



Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand (SCS SAP Project)

First Meeting of the SCS SAP Steering Committee

Teleconference, 29-30 June 2021

Draft Terms of Reference for the Regional and National Committees and Working Groups



Draft Terms of Reference for the Regional and National Committees and Working Groups

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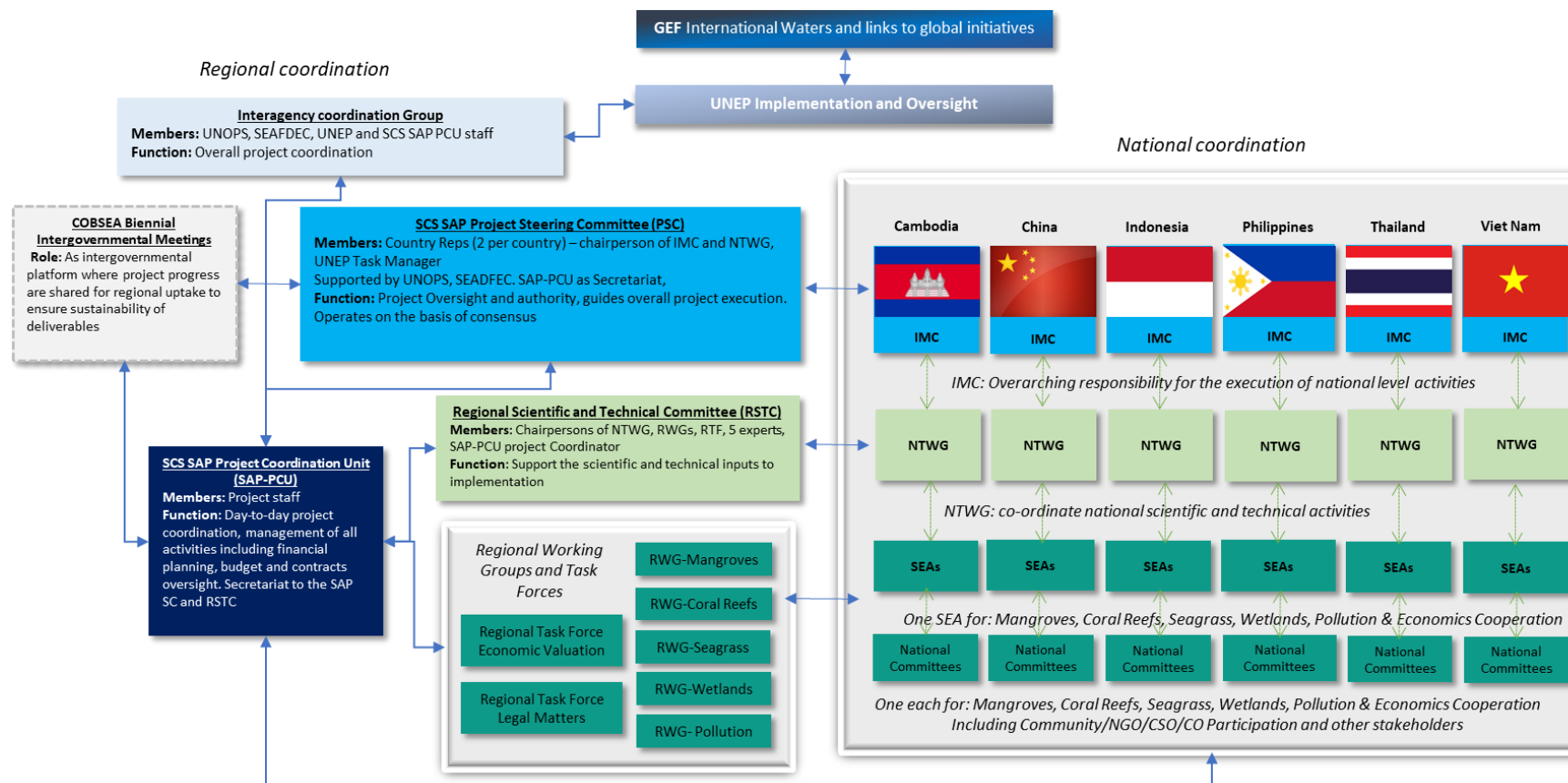
INTRODUCTION

The UNEP GEF “Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand (SCS SAP) Project, build upon the work undertaken in the UNEP GEF project “[Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand](#)” which was implemented from 2003-2008. In order to ensure full involvement of relevant ministries, technical and scientific institutions at the regional and national level, as well as other key stakeholders in the implementation of the project, a number of regional and national level committees and working groups were established that ensured full engagement throughout the project and was commended by the terminal evaluation of the project in 2009.

Following in the footsteps of this project, and in order to ensure full engagement in the SCS SAP project, a similar approach was presented in the project document endorsed by UNEP and the GEF in 2016 as summarized in Figure 1.

Therefore, one of the objectives of this Steering Committee meeting is to discuss and adopt the Terms of Reference (TORs) for the regional and national committees and working groups that will provide and serve as the project’s management framework and implementation arrangements at regional and national levels.

Figure 1 Organogram of the SCS SAP project.



IMC = Inter-Ministry Committee; NTWG = National Technical Working Group; National Committee = Specialized Executing Agency; RWG= Regional Working Group

1) REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

A. Provisional Terms of Reference for the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee

1. RATIONALE AND PURPOSE OF A REGIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

1.1 To facilitate the achievement of the goals and objectives of the UNEP/GEF project entitled “*Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand*”, a Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC) will be established with responsibility for: overseeing the scientific and technical elements of the project; ensuring effective implementation of activities undertaken during project execution; and providing sound scientific and technical advice to the SCS SAP Project Steering Committee.

1.2 The RSTC will also be responsible for ensuring that scientific and technical aspects of SCS SAP Project meet international standards. Specifically, it will review the substantive activities of the project to: (1) reduce habitat degradation and loss via national and local reforms to achieve Strategic Action Programme targets for coastal habitat management in the South China Sea; (2) strengthen knowledge-based planning for the management of coastal habitats and land-based pollution to reduce environmental degradation of the South China Sea; and (3) facilitate regional and national level integration and cooperation for implementation of the South China Sea Strategic Action Programme.

2. ROLE AND FUNCTION

2.1 As the over-riding scientific and technical body for the project, the RSTC shall provide sound scientific and technical advice to the SCS SAP Project Steering Committee regarding matters requiring decision and shall provide direction and strategic guidance to the national level activities aimed at the achieved of Strategic Action Programme targets as required.

3. THE REGIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE SHALL:

3.1 Regional Activities

3.1.1 Review and co-ordinate regional scientific and technical activities of the SCS SAP Project;

3.1.2 Review and evaluate, from a scientific and technical perspective, progress in achievement of Strategic Action Programme targets, and provide guidance for improvement when necessary;

3.1.3 Receive, and review reports, data and information from Regional Working Groups and Task Forces established under the project;

3.1.4 Provide the SCS SAP Project Steering Committee with recommendations on proposed regional activities, work plans, and budgets;

3.1.5 Provide the SCS SAP Project Steering Committee with technical guidance and suggestions to improve project activities where necessary, including reforms of national and regional policy and planning frameworks, including the update of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea;

3.1.6 Facilitate co-operation with relevant international, regional, and national organisations and projects to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the SCS SAP implementation initiative; &

3.1.7 Monitor the progress of the project's regional activities and ensure the quality of outputs.

3.2 National Activities

3.2.1 Review and evaluate, from a scientific and technical perspective, progress in implementation of the national activities of the SCS SAP Project, and provide guidance for improvement when necessary;

3.2.2 Receive, and review reports, data and information from national level activities of the project and oversee the regional syntheses of this information to identify overall needs and priorities for strengthening scientific and technical support to Strategic Action Programme implementation;

3.2.3 Receive, review, and comment on drafts of national policies and/or action frameworks; and

3.2.3 Advise the regional SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit and National Focal Points of the need for public awareness and information materials concerning efforts to reverse environmental degradation trends in the South China Sea.

4. PROPOSED MEMBERSHIP FOR THE REGIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

4.1 The Regional Scientific and Technical Committee shall consist of: the Chairpersons of the National Technical Working Groups (NTWGs); the Chairpersons of the Regional Working Groups (RWGs) and Regional Task Forces (RTFs); up to 5 selected regional experts; and the Senior Project Manager of SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit.

4.2 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit, in consultation with National Technical Focal Points, shall nominate no more than 5 regional experts to ensure a balance of expertise and specialisation consistent with the mandate of the Committee. The membership of the RSTC shall be formally established at the first meeting of the committee.

4.3 At the commencement of each meeting the committee shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chair from amongst the members. The Vice-Chair shall act as Chairperson of meetings in the absence of the Chairperson. The Chairperson and Vice-Chair shall participate in the annual meetings of the SCS SAP Project Steering Committee at which they shall present the reports and recommendations of the RSTC.

5. SECRETARIAT

5.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit shall act as Secretariat to the RSTC and shall ensure that reports of the meetings are circulated to all members of the regional SCS SAP Project Steering Committee.

6. MEETINGS OF THE REGIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

6.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit in consultation with the Chairperson shall convene meetings of the RSTC according to an agreed schedule, which will form part of the agreed work plan and timetable for the work of the Committee.

6.2 The first meeting of the RSTC will be convened during project inception to: agree on the detailed activities, work plan and timetable for the twenty-four months leading to the project's mid-term evaluation; and to provide guidance to the project's emerging scientific and technical needs.

7. CONDUCT OF REGIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE BUSINESS

7.1 The Committee shall operate and take decisions on the basis of consensus, regarding any matter relating to project execution that has regional significance. Where full consensus cannot be achieved in reaching agreement during a meeting of the Committee, the Chair, Vice-Chair and Senior Project Manager shall decide on the least contentious course of action to be adopted.

8. PARTICIPATION OF OBSERVERS IN REGIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

8.1 The RSTC may invite observers to participate in its meetings;

8.2 Upon the invitation of the Chairperson, observers may participate in the discussion of issues within their competence or scope of activities, without the right to participate in decision-making; and

8.3 Observers may, upon invitation of the Chairperson, submit written statements that shall be circulated by the SCS SAP Project Coordinating Unit to the members of the RSTC.

B. Provisional Terms of Reference for the Regional Working Group on Mangroves

1. RATIONALE AND PURPOSE OF A REGIONAL WORKING GROUP ON MANGROVES

1.1 To facilitate the achievement of the Strategic Action Programme targets for mangroves, a Regional Working Group on Mangroves (RWG-M) shall be established with overall responsibility for: co-ordinating the work of the National Mangrove Committees established in each of the participating countries; for ensuring effective implementation of project activities undertaken in the context of the achievement of the mangrove management targets of the project; and to provide a mechanism for exchange of information and experience of mangrove management activities in each country.

2. MEMBERSHIP

2.1 The RWG-M of the SCS SAP Project shall consist of the Chairpersons of the National Mangrove Committees together with one member of the SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit and selected regional experts. The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit in consultation with the National Technical Focal Points for the project shall nominate no more than four such experts to ensure a balance of expertise and specialisation consistent with the mandate of the working group.

2.2 The membership of the RWG-M shall be formally established at the first meeting of the Working Group, which shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chair from amongst its members. The Vice-Chair shall act as Chairperson of meetings in the absence of the Chairperson. The Chairperson of the RWG-M will represent the RWG-M on the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC) and will attend the meetings of that Committee.

3. SECRETARIAT

3.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit shall act as Secretariat to the RWG-M, and shall ensure that reports of the meetings are circulated to all members of the working group, and are copied to the members of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee. The National Mangrove Committees shall serve as the principal source of national scientific and technical data and information to the RWG-M.

4. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

4.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit in consultation with the Chairperson shall convene meetings of the RWG-M according to an agreed schedule, which will form part of the agreed work plan and timetable for the work of the Committee. The first meeting of the RWG-M will be convened within three months of signature of the operational project document to agree on the detailed activities, workplan and timetable for the first twenty-four months of project execution leading to the project's mid-term review.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The RWG-M shall:

5.1 Provide direction, and strategic guidance to the National Mangrove Committees regarding the establishment of appropriate forms of sustainable management for 860,000 ha of mangrove bordering the South China Sea, including the achievement of the following targets¹:

- Declaration of 57,400 ha of mangrove as National Parks and Protected Areas
- Designation and development of plans for the management of 166,600 ha of mangrove as non-conversion, sustainable use areas
- Reform of laws and regulations for the sustainable use of 602,800 ha of mangrove forest
- Replanting of 21,000 ha of deforested mangrove land
- Biodiversity increased for 11,200 ha of mangrove forest via enrichment planting

5.2 Assume overall responsibility for the timely execution of project activities in support of the achievement of the abovementioned targets;

5.3 Update, in close collaboration with the National Mangrove Committees, the regional mangrove meta-database and GIS, including meta-data on biodiversity and the results of mangrove research pertaining to this project.

5.4 Develop, in close collaboration with the National Mangrove Committees, public awareness and information materials concerning the national and regional importance of such ecosystems;

5.5 Receive, and review reports, data and information from the National Mangrove Committees and compile the regional syntheses regarding mangrove management needs and priorities;

5.6 Develop guidelines regarding best practices for sustainable mangrove management for adoption and application at national level in participating countries;

5.7 Develop, review and recommend for adoption by the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee the proposed targets and timelines that may be included in a revised Strategic Action programme in order to achieve, sustainable management of mangroves bordering the South China Sea in the longer-term;

5.8 Prepare a regional review of national experiences in mangrove restoration with a view to developing widely applicable guidelines concerning best practices in mangrove restoration and rehabilitation;

5.9 Review and evaluate, at the regional level, progress in implementation of the mangrove activities of the project, and provide guidance for improvement when necessary; and

5.10 Develop annual workplans and provide periodic progress reports to the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee.

¹ To be revised if required following finalisation of the National Implementation Reports

C. Provisional Terms of Reference for the Regional Working Group on Coral Reefs

1. RATIONALE AND PURPOSE OF A REGIONAL WORKING GROUP ON CORAL REEFS

1.1 To facilitate the achievement of the Strategic Action Programme targets for coral reefs, a Regional Working Group on Coral Reefs (RWG-CR) shall be established with overall responsibility for: coordinating the work of the National Coral Reefs Committees established in each of the participating countries; for ensuring effective implementation of project activities undertaken in the context of the achievement of the coral reef management targets of the project; and to provide a mechanism for exchange of information and experience of coral reef management activities in each country.

2. MEMBERSHIP

2.1 The RWG-CR of the SCS SAP Project shall consist of the Chairpersons of the National Coral Reef Committees together with one member of the SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit and selected regional experts. The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit in consultation with the National Technical Focal Points for the project shall nominate no more than four such experts to ensure a balance of expertise and specialisation consistent with the mandate of the working group.

2.2 The membership of the RWG-CR shall be formally established at the first meeting of the Working Group, which shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chair from amongst its members. The Vice-Chair shall act as Chairperson of meetings in the absence of the Chairperson. The Chairperson of the RWG-CR will represent the RWG-CR on the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC) and will attend the meetings of that Committee.

3. SECRETARIAT

3.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit shall act as Secretariat to the RWG-CR, and shall ensure that reports of the meetings are circulated to all members of the working group, and are copied to the members of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee. The National Coral Reef Committees shall serve as the principal source of national scientific and technical data and information to the RWG-CR.

4. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

4.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit in consultation with the Chairperson shall convene meetings of the RWG-CR according to an agreed schedule, which will form part of the agreed work plan and timetable for the work of the Committee. The first meeting of the RWG-CR will be convened within three months of signature of the operational project document to agree on the detailed activities, workplan and timetable for the first twenty-four months of project execution leading to the project's mid-term review.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The RWG-CR shall:

5.1 Provide direction, and strategic guidance to the National Coral Reef Committees regarding the sustainable management of 110,430 ha of coral reef at 46 priority sites by Yr 5, including a reduction in the decadal rate of degradation in live coral cover from 16 to 5%, including the achievement of the following targets:²

- Management capacity built for 46 coral reef sites
- Management approaches (integrated, community-based, multiple use) improved at 82 coral reef sites
- Management tools (licensing and permit systems, seasonal closures, zoning) developed and utilized to address key threats at priority sites
- Established mechanism for the monitoring of management, ecological and socio-economic indicators at 46 sites

5.2 Assume overall responsibility for the timely execution of project activities in support of the achievement of the abovementioned targets;

5.3 Update, in close collaboration with the National Coral Reef Committees, the regional coral reef meta-database and GIS, including meta-data on biodiversity and the results of coral reef research pertaining to this project.

5.4 Develop, in close collaboration with the National Coral Reef Committees, public awareness and information materials concerning the national and regional importance of such ecosystems;

5.5 Receive, and review reports, data and information from the National Coral Reef Committees and compile the regional syntheses regarding coral reef management needs and priorities;

5.6 Develop guidelines regarding best practices for sustainable coral reef management for adoption and application at national level in participating countries;

5.7 Develop, review and recommend for adoption by the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee the proposed targets and timelines that may be included in a revised Strategic Action programme in order to achieve, sustainable management of coral reefs bordering the South China Sea in the longer-term;

5.8 Prepare a regional review of national experiences in coral reef restoration with a view to developing widely applicable guidelines concerning best practices in coral reef restoration and rehabilitation;

5.9 Review and evaluate, at the regional level, progress in implementation of the coral reef activities of the project, and provide guidance for improvement when necessary; and

5.10 Develop annual workplans and provide periodic progress reports to the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee.

² To be revised if required following finanlisation of the National Implementation Reports

D. Provisional Terms of Reference for the Regional Working Group on Seagrass

1. RATIONALE AND PURPOSE OF A REGIONAL WORKING GROUP ON SEAGRASS

1.1 To facilitate the achievement of the Strategic Action Programme targets for seagrass, a Regional Working Group on Seagrass (RWG-SG) shall be established with overall responsibility for: co-ordinating the work of the National Seagrass Committees established in each of the participating countries; for ensuring effective implementation of project activities undertaken in the context of the achievement of the seagrass management targets of the project; and to provide a mechanism for exchange of information and experience of seagrass management activities in each country.

2. MEMBERSHIP

2.1 The RWG-SG of the SCS SAP Project shall consist of the Chairpersons of the National Seagrass Committees together with one member of the SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit and selected regional experts. The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit in consultation with the National Technical Focal Points for the project shall nominate no more than four such experts to ensure a balance of expertise and specialisation consistent with the mandate of the working group.

2.2 The membership of the RWG-SG shall be formally established at the first meeting of the Working Group, which shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chair from amongst its members. The Vice-Chair shall act as Chairperson of meetings in the absence of the Chairperson. The Chairperson of the RWG-SG will represent the RWG-SG on the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC) and will attend the meetings of that Committee.

3. SECRETARIAT

3.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit shall act as Secretariat to the RWG-SG, and shall ensure that reports of the meetings are circulated to all members of the working group, and are copied to the members of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee. The National Seagrass Committees shall serve as the principal source of national scientific and technical data and information to the RWG-SG.

4. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

4.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit in consultation with the Chairperson shall convene meetings of the RWG-SG according to an agreed schedule, which will form part of the agreed work plan and timetable for the work of the Committee. The first meeting of the RWG-SG will be convened within three months of signature of the operational project document to agree on the detailed activities, workplan and timetable for the first twenty-four months of project execution leading to the project's mid-term review.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The RWG-SG shall:

5.1 Provide direction, and strategic guidance to the National Seagrass Committees regarding the conservation, management and sustainable use of 15,848 ha of known seagrass area in the South China Sea by Year 5 of the project, including the achievement of the following targets³:

- Twenty-one seagrass areas totalling 15,848 ha under sustainable management with supporting laws and regulations
- Amended management plans for 7 existing MPAs with significant seagrass areas, to include specific seagrass-related management actions
- Designation of 7 new Marine Protected Areas focusing on seagrass areas
- Established mechanism for monitoring management, ecological and socio-economic indicators at 20 sites

5.2 Assume overall responsibility for the timely execution of project activities in support of the achievement of the abovementioned targets;

5.3 Update, in close collaboration with the National Seagrass Committees, the regional seagrass meta-database and GIS, including meta-data on biodiversity and the results of seagrass research pertaining to this project.

5.4 Develop, in close collaboration with the National Seagrass Committees, public awareness and information materials concerning the national and regional importance of such ecosystems;

5.5 Receive, and review reports, data and information from the National Seagrass Committees and compile the regional syntheses regarding seagrass management needs and priorities;

5.6 Develop guidelines regarding best practices for sustainable seagrass management for adoption and application at national level in participating countries;

5.7 Develop, review and recommend for adoption by the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee the proposed targets and timelines that may be included in a revised Strategic Action programme in order to achieve, sustainable management of seagrass of the South China Sea in the longer-term;

5.8 Prepare a regional review of national experiences in seagrass restoration with a view to developing widely applicable guidelines concerning best practices in seagrass restoration and rehabilitation;

5.9 Review and evaluate, at the regional level, progress in implementation of the seagrass activities of the project, and provide guidance for improvement when necessary; and

5.10 Develop annual workplans and provide periodic progress reports to the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee.

³ To be revised if required following finalisation of the National Implementation Reports

E. Provisional Terms of Reference for The Regional Working Group on Wetlands

1. RATIONALE AND PURPOSE OF A REGIONAL WORKING GROUP ON WETLANDS

1.1 To facilitate the achievement of the Strategic Action Programme targets for wetlands, a Regional Working Group on Wetlands (RWG-W) shall be established with overall responsibility for: co-ordinating the work of the National Wetland Committees established in each of the participating countries; for ensuring effective implementation of project activities undertaken in the context of the achievement of the wetland management targets of the project; and to provide a mechanism for exchange of information and experience of wetland management activities in each country.

2. MEMBERSHIP

2.1 The RWG-W of the SCS SAP Project shall consist of the Chairpersons of the National Wetland Committees together with one member of the SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit and selected regional experts. The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit in consultation with the National Technical Focal Points for the project shall nominate no more than four such experts to ensure a balance of expertise and specialisation consistent with the mandate of the working group.

2.2 The membership of the RWG-W shall be formally established at the first meeting of the Working Group, which shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chair from amongst its members. The Vice-Chair shall act as Chairperson of meetings in the absence of the Chairperson. The Chairperson of the RWG-W will represent the RWG-W on the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC) and will attend the meetings of that Committee.

3. SECRETARIAT

3.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit shall act as Secretariat to the RWG-W, and shall ensure that reports of the meetings are circulated to all members of the working group, and are copied to the members of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee. The National Wetland Committees shall serve as the principal source of national scientific and technical data and information to the RWG-W.

4. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

4.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit in consultation with the Chairperson shall convene meetings of the RWG-W according to an agreed schedule, which will form part of the agreed work plan and timetable for the work of the Committee. The first meeting of the RWG-W will be convened within three months of signature of the operational project document to agree on the detailed activities, workplan and timetable for the first twenty-four months of project execution leading to the project's mid-term review.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The RWG-W shall:

5.1 Provide direction, and strategic guidance to the National Wetland Committees regarding the integrated management of 783,900 ha of coastal wetland at 19 sites, including habitat restoration and protection strengthened at priority locations, including the achievement of the following targets:

- Development and implementation of integrated management plans for 3 lagoons (26,818 ha), 9 estuaries (614,680 ha), 5 tidal flats (96,903 ha), 1 peat swamp (45,700 ha) and 1 non-peat swamp (9,808 ha)
- Declaration of at least 7 wetland areas with protection status (i.e. non-hunting area, nature reserves, protected areas, Ramsar Sites).
- Development, adoption and implementation of a regional estuary monitoring scheme at the national level

5.2 Assume overall responsibility for the timely execution of project activities in support of the achievement of the abovementioned targets;

5.3 Update, in close collaboration with the National Wetland Committees, the regional wetland meta-database and GIS, including meta-data on biodiversity and the results of wetland research pertaining to this project.

5.4 Develop, in close collaboration with the National Wetland Committees, public awareness and information materials concerning the national and regional importance of such ecosystems;

5.5 Receive, and review reports, data and information from the National Wetland Committees and compile the regional syntheses regarding wetland management needs and priorities;

5.6 Develop guidelines regarding best practices for sustainable wetland management for adoption and application at national level in participating countries;

5.7 Develop, review and recommend for adoption by the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee the proposed targets and timelines that may be included in a revised Strategic Action programme in order to achieve, sustainable management of wetlands bordering the South China Sea in the longer-term;

5.8 Prepare a regional review of national experiences in wetland restoration with a view to developing widely applicable guidelines concerning best practices in wetland restoration and rehabilitation;

5.9 Review and evaluate, at the regional level, progress in implementation of the wetland activities of the project, and provide guidance for improvement when necessary; and

5.10 Develop annual workplans and provide periodic progress reports to the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee.

F. Provisional Terms of Reference for the Regional Working Group on Land-Based Pollution

1. RATIONALE AND PURPOSE OF A REGIONAL WORKING GROUP ON LAND-BASED POLLUTION

1.1 To facilitate the achievement of the Strategic Action Programme targets for land-based pollution management, a Regional Working Group on Land-based Pollution (RWG-LbP) shall be established with overall responsibility for: co-ordinating the work of the National Land-Based Pollution Committees established in each of the participating countries; for ensuring effective implementation of project activities undertaken in the context of the achievement of the land-based pollution management targets of the project; and to provide a mechanism for exchange of information and experience of land-based pollution management activities in each country.

2. MEMBERSHIP

2.1 The RWG-LbP of the SCS SAP Project shall consist of the Chairpersons of the National Land-based Pollution Committees together with one member of the SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit and selected regional experts. The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit in consultation with the National Technical Focal Points for the project shall nominate no more than four such experts to ensure a balance of expertise and specialisation consistent with the mandate of the working group.

2.2 The membership of the RWG-LbP shall be formally established at the first meeting of the Working Group, which shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chair from amongst its members. The Vice-Chair shall act as Chairperson of meetings in the absence of the Chairperson. The Chairperson of the RWG-LbP will represent the RWG-LbP on the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC) and will attend the meetings of that Committee.

3. SECRETARIAT

3.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit shall act as Secretariat to the RWG-LbP, and shall ensure that reports of the meetings are circulated to all members of the working group, and are copied to the members of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee. The National Land-based Pollution Committees shall serve as the principal source of national scientific and technical data and information to the RWG-LbP.

4. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

4.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit in consultation with the Chairperson shall convene meetings of the RWG-LbP according to an agreed schedule, which will form part of the agreed work plan and timetable for the work of the Committee. The first meeting of the RWG-LbP will be convened within three months of signature of the operational project document to agree on the detailed activities, workplan and timetable for the first twenty-four months of project execution leading to the project's mid-term review.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The RWG-LbP shall:

- 5.1 Provide direction, and strategic guidance to the National Land-based Pollution Committees regarding the achievement of the land-based pollution targets of the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea;
- 5.2 Assume overall responsibility for the timely execution of project activities in support of the achievement of the abovementioned targets;
- 5.3 Update, in close collaboration with the National Land-based Pollution Committees, the regional land-based pollution meta-database and GIS, including meta-data on pollution hotspots and the results of pollution hotspot research pertaining to this project;
- 5.4 Develop, in close collaboration with the National Land-Based Pollution Committees, public awareness and information materials concerning the national and regional importance of effective pollution control;
- 5.5 Update in close collaboration with the National Land-based Pollution Committees, regional data sets relating to the economic impacts of land-based pollution with a view to incorporation of such valuations in national economic and development planning;
- 5.6 Receive, and review reports, data and information from the National Land-based Pollution Committees and compile the regional syntheses regarding wetland management needs and priorities;
- 5.7 Develop guidelines regarding best in land-based pollution management for adoption and application at national level in participating countries;
- 5.8 Develop, review and recommend for adoption by the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee the proposed targets and timelines that may be included in a revised Strategic Action programme in order to achieve, sustainable management of land-based pollution in the longer-term;
- 5.9 Work to ensure that the nutrient carrying capacity model developed for the South China Sea marine basin is used to communicate with decision-makers about the localized versus transboundary impacts of land-based pollution in the SCS;
- 5.10 Work to ensure that the regional level assessment of impacts of key contaminants (nutrients, heavy metals, oil, litter) and national or local assessments based on NAP and hotspots;
- 5.11 Provide regional guidance on options for strengthening and harmonizing national policies and laws, and supporting financial mechanism, for the management of land-based sources of pollution;
- 5.12 Review and evaluate, at the regional level, progress in implementation of the land-based pollution activities of the project, and provide guidance for improvement when necessary; and

5.13 Develop annual workplans and provide periodic progress reports to the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee.

G. Provisional Terms of Reference for the Regional Task Force on Economic Valuation

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Economic valuation is defined as the attempt to assign quantitative or monetary values to the goods and services provided by environmental resources, whether or not market prices are available to assist in the process. The National Research Council defines economic valuation as an attempt to provide an empirical account of the value of the services and amenities or of the benefits and costs of proposed action (project or policies) that would modify the flow of services and amenities. Both definitions are in agreement regarding the quantification of goods and services that provide information about the environmental resources. “Valuing” an ecosystem is essentially valuing the characteristics of a system. Costanza⁴ *et al.* (1997) have made a comprehensive list of ecosystem functions and services and defined ecosystem services as “flows of materials, energy and information from natural capital stocks which combine with manufactured and human capital services to produce human welfare”. The concept of Total Economic Value (TEV) provides a framework for valuing natural systems and is used to identify and estimate the monetary value of all economic benefits that a society derives from a particular ecosystem. Whilst the South China Sea SAP formulation resulted in advancements in the determination of national and regionally applicable TEVs that were used to value the cost of action versus non-action within the framework of SAP implementation, the values determined through the previous SCS project are incomplete since not all known goods or services from individual coastal ecosystems have been valued. One area of current weakness is that comparatively few existing values for the service provided by habitats as nursery areas for off-shore fish and crustaceans are included. This is known to be a significant and major service provided by mangrove and seagrass habitats and work will be undertaken to establish the economic values of these services.

1.2. Since this work was conducted, new approaches have been applied through several initiatives including the [Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity](#) (TEEB), the UNEP GEF [Blue Forests project](#), as well as through the UN Regular Process and World Ocean Assessment Reports. Also, since the 2008 SAP, greater focus has been given on blue/green and circular economy approaches to ensure effective management of marine and coastal resources, and this is becoming an important priority in the region.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE REGIONAL TASK FORCE ON ECONOMIC VALUATION

2.1 The Regional Task Force on Economic Valuation (RTF-E) is re-established with the primary objective of advising and supporting the national committees and regional working groups by providing the appropriate expertise and assistance in completing the envisaged economic valuations and cost-benefit analyses.

3. TASK FORCE MEMBERS

⁴ Costanza, R., d’Arge, R. de Groot, R., Farber, S., Grasso, M., Hannon, B. Limburg, K., Naeem, S., O’Neill, R.B., Paruelo, J., Raskin, R.G., Sutton, P. and van den Belt, M. (1997). The Value of the world’s ecosystem services and natural capital. *Nature* 387 (6630) 253-260

3.1 The Task Force will be comprised of: one environmental or resource economist, nominated by each of the participating countries; and two regional, environmental economic experts; all of whom will serve as members in their personal capacity. Each participating country will nominate these members, in accordance with procedures agreed by the SCS SAP Project Steering Committee. The membership of the committee will be established at its first meeting, at which a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur will be elected from the members. The Vice-Chairperson will act as Chairperson of meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.

4. SECRETARIAT

4.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit will serve as Secretariat to the RFT-E and will ensure that the reports of the meetings are circulated to all members of the committee, the National Focal Points, Regional Working Group Members, and National Committees as promptly as possible following the closure of the meetings.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE

5.1 In principle, the RTF-E shall serve as the principal source of economic advice and information to the project. In doing so, the terms of reference for the Task Force may be expected to include, among other things:

- identifying available reference materials and information regarding various established economic valuation techniques that have been applied or can be applied to, the coastal resources and environments within the South China region;
- compiling a comprehensive, annotated bibliography of existing empirical studies, research and data regarding environmental, economic and resource valuations conducted in the countries of the South China Sea Region;
- providing advice and guidance regarding the methodologies and values that can be used in the framework of economic and cost-benefit analyses required to achieve SAP targets, and prepare updated National Action Plans and a revised Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea

6. MEETINGS OF THE TASK FORCE

6.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit shall convene meetings of the RTF-E to advise the SCS SAP Project Steering Committee or, as required in order to complete the tasks assigned to the Task Force. The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit shall convene one meeting of the RTF-E prior to the annual meeting of the SCS SAP Project Steering Committee in order to ensure economic advice being provided to the project is as up-to-date as possible. Additional *ad hoc* meetings may be convened as required.

2) NATIONAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

A. Provisional Terms of Reference for the National Inter-Ministry Committees

1. RATIONALE AND PURPOSE OF THE NATIONAL INTER-MINISTRY COMMITTEES

The National Inter-Ministry Committees shall operate on the basis of consensus to:

1. Assume overarching responsibility for the execution of national level activities of the UNEP/GEF project entitled '*Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand*' in [Insert Country Name];
2. Receive, review, and approve reports from the National Technical Working Groups and National Committees for mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass, wetlands, land-based pollution, and economic valuation regarding the outputs and outcomes of efforts to achieve Strategic Action Programme targets;
3. Meet on a biannual basis during the operational phase of the project to guide the timely execution of project activities, particularly activities at the site level, and to consider, amend and endorse quarterly work-plans, narrative progress and financial reports for submission to the regional SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit;
4. Provide direction and strategic guidance to the National Technical Working Group and National Committees for mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass, wetlands, land-based pollution, and economic on the national and local reforms to achieve SAP targets and mainstream best practices in to natural resource and environmental management of the South China Sea marine basin;
5. Review planned and ongoing coastal and marine environment projects being operated along the South China Sea coast with the aim of minimising duplication of efforts, and to identify opportunities for cooperation and the sharing of examples of best practices in reversing environmental degradation trends;
6. Assess stakeholder involvement in national level execution of the SCS SAP Project and take action where necessary to ensure appropriate levels of government, civil society and community organisation, environmental NGOs, Women's groups, and private sector engagement in project activities.
7. Ensure compatibility between site-based activities of the SCS SAP Project and other National, provincial and municipal activities in coastal and marine environmental management;
8. Approve annual progress reports for transmission to UNEP and the GEF Secretariat;
9. Assist the National Committees for mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass, wetlands, land-based pollution, and economic valuation in securing co-financing committed to the project and in leveraging additional funding that may be required from time to time.
10. Agree at their first meeting:
 - a) the membership, meeting arrangements, and terms of reference of the committee; and
 - b) such standing orders and manner of conducting business as may be considered necessary by the committee.

B. Provisional Terms of Reference for The National Technical Working Groups

1. RATIONALE AND PURPOSE OF THE NATIONAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUPS

The National Technical Working Groups shall operate on the basis of consensus to:

1. Review and co-ordinate national scientific and technical activities of the UNEP/GEF project entitled “*Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand*” in [country name];
2. Review and evaluate, from a scientific and technical perspective, progress in the achievement of Strategic Action Programme targets, and provide guidance for improvement when necessary;
3. Provide the National Inter-Ministry Committees with recommendations on proposed national and site-based activities, work plans, and budgets;
4. Provide the National Inter-Ministry Committees with technical guidance and suggestions to improve project activities where necessary, including the reform of policy, legislation and institutional arrangements;
5. Facilitate co-operation with relevant national and provincial organisations and projects to enhance the information and science base for use in achieving Strategic Action Programme targets and in preparing updated National Action Plans and a revised Strategic Action Programme in [country name];
6. Compile and evaluate national level sources of information and data for sharing at the regional level;
7. Receive, and review reports, data and information from site-based activities of the project and oversee the national synthesis of this information to identify overall needs and priorities for individual sites and future targets for mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass, wetlands, and land-based pollution management in [country name];
8. Ensure that planned national level project activities are consistent with the national results framework for the project, and that the subsequent monitoring and reporting of project results is undertaken in a standardized and consistent manner;
9. Agree at their first meeting:
 - a) the membership, meeting arrangements, and terms of reference of the committee; and
 - b) such standing orders and manner of conducting business as may be considered necessary by the committee.

C. Provisional Terms of Reference for The Specialized Executing Agencies for Mangroves, Coral Reefs, Seagrass, Wetlands, Land-Based Pollution and Economic Valuation

The National Specialized Executing Agencies shall:

1. Assume overall responsibility for the execution of the national-level activities in their respective areas of expertise for the UNEP/GEF project entitled '*Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand*' in accordance with the results framework contained in the regional UNEP Project Document;
2. Provide Secretariat support to the operation of the National Committees for mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass, wetlands, land-based pollution, and economic valuation and convene quarterly meetings of these bodies, respectively;
3. Nominate a National Focal Point to (a) act as the main point of contact with the SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit and UNEP; (b) act as Chair of his/her respective National Committee; (c) act as a member of NTWG; and (d) act as a member of the respective Regional Working Group or Task Force;
4. Plan and implement activities based on the results framework, work plan and timetable contained in the UNEP Project Document aimed at achieving the national-level goals and targets of the project and the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea;
5. Prepare and facilitate endorsement, by the National Inter-Ministry Committee (IMC), quarterly costed work plans to guide the execution of national and site-based activities of the project;
6. Submit endorsed quarterly national costed work plans to the Senior Project Manager of the SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit within five (5) working days before the end of each quarter (i.e. Quarter 1 is January-March, Quarter 2 is April-June, Quarter 3 is July-September, Quarter 4 is October-December).
7. Prepare and submit quarterly progress reports, expenditure reports, and cash advance requests for endorsement by the National Inter-Ministry Committee and subsequent submission to the Senior Project Manager of the SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit within five (5) working days before the end of each quarter;
8. Prepare annual progress reports on national-level activities and results of efforts to meet SAP targets;
9. Maintain accurate and up-to-date records and documents in respect of all expenditures incurred with the funds made available to ensure that all expenditures are in conformity with the provisions of the endorsed costed work plans. For each disbursement, proper supporting documentation shall be maintained, including original invoices, bills, and receipts pertinent to the transaction.
10. Provide the SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit with certified periodic financial statements, and with an annual audit of the financial statements relating to the status of project funds advanced to the Specialized Executing Agency;
11. Be responsible for the proper custody, maintenance and care of all equipment purchased for use at the national level;
12. Lead national-level efforts to secure co-financing committed to this project and to leverage additional funding required to replicate and scale-up best practices in coastal and marine environmental management generated through this project; and
13. Ensure that the work of the parties under this agreement is suitably promoted as part of the UNEP/GEF project entitled '*Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand*', including labelling of outputs with agreed logos.

3) SCS SAP PROJECT COORDINATION UNIT

1. RATIONALE AND PURPOSE OF A SCS SAP PROJECT COORDINATION UNIT

1.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit for the UNEP/GEF Project entitled: “*Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand*” is established under the Project Document paragraph 432 as approved by the collaborating institutions and organisations during the project preparation phase as follows:

1.2 A South China Sea Strategic Action Programme Project Coordination Unit (PCU) shall be established at SEAFDEC, which serves as one of the GEF Regional Executing Agencies. The PCU shall have responsibility for the day-to-day management of project activities, and oversight of SAP implementation, including liaison with the National Focal Ministries (ministries responsible for environmental matters), the Specialised Executing Agencies at national level and other partners involved in SAP implementation.

1.3 The PCU will be led by a Senior Project Manager and shall provide quality technical support, guidance and advice on the implementation of project activities and the achievement of SAP targets.

2. ROLE AND FUNCTION

2.1 The PCU, recruited under UNOPS will be responsible for: overall leadership, management and technical oversight of the SCS SAP Project; regional project governance, monitoring and reporting; policy/technical advice and advocacy; regional coordination, including the establishment of partnerships and networking; and external communications.

3. THE PROJECT COORDINATION UNIT SHALL:

3.1 Assume general responsibility for the day-to-day management and implementation of all project objectives and activities;

3.2 Prepare the annual work plan of the project, in a format consistent with UNEP’s budget, work programme and monitoring and evaluation procedures and financial regulations on the basis of the regional UNEP Project Document, and in close consultation and coordination with the SCS SAP Project Steering Committee, National Inter-Ministry Committees, National Focal Points, the UNEP Task Manager and relevant donors;

3.3 Provide Secretariat support to the SCS SAP Project Steering Committee, Regional Scientific and Technical Committee, Regional Working Groups and Regional Task Forces;

3.4 Coordinate and monitor the activities described in the work plan, and report to UNEP and the regional SCS SAP Project Steering Committee;

3.5 Facilitate liaison and networking between and among the 6 country participants, relevant regional organisations, other relevant organisations, non-governmental organisations, key stakeholders and other individuals involved in SAP project implementation;

3.6 Foster and establish links with other related programmes and projects and, where appropriate, with other regional GEF International Waters projects, e.g. IW:LEARN, the SEAFDEC/UNEP/GEF Fisheries *Refugia* Project and PEMSEA,

3.7 Oversee the development of Terms of Reference for consultants and contractors, and be ultimately responsible for the delivery of work produced by consultants under the project;

3.8 Coordinate and oversee the preparation of the substantive and operational reports for the project;

3.9 Guide other SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit staff in the collection and dissemination of information on policy, economic, social, scientific, and technical issues related to achievement of SAP targets;

3.10 Promote public awareness and stakeholder engagement activities necessary for successful project implementation;

3.11 Assist in the delivery of training courses on technical matters, project management, and monitoring and evaluation to strengthen regional capacity in GEF project execution; and

3.12 Lead in the development of integrated and simplified results tracking and reporting tools for the project to ensure effective communication with national governments, UNEP and the GEF.

4. MANAGEMENT OF THE SCS SAP PROJECT COORDINATION UNIT

4.1 The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit will be led by a Senior Project Manager. He/she shall liaise directly with the National Focal Points and other relevant bodies and stakeholders where relevant. He/she will also liaise with representatives of UNEP and GEF, as well as other regional donors, in order to coordinate the annual work plan for the project. He/she shall be responsible for all technical, planning, managerial, monitoring, progress and financial reporting for the project.

4.2 The Senior Project Manager will consult and coordinate closely with other representatives of UNEP and report directly to the UNEP Task Manager. The position of Senior Project Manager encompasses the following major functions:

- Leadership, management and technical oversight of the SCS SAP Project;
- Regional project governance and monitoring;
- Policy/technical advice and advocacy;
- Regional and national coordination, partnership and networking; and
- External communication

4.3 The Senior Project Manager will be supported by the following SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit staff: Project Management Support Specialist (Country Coordinator); Scientific Coordinator; Communication/web-site management; and Project Support Officer. Terms of Reference for these positions will be developed during project inception as a primary task of the Senior Project Manager.