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**IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME FOR THE YELLOW SEA LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEM: RESTORING ECOSYSTEM GOODS AND SERVICES AND CONSOLIDATION OF A LONG-TERM REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK  
(UNDP/GEF YSLME Phase II Project)**

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**Draft Program of YSLME Biodiversity Conservation Planning Workshop**

Rudong, Jinagsu, PR China, 7-10 November 2017

**Background**

The biodiversity in the Yellow Sea including the marine ecosystems and their services have already been changing due to the continued threats identified in the UNDP/GEF YSLME Phase I Project. Increasing demand for water, the damming of rivers, the dumping and accumulation of various pollutants, and invasive species make coastal and marine ecosystems some of the most threatened. Reclamation and other forms of conversion have changed coastal habitat. In the ROK, about 43% of intertidal wetlands were lost during the 20th century and in China, about 37% of intertidal wetlands have been converted in the last 50 years. These threats to and losses of biodiversity and ecosystem services have impacted the well-being of people in the YS.

According to the previous study (WWF, 2008), scientists from both China and ROK reviewed set of criteria that defines globally significant indicator species and their ecologically critical habitat. The study identified a total of 23 potential priority areas (PPAs) in the YS region. Conservation status of these PPAs and protection measures need to be assessed with updated data and information available with support of the UNDP/GEF YSLME Phase II Project and projects of other stakeholders.

In order to respond to various threats to biodiversity in the YS region, one of response measures could be systematic designation and management of protected areas. The range and areas of MPAs in the YS region need to be extended for the future conservation of biodiversity. There is also a consensus

among conservation community and academia that more efforts need to be devoted to management effectiveness of existing MPAs. Studies in the YSLME region identified a number of problematic areas with existing MPAs, including lack of proper management bodies, lack of funding and enforcement of regulations, lack of capacity and understanding of the importance of biological diversity conservation not only within reserves but also in local government and amongst other stakeholders. Also, local people are frequently more concerned with development than conservation and lack of biodiversity monitoring with reserve areas.

In response to the YSLME Strategic Action Programme (SAP) adopted by China and RO Korea in 2009, UNDP/GEF YSLME Phase II Project will support the development and adoption of YSLME Biodiversity Conservation Plan covering 2008-2020. Meanwhile, the Phase II Project will continue to support the expansion and management effectiveness of YSLME MPA Network. At the inception workshop of the Phase II Project, the participating countries agreed to focus on critical coastal wetlands for migratory waterbirds and marine mammals, spawning and nursery grounds of critical fish species, and the Yellow Sea Cold Water Mass. Within the institutional structure of the Interim Yellow Sea Commission, the Regional Working Group on Habitat is mandated to coordinate the assessment and preparation of the YSLME Biodiversity Conservation Plan as well as the development of the YSLME MPA Network.

## **Objectives**

The workshop is designed to agree on the key elements of the YSLME Biodiversity Conservation Plan (2018-2020) to enable the integration and consolidation of a draft plan for review by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Management, Science and Technical Panel and adoption by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Interim YSLME Commission Council.

Specially, the workshop seeks to:

- Review the conservation status of the 23 PPAs of YSLME, identify and confirm priority areas of global and regional significance for designation of MPA and through other area-based measures;
- Review the status and gaps and weakness of response measures and make consensus on gaps and areas of improvements to be made concerning:
  - legal and policy framework;
  - institutional and individual capacities;
  - access to knowledge and good practices;

- awareness of threats, values, impact of loss and YSLME biodiversity;
- monitoring;
- inventory;
- science and technological advancement
- Agree on objectives, priority actions, targets, as well as a monitoring system;

**Organizers:**

The workshop will be organized by UNDP/GEF YSLME Phase II Project Management Office and Regional Working Group on Habitat, and hosted by Department of Marine Environmental Protection of State Oceanic Administration and Ocean and Fishery Bureau of Jiangsu Province, PR China, and Municipal Government of Rudong, Jiangsu Province.

**Collaborating partners**

- FIO of SOA, PR China
- KOEM, RO Korea
- KMI, RO Korea
- WWF Korea, RO Korea
- Korea Institute of Environment Ecology, RO Korea
- Conservation International China, PR China
- EAAFP Secretariat
- Anyang University
- IUCN China

## Tentative Programme

7 November (Tuesday)	
08:30~18:00	<p>Registration for participants</p> <p>Welcome addresses</p> <p>Introduction of the objectives and mechanics of the workshop, by PMO</p> <p><b>Session 1: Understanding the conservation status of the 23 PPAs</b></p> <p>This session will review whether the intertidal mudflat, estuarine and shallow bays of the 23 Potential Priority Areas (PPAs) are maintained at the baseline level, coverage by MPAs and management effectiveness, population status of priority endangered and threatened species such as spoonbill sandpiper, black-faced spoonbill, spotted seal. To the extent possible, threats to species populations and underlying causes can also be discussed.</p> <p>The following presentations (at least 12 presentations) will be delivered in this session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Setting the scene:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ introduction to the 23 potential priority areas and identification processes, by WWF</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <u>Status of coastal habitat and coverage by gaps in MPAs coverage:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Priority RAMAR sites and IBAs in Yellow Sea and conservation gaps analysis and recommendations (China and RO Korea)</li> <li>○ Impact of reclamation to the 23 PPAs (China and RO Korea)</li> <li>○ Population status of endangered and threatened migratory species (by China and RO Korea and other organizations)</li> <li>○ The role of Yellow Sea in EAAF and gaps in key waterbirds conservation (EAAF)</li> <li>○ Population status of spotted seal (China, DPR Korea, and other organizations)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <u>Fish Spawning and Nursery grounds and gaps in MPA coverage:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ YSCWM as an PPA and conservation needs (by an invited speaker)</li> <li>○ Spawning and nursery grounds of critical fish species (China, RO Korea)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>After coffee break in the afternoon, the participants will break into groups to discuss and confirm or identify new threats, causes and drivers. The results will be fed into proposed responses measures.</p> <p>Dinner reception by host</p>
8 November (Wednesday)	
09:00~18:00	<p><b>Session 2: Calibrating response measures to degradation and loss of YSLME biodiversity</b></p> <p>This session will review the status, gaps and weakness of response measures and make consensus on gaps and areas of improvements in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ legal and policy framework;</li> <li>○ institutional and individual capacities;</li> <li>○ access to knowledge and good practices;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ awareness of threats, values, impact of loss and YSLME biodiversity;</li> <li>○ adaptation of ecosystems and communities to impact of climate changes;</li> <li>○ restoration of coastal and marine ecosystem;</li> <li>○ monitoring and inventory; and</li> <li>○ science and technological advancement</li> </ul> <p>In one or more areas indicated above, speakers from China and RO Korea will present the review results and recommendations for discussion.</p> <p>The meeting will break out into groups to make consensus on status, gaps and weakness of responses measures, and then agree on recommendations in areas of improvements for development into objectives, targets and actions.</p>
<b>9 November (Thursday)</b>	
09:00~16:00	<p><b>Session 3 – Action planning</b></p> <p>Based on the discussion and results of session 1 and 2, this session will break into groups to discuss and agree on the objectives, targets and identification of priority actions. A resource person will make a presentation to summarize the results of discussions in Session 1 and 2 to help roll out the group discussion. Each group will report the objectives, targets and actions for review at the plenary. A consultant will prepare the action plan based on the discussion.</p> <p>Reception by PMO</p>
<b>10 November (Friday)</b>	
09:00~12:00	<p><b>Field visit</b></p> <p>The participants will have an opportunity to visit the core zones of a proposed special MPA with support of YSLME Phase II Project for conservation of the habitats of the endangered spoonbill sandpiper and other threatened and vulnerable species.</p>
Afternoon	<b>Closure of the meeting</b>