to the GEF in 2010. It is expected that during next year, as GEF reviews the proposal, that there will be queries from the GEF that need to be clarified. Some further refinement of the documents and communication with GEF will take place in 2010.

Terminal Evaluation

9. All GEF projects are required to undergo a terminal evaluation before the project ends. The purpose of the Terminal Evaluation will be to examine the performance of the project from the beginning of its implementation, measuring the results against the planned outputs described in the Project Document, and in accordance with the budget. Other aspects such as processes involved in achieving those outputs, as well as the impacts from the project will also be evaluated. This activity will begin shortly after the 6th RSTP/PSC Meeting, and will be carried out by two independent consultants to be hired.

NEW ACTIVITIES

10. As 2010 is mainly the Bridging Phase of the project, activities during this period should link the 2 phases of the project, allowing it to transition from one of SAP design to SAP implementation. During this phase, it is critical to maintain the project's momentum, and ensure that the project's successes and existence are not lost. It is also important to engage stakeholders in preparation for the project's next phase, informing and involving them in some of the activities that will transition the project to SAP implementation. In this context, activities using savings and cost-sharing with partners have been proposed for implementation in 2010.

The RSTP/PSC Meeting is invited to review the proposed activities, provide input on implementation, and approve the activities.

Maintaining the Network of Sustainable Mariculture Proponents

11. With the report of the mariculture consultant on Sustainability in Marine Aquaculture and the ensuing conferences, symposiums, and workshops that occurred over the last 3 years, a close network of sustainable mariculture proponents has emerged and close ties and collaboration amongst the regional experts and relevant stakeholders has developed. During the Second Regional Mariculture Conference the participants proposed to continue this partnership, a forum for regional scientists to discuss recent advances in sustainable mariculture was proposed to be hosted and jointly funded by YSFRI and the YSLME with full cooperation from the WSFRI.

Involving Local Government in Fisheries Management

12. The project has now demonstrated the effectiveness of three of the SAP fisheries management actions: the buy-back of fishing boats; the seasonal closure of fishing grounds; and the enhancement of commercial fish stocks through the mass release of healthy, genetically diverse hatchery-raised juveniles and the contribution of these management actions to the achievement of the SAP regional targets including: 25-30% reduction in fishing effort; and the rebuilding of fish stocks.
13. The resulting reports picked up on a number of issues, strengths and weaknesses that influenced the effectiveness of these management actions. One particular strength that was highlighted in ROK fisheries management demonstration activity was the benefits of community based management. This was thought to be particularly effective by the interviewed Korean inshore fishermen.
14. Exchange of ideas of fisheries management practices could be an effective method for improving local fisheries management. To this end, an exchange of local government fisheries managers is proposed. This activity will bring the local government officers and the leaders of fishery associations together, sharing the experiences of fishery management; identifying potential activities to implement relevant management actions of SAP; and proposing possible ways and activities for the second phase of the project.

Supporting the Yellow Sea MPA Network

15. During the First Yellow Sea MPA network meeting there was overwhelming support for the idea of a network, built initially around a social network to provide capacity building and facilitate an exchange of experiences so that management of these critical habitats can be improved. To this end, participants agreed to engage in a number of training exercises and an annual meeting of members.
16. It is proposed that the YSLME project, KMI and the WWF YSESP jointly support these activities through existing project budgets and from exterior funding sources. The first is scheduled to take place in April 2010 at the Yalu Nature reserve where training on benthic surveying and survey design will be provided, in co-ordination with the WWF/Liaoning Provincial Government/Dandong City demonstration project.

Harmonising Basin-wide Ecosystem Monitoring

17. During the data analyses of the 2 co-operative cruises, it was clear that there still remain differences throughout the region in sampling methodologies and equipment, taxonomic classification of organisms, and data harmonisation. In order for science-based management and the regional SAP to be effective in the region, better understanding and prediction of ecosystem changes are needed to implement ecosystem-based management. This can be achieved if data are harmonised and comparable, thus giving a basin-wide picture of ecosystem change. A regional monitoring network needs careful design to meet the requirements of all parties concerned, and also needs scientific considerations, government support on data sharing, and financial support for routine monitoring activities.
18. It is proposed to have a gathering of scientists and managers/policy makers who will use the monitoring data to better manage the Yellow Sea. The participants will begin exploring ways to develop strategies to monitor Yellow Sea's transboundary and emerging issues, such as N:P:Si change, climate change impacts, jellyfish blooms, and harmful algal blooms. The participants will also begin exploring ways to transfer any newly recommended monitoring programmes to the governments. This activity will pave a foundation for establishing the regional monitoring network, as defined in the SAP.

Technical Co-operation for QA/QC (Monitoring Nutrient Loads)

19. During SAP implementation, it is expected that a regional monitoring network for pollutants will be established for better understanding of the marine environment status and trends, and for monitoring the effectiveness of management actions to reduce environmental stresses in the Yellow Sea. In order for data to be reliable and usable, QA/QC of data must be ensured. From the co-operative cruises and various activities in the project's current phase on inter-calibration, it was observed that differences in analytical methods, irregular use of standard reference materials, and data harmonisation all need to be resolved.
20. The SAP target on reducing total nutrient loads from 2006 levels can be achieved only if data are reliable and comparable across the region. Thus, this proposed activity will invite an internationally recognised lead institute on QA/QC to promote good practices in this field, enhance capacity on new technologies/methods that are relevant, and promote the importance and

application of such practices to stakeholders, e.g. assisting local government agencies in monitoring nutrient discharge from mariculture areas.

Assessment and Estimation of Nutrient Loads (Modelling)

21. The 3 SAP demonstration activities on managing nutrient loads to the Yellow Sea from point and non-point sources will attempt to create one or a series of models to estimate total pollution loads from sea-, land- and atmospheric sources. Technical assistance is required to refine the models and make them applicable for the area where the demonstration activities are implemented, and later to serve as a best-practice model for other areas.
22. In co-operation with the Plymouth Marine Laboratory, a Chinese expert will visit the lab, under national financial sources, to prepare ecosystem models. Under the project budget, it is proposed to hire a consultant who is an expert in modelling to assist in this activity. This activity will largely assist the implementation of SAP management actions on reducing nutrient discharge to the Yellow Sea marine environment.

Improvement of CBA Procedures for SAP Management Actions

23. During the Project's first phase, the general guidelines for cost-benefit analyses (CBA) were developed to evaluate whether proposed management actions are economically justifiable. Then, pilot CBA projects were conducted based on the guidelines on two selected SAP demonstration activities: the environmentally-friendly mariculture and the improved biodiversity management. During the Project's second phase, similar CBA studies are expected to be implemented on SAP management actions, including those aiming at improving provisioning and regulating services. To ensure the integrity of those CBA studies, it is necessary to refine the general guidelines by preparing detailed procedures for specific fields of the actions.
24. This new activity is proposed to invite regional economists to prepare a set of suggested methods with specific procedures that will be used in the CBA studies during the SAP implementation. Small groups of experts will be organised according to the different field of targeted management actions. The experts will share the experience and lessons learned from the pilot CBA projects, reviewing the procedures and methods; examine existing methodologies to estimate the benefits of the specific SAP management actions (e.g., reduction in fishing efforts and pollution loads); and devise methodology papers that complement the general guidelines. The outputs of this activity (i.e., methodology papers) will be used as a reference for governments, research institutes, and universities when they implement the CBA of SAP management actions.

Preparation for the Establishment of YSLME Commission

25. In conjunction with the development of PIF and Project Document, the draft structure of YSLME Commission and the rules of procedures for its Interim Commission Council were proposed. Those documents provided the core organisational framework of the Commission and the basic guidelines on the Council operation. During the transitional period, it is necessary to further the preparation to establish the Commission and ensure its smooth operation. Additional arrangements should be made with/among relevant stakeholders and supplemental requirements and guidelines should be prepared, that complements the structure and rules.

26. This proposed activity will organise a forum for relevant stakeholders to explore, define, and start fulfilling requirements that are necessary for the establishment and operation of the Commission. The participants will be invited to provide suggestions on a number of specific issues, including the membership of each commission body, the specific areas and activities of Regional Working Groups (RWGs), the communication and co-ordination between RWGs and equivalent National Working Groups, and the establishment of a management advisory roster. The activity is expected to greatly contribute to materialising the vision of institutionalising the Commission so as for this unique regional framework to be fully operational in the second phase.

Exploring Co-operation with EU

27. The project has started communication with the European Union on potential co-operation in the implementation of SAP. Positive response has been received from the relevant institution that suggests there may be possibilities to co-operate with EU to jointly implement some activities that meet the requirements and criteria of EU, and those required by YSLME SAP implementation.
28. In order to achieve the co-operation, necessary activities in preparing a proposal for the potential co-operation, and a visit to EU to discuss the interests of both parties have been proposed by EU. During 2010, the necessary activities in this regard are proposed for the consideration of the 6th Meeting of the PSC.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Deadline / Activity Date</u>
Co-operative Cruises Regional Report	PMO and Chief Scientists	15 Dec 2009 (may be presented at 2nd RSC)
NSAP - final English versions	NPCs and national members	31 Dec 2009
Project Phase 2 final documents	Consultant, NPC, countries, experts	31 Jan 2010
2nd Regional Science Conference	PMO & Conference Organising Committee	24-26 Feb 2010
Terminal Evaluation	Evaluator(s), UNDP, UNDP/GEF, PMO, UNOPS	15 Mar 2010
CBA of SAP Demonstration Activities	Contractors	1 May 2010
Public Awareness and Stakeholder Involvement	PMO / Contractor	1 May 2010
Financial Sustainability Workshop	PMO	1 May 2010
Maintaining the network of sustainable mariculture	PMO, scientists, SAP demonstration activity	1 Jan - 1 Jun 2010

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Deadline / Activity Date</u>
proponents	contractors	
Involving local government in fisheries management	PMO, local government, scientists	1 Jan - 1 Jun 2010
Supporting the Yellow Sea MPA network	PMO, local government, MPA managers, NGOs, scientists, SAP demonstration activity contractors	1 Jan - 1 Jun 2010
Harmonising basin-wide ecosystem monitoring	PMO, Scientists, policy makers dealing with monitoring	1 Jan - 1 Jun 2010
Technical co-operation for QA/QC and monitoring N loads	PMO, scientists, international institute known for QA/QC	1 Jan - 1 Jun 2010
Modelling nutrient loads	PMO, scientists, SAP demonstration activity contractors	1 Jan - 1 Jun 2010
Improvement of CBA procedures	PMO, economists, experts on environmental valuation	1 Jan - 1 Jun 2010
Preparation for establishing YSLME Commission	PMO, NPC, countries, experts	1 Jan - 1 Jun 2010
Co-operation with the EU	PMO, EU, NPCs	1 Jan - 1 Jun 2010