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

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**Fourth Meeting of the Regional Scientific and Technical Panel  
for the UNDP/GEF Yellow Sea Project**  
*Guangzhou, China, 26-28 November 2007*

**Preparation Progress for the Co-operative Study Cruise**

**1. BACKGROUND**

The following table contains background information regarding the co-operative cruises.

<p>(i) <b>May 2000.</b> Project containing cruises as one activity was approved by the GEF Council. There were 6 co-operative cruises planned and approved to be implemented under the project.</p> <p>It should be noted that according to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, marine scientific research in the exclusive economic zone and on the continental shelf shall be conducted with the consent of the coastal state, with application submitted to the coastal states 6 months before the marine scientific research (MSR) for approval. The GEF projects which plan to have co-operative cruise of MSR nature, should follow the procedure defined by the Convention.</p>
<p>(ii) <b>23 July 2002, and 8 August 2002.</b> Project and cruises approved by the governments of ROK and China with original plan, i.e. 6 cruises.</p>
<p>(iii) <b>3-5 March 2005, the Second Regional Technical Meeting, Ansan, ROK.</b> Considering the increase in oil price and other costs, the budget allocated for 6 cruises can only support 2-3 cruises. The meeting recommended to the PSC to reduce number of cruises to 2-3.</p> <p>The Project Manager provided cost estimation of the cruises to the meeting.</p>
<p>(iv) <b>7-8 March 2005, 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Project Steering Committee, Seoul, ROK.</b> It was agreed that 2 cruises should be organised in one year.</p> <p>The Chinese delegation indicated that there is a need for the Chinese government to approve the cruise according to UNCLOS, and associated internal regulation, with detailed transects and observation stations shown to several relevant government agencies.</p>
<p>(v) <b>4-6 July 2005, 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Regional Scientific and Technical Panel,</b></p>

**Dalian, China.** The meeting agreed to organise the cruises as following:  
1<sup>st</sup> cruise (winter 4-25 January 2006); and  
2<sup>nd</sup> cruise (spring April or May 2006).

The meeting agreed on the observation transects and stations and calculated the total working days for the cruises. The cruises will include fisheries, pollution and ecosystem components.

(vi) **17-18 October 2005, 1<sup>st</sup> Technical Meeting for the Co-operative Cruise, Qingdao, China.** The observation transects and stations were re-considered under request of the Korean experts. The meeting reached the following agreements:

1st cruise (winter 4-25 January 2006), with 50 stations and 21 working days;  
2nd cruise (spring May 2006), with 71 stations.

It was agreed to use the research vessel, "Bei Dou," and carry out survey of fisheries, pollution and ecosystem components. The Chinese experts indicated again the agreement is not a final one, which should be approved by the Chinese government according to the established procedure.

(vii) **1 December 2005,** the Project Manager received a phone call from the assistant of the NPC, China, and was informed that the government of China did not approve the fisheries component to be included in the cruise.

The Project Manager tried every possible way to persuade the Chinese government, but with no success.

(viii) **15-17 December 2005 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of RSTP, Kunming, China.**

During the meeting, the NPC discussed with the Chairperson of the Regional Fisheries Working Group, the impacts of the absence of the Fisheries Component in the cruise, and they agreed to have another try to persuade the relevant agency to approve the cruise after the meeting. Based on this agreement, the Chinese delegate stated that:

*"due to late submission of the application for the co-operative study cruise, the approval process within the country has not been completed yet."*

(ix) **29 March 2006, NPCs-Project Manager Meeting, Qingdao, China.**

In late January and beginning of February 2006, it was clear that inclusion of fisheries component would be impossible for the winter cruise. The Project Manager informed the Korean NPC informally, and the Korean side was not in an agreement to have the cruise without the Fisheries Component.

The Project Manager discussed with several key Korean experts on this issue, trying to persuade them to organise the cruise without the Fisheries Component, as the approval would take a very long time, if not impossible.

Taking the opportunity that both NPCs attended the Parliamentary Conference of the Project, a meeting was organised during the conference, and both NPCs felt that even though the absence of the Fisheries Component would deem the cruise to have less scientific meaning, it would still be better to organise the cruise.

**(x) 11 May 2006, Meeting with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT), ROK, Seoul, ROK.**

In order to obtain formal agreement from the Focal Ministry of the project, a meeting was organised in MOFAT with participation of officers from MOMAF. The Project Manager provided justifications for the cruise, and got preliminary agreement to attend the special meeting of the PSC.

**(xi) 25 April 2006, Special Meeting of PSC, Qingdao, China.**

Before the formal meeting started, an informal dinner meeting was organised with participation of both delegations. During the meeting, both sides frankly exchanged views about the cruise, and understood the position of each other.

The Special Meeting went very well, and agreed to have the cruise without the Fisheries Component. It was agreed that data and sample sharing (as shown in the cruise plan) should be included in the application. It was clarified and understood that, with approval of the application as a whole, the data and sample can be shared according to the sharing plan listed in the approved application. The meeting also agreed to have a technical meeting to work out the technical details of data and sample sharing plan.

**(xii) 26-27 April 2006, Second Technical Meeting for the Co-operative Cruise, Qingdao, China.**

During the technical meeting, there was no agreement reached for the sample sharing, although it was agreed that all the data from the cruise will be fully shared.

Several options were proposed by the Project Manager to persuade both sides to compromise, but there was no success.

**(xiii) 22 May 2006, Project Manager visited Beijing, China.**

In order to break the impasse in the negotiation, The Project Manager visited China with several options, and one proposal from ROK.

It should be noted that the NPC of China has tried very hard to get agreement from relevant agencies within the countries, including the military. There were 3 informal consultations organised to get the agreement.

During the visit, there were several meetings with NPC and relevant Chinese experts, and questions on the location of the observation stations, CTD data sharing, etc, had become serious issues for discussion and explanation.

In the end, there was an overall agreement, to be submitted for approval.

**(xiv) 8 August 2006, final result of approval from China.**

The Project Manager received a phone call from NPC China on 8 August 2006, and was informed that the final approval had been obtained with decision to remove 13 stations from the plan.

The Project Manager discussed with both sides trying to find a compromise, but was unsuccessful. The cruise was to be postponed again.

## 2. DECISION OF THE PSC AT ITS THIRD MEETING

The PSC discussed this issue at its third meeting, and made the following decision:

*The informal meeting engaged in extensive discussion on the arrangements for the co-operative study cruises. **Final resolution could not be reached, but the informal meeting agreed that discussions would continue during the inter-sessional period, and that the PMO would keep both countries informed of all developments on this issue.***

## 3. CURRENT STATUS

Following the decision of the PSC, PMO continued negotiation with participating countries, including scientists, experts and governmental officers. Following discussion in many meetings and negotiations, a possible solution has been initially agreed by both participating countries. At the time when this document was prepared, the formal approval process was started. The station map is attached to this document. It was initially agreed that all the data and sample generated from the co-operative cruises will be fully shared.

A technical meeting to discuss technical details for the winter cruise is planned to be organised in Yantai, China, 22-23 November 2007.

PMO expresses its appreciation to all relevant government officers and experts who have been involved in the cruise negotiation process.

