



UNDP/GEF PROJECT ENTITLED "REDUCING ENVIRONMENTAL STRESS IN THE YELLOW SEA LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEM"

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English only

Special Meeting of the Project Steering Committee for the UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project Qingdao, China, 25 April 2006

CURRENT STATUS OF THE SPRING CO-OPERATIVE CRUISE

1 Background

At the Second Meeting of the Regional Scientific and Technical Panel (Kuming, China, 16-17 December 2005), the co-operative cruise was discussed and the following agreements were reached by the meeting, and were approved by the Project Steering Committee at its second meeting (Kunming, China, 19-20 December 2005):

For future implementation of the project, the meeting considered the new activities proposed by the regional working groups, in particular the meeting agreed on the following activities:

- *Following careful consideration of the approval of the co-operative cruises in the participating countries, the meeting agreed to postpone the winter cruise. Options in re-organising the cruises was discussed and agreed upon.*
- *The meeting considered the location of the observation stations, and agreements were reached on the spring cruise stations.*

Since the last PSC meeting, the National Project Co-ordinators (NPC) of China and Korea have continued to work with respective governmental agencies for the approval of the co-operative cruise.

2 Current Status

Following the efforts made by the NPCs, the Project Management Office (PMO) maintained close communication with the NPCs on this matter. Until the middle of March, there was still no approval from both China and Korea on this matter. Considering the spring cruise is planned to be organised in May 2006, and taking advantage of the convening of the Parliamentary Conference that both NPCs attended, a separate meeting of the NPCs was organised on 29 March 2006 to discuss the cruise. The NPC of Korea indicated that with the approval from the Government of China on the co-operative cruise, it would not take very long to obtain approval from the Government of Republic of Korea. The meeting with the NPCs reviewed the status of the co-operative cruises, and agreed on the following:

- (i) The NPC of China will continue to work with relevant governmental agencies to obtain approval of the spring cruise, originally planned in May 2006, and will keep the NPC of Korea and PMO informed;
- (ii) If approval cannot be obtained from the Government of China for a cruise covering all components as originally planned, it would be advisable to organise a spring cruise for the approved components. In the meantime, the NPC of China will continue to work with relevant governmental agencies to get full approval for the later cruise; and
- (iii) If Scenario ii from above is the outcome from the cruise approval, a special session of the Project Steering Committee should be organised together with a technical meeting to plan the joint spring cruise.

At the time that this document was prepared, the formal approval from the Government of China was not yet received.

3. Proposed Actions

Based on the latest information, it does not seem possible for the Government of China to approve the spring cruise as originally planned. As discussed during the NPC Meeting there are two options to be considered by the participating countries:

- Option 1. Postponing the spring cruise and waiting for the full approval from the Government of China; and
- Option 2. Having the spring cruise, excluding the non-approved components.

In the meantime, a Special Meeting of the Project Steering Committee is planned for 25 April 2006, and members of the Special Meeting are invited to consider the necessary actions and arrangements for implementing the co-operative cruise.