



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

**Second Meeting of the SCS SAP Steering Committee**

30-31 January 2024, Bangkok, Thailand

**IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL AND  
NATIONAL ACTIVITIES UNDER  
COMPONENTS 2 and 3**



## INTRODUCTION

The objective of the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand (SCS SAP Project) is:

*“To assist countries in meeting the targets of the approved Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the marine and coastal environment of the South China Sea (SCS) through implementation of the National Action Plans in support of the SAP, and strengthening regional co-ordination for SCS SAP implementation.”*

Participating Countries:	Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam
Implementation Agency:	United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
Executing Agencies:	United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
Funding Agency:	Global Environment Facility (GEF)
Funding:	15 million USD (with approximately 83 million USD in co-financing)
Web-links:	<a href="https://scssap.org">https://scssap.org</a>

The SCS SAP Steering Committee’s role will be to provide managerial and governance advice to the project, and to guide the Project Coordination Unit (PCU), in the implementation and monitoring of the overall regional project. The SCS SAP Steering Committee will also provide a regional forum for reviewing and resolving national concerns, reviewing and approving annual work plans and budgets, and provide a regional forum for stakeholder participation. At the first meeting of the SCS SAP Steering Committee, the membership of the PSC was reconfirmed and reconstituted, and the terms of reference and meeting procedures were agreed upon by the members of the PSC.

The objectives of this Second Steering Committee Meeting include:

1. Discuss project progress and implementation at regional and national levels
2. Discuss habitats and land-based pollution achievements in implementing the SAP during 2008 – 2021
3. Discuss and adopt regional and national activities for implementation under Components 2 and 3
4. Discuss and adopt the revised workplan and budget

The Steering Committee is composed of two representatives from each participating country, the Chairs of the Inter-Ministry Committee (IMC) and the Chairs of the National Technical Working Group (NTWG) and UNEP. The SCS SAP Project Coordination Unit (PCU) and UNOPs will support the meeting. Key national team members will be invited to support the IMC and NTWG chairs.

## **DETAILED PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SAP AT THE REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS UNDER COMPONENTS 2 AND 3**

### **Introduction**

This detailed plan is an updated version of the document SCSSAP RSTC 1/8 namely “Regional and national activities under component 2 and 3 which was distributed in First Meeting of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee Bangkok, Thailand, 17-19 October 2022. Some contents in this plan have been revised to be appropriate to the revised work plan of the SCS SAP Project with the extension of the project period until 2026.

### **Component 2. Strengthening knowledge-based action planning for the management of coastal habitats and land-based pollution to reduce environmental degradation of the South China Sea**

This component will result in: an enhanced information-base for coastal habitat management and action planning; effective integration of regional science in the management of land-based pollution; strengthened and harmonized national policies and laws, and supporting financial mechanism, for the management of land-based sources of pollution; improved national and regional values for the economic evaluation of coastal habitats for use in development planning and decision-making; regionally appropriate tools and mechanisms to guide the development of sustainable management systems for coastal habitats and land-based pollution; and an updated and Ministerially adopted Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Programme, including prioritization of national management actions to address climate variability and change. Each of the outcomes to be delivered and regional and national activities to achieve the outcomes via Component 2 of the project are outlined below.

#### ***Outcome 2.1 Enhanced information-base for coastal habitat management, monitoring and action planning***

2.1.1. Assessment of existing data and information on coastal habitat in the South China Sea, and review of monitoring and assessment approaches that can support SCS monitoring program, from national, regional and global sources, combined with project-generated data from Component 1

- Regional: (1) Develop and establish mechanism for collection and compilation of GIS data, partnerships, approach, and database linked to global databases on habitats; (2) Report on existing databases on coastal ecosystems, including all relevant types of data and information
- National: Review status of national monitoring system including innovative technology and approaches; report on data available and main gaps and capacity needs in monitoring, in line with regional and national commitments, the SDG’s and CBD Post 2020 Framework

Execution: Consultancy work with participation of RWGs & Focal Points on habitats

2.1.2 Mechanism for collection and exchange of regional coastal habitat and pollution information and data established

- National: Provision of habitat and pollution data following site characterization forms and guidance on assessment of sources, flows, and impacts of land-based coastal and marine pollution
- Regional: (1) Agreed characterization form and guidance to support national reviews of data and information on pollution; (2) Development of GIS & meta-database; (3) Sharing with partners

Execution: Consultancy work with participation of RWGs & National Focal Points on habitats & LbP

### 2.1.3 Role of coastal habitats of the South China Sea in climate change adaptation and the sequestration and storage of carbon

- Regional: (1) Documentation of regional data & information; (2) Communication on review outcomes published by media outlets and syndicated via LME LEARN; (3) Methodology to integrate climate change aspects into TDA and SAP
- National: Review of available data and information related to assessment of role of habitats in capture & storage of carbon at the national level

Execution: Consultancy work with participation of RWG & Focal Points on habitats

### 2.1.4 Review of status and potential of blue economy in the region and linkages to coastal ecosystems

- Regional: Report on current status of Blue Economy in the region and linkages to coastal ecosystems.

Execution: Consultancy work with participation of RWG on habitats

## ***Outcome 2.2 Effective integration of regional science in the management of land-based pollution***

### 2.2.1 Updating the current scientific data and information on marine land-based pollution for SCS marine basin

- National: Analysis and mapping of each countries monitoring programmes, desk review of national LbP assessment and modelling
- Regional: Report on scientific data and information on marine land-based pollution for SCS marine basin and building a regional mechanism for monitoring and reporting on the marine and coastal environment (in partnership with regional organizations)

Execution: Consultancy work with information contribution from countries and other exercises

### 2.2.2. Regional level assessment of sources, flows, and impacts of marine pollution (incl. from coastal aquaculture): Support national surveys using recommended approaches and applying training to establish baselines and inform a regional assessment

- Regional: Development of guidelines on assessment of impacts of key contaminants and quantification of effluent volumes and contaminant loadings for coastal aquaculture
- National: Provision of available data on sources, flows, and impacts of marine pollution for regional assessment

Execution: Consultancy work with participation of RWG & National Focal Points on LbP

### 2.2.3. Quantification of effluent volumes and contaminant loadings from coastal aquaculture to the SCS marine basin

- National: Review of data and information on effluent and contaminant loading from culture operations identified as key threat to dominant coastal biomes
- Regional: Report on impacts of key contaminants and quantification of effluent volumes and contaminant loadings for coastal aquaculture

Execution: Consultancy work with participation of RWG & National Focal Points on LbP

***Outcome 2.3 Strengthened and harmonized national policies and laws, and supporting financial mechanism, for the management of habitats and land-based sources of pollution***

2.3.1. National best practices in waste water management, law enforcement, and community and industry participation in managing land-based sources of pollution and habitat management documented and shared

- National: Report on best-practices in waste water management, law enforcement and community and industry participation in managing land-based sources of pollution and habitat management
- Regional: Conjunction with outputs 1.5.3, 2.3.5, and 3.1.6

Execution: National Focal Points and RWG on habitats and LbP

2.3.2 Review of legislative and institutional frameworks for land-based pollution and habitat management in participating countries

- National: Reports on the review of legislative and institutional frameworks for land-based pollution and habitat management (link with output 2.6.5), taking into account of output-based evaluation of impacts (habitat area in ha under sustainable management) in implementing legal reforms and/or revised/updated management policies/plans since 2008

Execution: Focal Points on Legal Matters, habitats and LbP with consultation with SAP/TDA consultant

2.3.3 Key principles agreed for harmonized national procedures for land-based pollution management

- National: Report on gaps and needs for land-based pollution management.
- Regional: Agreement on key principles for increased harmonization of national processes for land-based pollution management

Execution: Consultancy work with participation of Focal Point on LbP

2.3.4. Support to countries in revising national/provincial policies and supporting regulations for land-based pollution and habitats

- National: Report on the policies and regulations for land-based pollution and habitat management revised/updated or proposed for revision (Linked with output 2.6.5), indicating output-based evaluation of impacts (habitat area in ha under sustainable management)

Execution: RWG & National Focal Points on LbP and RTF & Focal Point on Legal Matters

***Outcome 2.4 Updated Total Economic Values of coastal habitats for use in development planning and decision-making and blue economy***

2.4.1 Expanded datasets and estimates of economic valuation information on the goods and services of SCS coastal ecosystems

- National: Desk reviews on economic valuation conducted in countries
- Regional: Report on the methodology and best practices on economic evaluations, updating the Economic Valuation carried out under Phase 1 (2002-2008) to include new data from the region, considering TEEB methodologies, blue economies, and blue carbon.

Execution: Consultancy work with participation of RTF-EV

2.4.2. Compilation of good examples, and identify recommendations to strengthen a blue economy (and circular economy) approach and innovative financing for pollution and habitat management

- Regional: Report on good examples and recommendations to strengthen blue economy (and circular economy) approach and innovative financing for pollution and habitat management

Execution: Consultancy work with participation of RTF-EV

***Outcome 2.5 Regionally appropriate tools and mechanisms to guide the development of sustainable management systems for coastal habitats and land-based pollution***

2.5.1. Online catalogue of best practice management measures and technologies for sustainable use of SCS coastal habitats and land-based pollution management

- Regional: Catalogue of best practices accessible online (Linked to outputs 1.5.3, 2.3.1, and 3.1.6)

Execution: Task of communication expert (PCU)

2.5.2 Government officials, community leaders, and habitat and pollution managers exposed to on-going practices in rehabilitation, management, and pollution control and treatment via programme of training, study tours and exchange

- Regional: Training program and study tour and exchange on habitat rehabilitation, management, and pollution control

Execution: In collaboration with existing networks, i.e. PEMSEA's networks of local governments

***Outcome 2.6 Updated and Ministerially adopted Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Programme, including prioritization of national management actions to address climate variability and change***

2.6.1 National and regional level consensus on contemporary issues and problems and updated TDA

- Regional: Guidelines for the update of the TDA, SAP, National Reports and NAPs, based on new TDA/SAP methodology
- National: Provision inputs for updated TDA

Execution: Consultancy work with participation of RSTC and National Technical Focal Points

2.6.2. SCS State of Coastal Habitats report in line with global commitments (SDGs, CBD)

- Regional: Joint publication on revised and updated National Reports, TDA and monitoring results

Execution: Consultancy work with participation of RWG & Focal Points on habitats

2.6.3 National and regional consultative process to develop updated Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for adoption at the Ministerial level including agreed monitoring and reporting mechanisms

- Regional: (1) Methodology for NAPs and SAP update, considering incorporation of additional elements; (2) Draft, review & adoption of SAP
- National: Organization of national consultations

Execution: Consultancy work with participation of RSTC, PSC and IMC (role of leading agencies)

2.6.4 Prioritization of national management actions for incorporation into national policies and plans, in particular for climate variability and change and blue economy

2.6.5 Updated and adopted National Action Plans for mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass and wetlands, and land-based pollution including enactment of supporting legislation where required

- Regional: Building methodology for NAP update
- National: (1) Prioritization of national management actions; (2) Conducting procedure for adoption of updated National Action Plans

Execution: Consultancy work with participation of IMC, NTWG, NWGs on habitats, LbP & EV, LM

### **Component 3. Facilitating regional and national level integration and cooperation for implementation of the South China Sea Strategic Action Programme**

This component will result in: regional and sub-regional co-operation in the integration of scientific knowledge and research outputs with management and policy making; capacity for civil society and community organization participation in SAP implementation strengthened via operational partnership with GEF SGP; relationships between central and local governments and the private sector strengthened and formalized; revitalization of regional mechanisms for communications, knowledge exchange, and information and data management and sharing; and agreed arrangements for strengthened regional cooperation in the management of the marine and coastal environment of the South China Sea. Each of the outcomes to be delivered and activities at regional and national levels to achieve these outcomes via Component 3 of the project are outlined below.

#### ***Outcome 3.1 Regional and sub-regional co-operation in the integration of scientific knowledge and research outputs with management and policy making***

3.1.1 Regional Scientific and Technical Committee of the SCS project functioning as a bridge between the scientific community and decision-makers [annual meetings]

- Regional: Organization of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee Meetings

3.1.2 Knowledge exchanges between government and scientific community through Regional Scientific Conferences

- Regional: Organization of the Regional Scientific Conferences (RSC).

Execution: The first RSC organized in partnership with regional organization ((IOC/WESTPAC); Final conference on project closing in 2025

3.1.3 Best practice exchanges between local government officials and coastal managers on science-based management via annual Mayor's Round-Table meetings

- Regional: Organization of the Mayor's Round Table Meeting

Execution: Back-to-back with RSTC meeting in cooperation with regional organizations.

3.1.4 Agreement for joint management of at least two (2) transboundary water areas agreed & implemented

- National: Review and consultation with current stakeholders on the status of past MOUs including further support for cooperation and signing new MOAs between (1) Cambodia and Thailand (Trat and Koh Kong); (2) Cambodia and Vietnam (Kampot and Kien Giang);
- Regional: Development of the MOA on transboundary management of marine turtles (Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia), in partnership with ASEAN Center for Biodiversity (ACB)

Execution: Coordination by the PCU for bilateral cooperation and partnership with ACB for multilateral cooperation

3.1.5 Integration of the GEF/UNEP fisheries refugia project results in TDA and SAP updating (Note: Changed from 'Cooperation with the GEF fisheries refugia project and other relevant regional initiatives established' since the FR project is completed already)

- Regional: FR project results integrated in revised/updated TDA and SAP

Execution: Consultancy work with participation of RWGs on habitats

3.1.6 Operational award program on best practices in coastal habitat and land-based pollution management for communities, local governments and industry [annual]

Regional: Design and implement an awards program on best practices.

Execution: Review by the RSTC and approved by PSC?

***Outcome 3.2 Capacity for civil society and community organization participation in SAP implementation strengthened via operational partnership with GEF SGP***

3.2.1 Cooperation with GEF SGP in the commissioning and implementation of an additional 12 community-based projects for SAP implementation

- Regional: Consultation and launching the SCS / SGP co-financing initiative for the South China Sea
- National: Approval and implementation of SGP projects (12 in the total)

Execution: Partnership with GEF/SGP and SGP national coordinators

3.2.2 CSO & CO inputs elicited for planning and M&E of the SCS-SGP partnership via annual NGO forums

- Regional: Organization of the NGO Forum for CSO and CO in coordination and consultation with SGP

Execution: Partnership with GEF/SGP and SGP national coordinators

3.2.3 Training program on science and management of SCS coastal habitats and resources for SGP proponents

- Regional: Organization of training programs for SCS-SGP proponents in coordination and consultation with SGP

Execution: Partnership with GEF/SGP and SGP national coordinators

***Outcome 3.3 Relationships between central and local governments and the private sector strengthened and formalized***

3.3.1 Review of current Blue Economy examples from the SCS region with private sector engagement as part of blue economy strategies

- Regional: Compilation of ongoing private sector partnerships in blue economy, in parallel to output 2.4.2

Execution: Consultancy work in partnership with other regional organizations

3.3.2 Identification of blue economy and blue finance opportunities for private sector investment (e.g. fisheries, tourism, others) in implementation of the updated SAP

- Regional: Report on opportunities for private sector investment and long-term financing mechanism for the implementation of the updated SAP

Execution: Consultancy work in partnership with other regional organizations

3.3.3 Public-private partnerships and investment plan for the implementation of the updated SAP solidified through two blue economy partnership forums

- Regional: Partnership forum organized with commitments to support implementation of updated SAP

Execution: Consultancy work in partnership with other regional organizations

3.3.4. Updated and adopted National Investment Plans for land-based pollution and habitat management in the SCS

- National: National Investment Plans for land-based pollution and habitat management in the SCS

Execution: Consultancy work in cooperation with National economic experts

3.3.5. Identification of options for regional financial mechanism for land-based pollution and habitat management

- Regional: Prioritized List of Options for financing future implementation of land-based pollution mitigation and habitat management

Execution: Consultancy work in cooperation with RTF-EV

***Outcome 3.4 Revitalization of regional mechanisms for communications, knowledge exchange, and information and data management and sharing***

3.4.1 A variety of multi-media information and knowledge products based on SCS SAP implementation communications strategy

- Regional: Development of the SCS SAP communication strategy

Execution: Reviewed by the RSTC

3.4.2 Regionally appropriate knowledge tools developed to support decision-making and planning

- Regional: Repository of knowledge tools based on national needs accessible online

Execution: Possible partnerships to support the development and initiate contracts and activities.

3.4.3 The SCS project web portal and clearing house mechanism and associated regional databases online, updated and linked to IW-Learn and other GEF Knowledge management systems

- Regional: Maintain and update the project web-site <https://scssap.org/> and linked to IWLEARN.

Execution: Daily work of communication expert

3.4.4 Active engagement with GEF IW: LEARN [1% of project resources] including participation in IW conferences and 3 experience notes

- Regional: Inputs and contributions to the IWLEARN activities

Execution: PCU task

***Outcome 3.5 Agreed arrangements for strengthened regional cooperation in the management of the marine and coastal environment of the South China Sea***

3.5.3 Options for future regional cooperation and governance identified

- Regional: Development of the draft Options Paper in collaboration with COBSEA

Execution: Consultancy work in collaboration with PCU and COBSEA

3.5.4 National stakeholder consultations on draft options paper for regional cooperation and governance

- National: Organization of national stakeholder consultation

Execution: Work of national legal mater expert led by IMC and NTWG

3.5.5 Options paper on future regional cooperation and governance endorsed by countries

- Regional & National: Endorsement by countries of Options Paper on Regional Cooperation and Governance

Execution: Procedures with be decided by the PSC