



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

Third Meeting of the Regional Working Group on Land-Based Pollution

26-28 November 2025, Batam, Indonesia

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LAND-BASED POLLUTION ACTIVITIES OF THE SCS SAP PROJECT AT REGIONAL LEVEL



Implementation of the Land-based Pollution Activities of the SCS SAP Project at the Regional level

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

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

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

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

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

- Development and operation of SEA: LEARN

Key results as of October 2025: SEA: LEARN developed but lacks information on land-based pollution

2.2.1 Regional level assessment of the sources, flows, and impacts of key contaminants: Support national surveys using recommended approaches and applying training to establish baselines and inform a regional assessment

- Develop methodology/guidelines on the assessment of sources, flows, and impacts of key contaminants and quantification of effluent volumes and contaminant loadings from coastal aquaculture.
- Review of status and gaps as well as proposed mechanism in monitoring and reporting on the marine and coastal environment (in partnership with regional organizations), in line with regional and national commitments (e.g., SDGs)
- Reports on assessment of key contaminants and quantification of effluent volumes based on watershed assessments/modelling and hotspot information, providing recommendations to TDA and SAP revision

Key results as of October 2025: Methodology/guidelines provided for national TDA pollution reports; Data from countries on key contaminants, sources, and loading generally at the scale of sites, if available; Spatial and temporal data are limited; A preliminary regional assessment of major contaminants has been undertaken.

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

- Regional documentation and synthesis of key contaminants and effluent volumes and contaminant loadings from coastal aquaculture
- Report on impacts of key contaminants and quantification of effluent volumes and contaminant loadings for coastal aquaculture

Key results as of October 2025: Provided in the methodology/guidelines for national TDA reports of pollution; Contaminant loadings from coastal aquaculture in countries not yet assessed; preliminary regional assessment needs validation using country-provided data.

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

- Combination and publication of best practices for exchange with national and regional partners

Key results as of October 2025: Policy and legal reforms at the national and provincial level compiled in the first draft of “recent good practices on habitat and land-based pollution management in participating countries of the UNEP/GEF SCS SAP project”

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

- Regional agreement on key principles for increased harmonization of Standard Operating Procedures for land-based pollution control and management [including sediment, biota, and water quality criteria]

Key results as of October 2025: Water quality criteria and effluent standards cited in submitted TDA-LbP reports frequently reference ASEAN values; a study of values across countries is needed.

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

- Review and publication of best practice management measures and technology for sustainable use of SCS coastal habitats and land-based pollution management

Key results as of October 2025: Good practices at the local level compiled in the first draft of “recent good practices on habitat and land-based pollution management in participating countries of the UNEP/GEF SCS SAP project”

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

- (1) Building partnerships; (2) Organization of study tours

Key results as of October 2025: A roundtable and study tour conducted in the framework of the 2025 PEMSEA Network of Local Government (PNLG) in Jakarta, Indonesia, September, 2025.

2.6.1 National and regional level consensus on contemporary issues and problems and updated Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA)

- Guidelines for the update of the TDA, SAP, National Reports and NAPs
- Draft revised TDA and consultation for revision
- Updated and regionally endorsed TDA for the SCS marine basin published and disseminated at national and regional levels

Key results as of October 2025: Guidelines provided to update TDA on LbP component; drafts obtained from three countries with feedback provided on documents

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: Methodology for NAPs and SAP update, considering incorporation of additional elements;
- Draft, review and adoption of SAP

Key results as of October 2025: Awaiting completion of national and regional TDAs

Potential for regional cooperation

- Collaboration with COBSEA to develop a knowledge management platform for long-term use.
- Exchange of best practices and lessons learned in plastic management and nutrient management (GPMN) through shared knowledge hubs and study visits to key locations.
- Review of and input to the 2002 ASEAN Marine Water Quality Management Guidelines and Monitoring Manual.
- Inter-laboratory comparison study for nutrients in seawater
- Expert exchange and exploration of cooperation in the region (IOC WESTPAC Riverine Discharge of Plastics to the Ocean Project, COBSEA RWG on Marine Litter, and ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment).

MARINE WATER QUALITY CRITERIA FOR THE ASEAN REGION

For Aquatic Life Protection

Parameter	Criteria Values	Note
Ammonia (NH ₃ -N)	70 µg/L	
Cadmium	10 µg/L	
Chromium (VI)	50 µg/L	Criteria value proposed by CPMS- II is 48 µg /L. The Meeting recommended to adopt 50 µg /L, following the existing national standards of member countries
Copper	8 µg/L	As the proposed value 2.9 µg /L is too stringent, the Meeting agreed to use round-up value of 7.7 µg /L, the product of the lowest LOEC from a chronic study 77 µg /L for reproduction for <i>Mysidopsis bahia</i> and a safety factor of 0.1
Temperature	Increase not more than 2° C above the maximum ambient temperature	
Cyanide	7 µg/L	
Dissolved oxygen	4 mg/L	
Lead	8.5 µg/L	
Mercury	0.16 µg/L	
Nitrate (NO ₃ -N)	60 µg/L	A single criteria value should be derived for nitrate and nitrite combined in future.
Nitrite (NO ₂ -N)	55 µg/L	
Oil and grease	0.14 mg/L	Other related parameter, e.g. PAH, should be proposed in the future.
Total phenol	0.12 mg/L	
Phosphate (PO ₄ ³⁻ -P)	15 µg/L (Coastal) 45 µg/L (Estuarine)	
Tributyltin	10 mg/L	
Total suspended solids	Permissible 10% maximum increase over seasonal average concentration	

For Human Health Protection

Parameter	Criteria Values	Note
Bacteria	100 faecal coliform/100 mL 35 enterococci/100 mL	Coastal water quality for recreational activities