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

Updating the Transboundary Diagnostic Analyses (TDA) and Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand

Concept, Process, and Progress

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1 COBSEA CONTEXT

The Seas of East Asia cover six transboundary large marine ecosystems (LMEs): (1) Yellow Sea, (2) East China Sea, (3) South China Sea, (4) Gulf of Thailand, (5) Sulu-Celebes Sea, and (6) Indonesian Seas) (Figure 1.1). Table 1.1 indicates that five of the six LMEs have been analyzed for transboundary environmental issues through GEF tools called transboundary diagnostic analyses (TDA) and corresponding strategic action programmes (SAP), the latter designed to mitigate these issues, at national and large marine ecosystem scales.

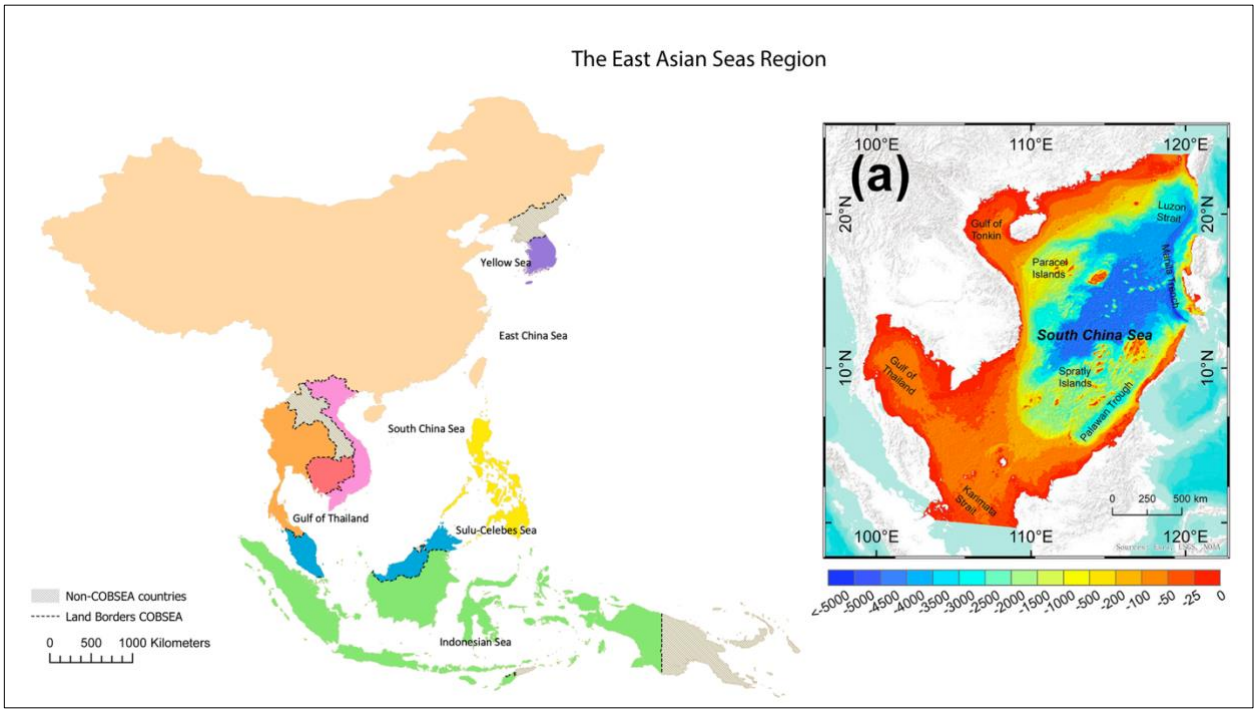

Figure 1.1 Large marine ecosystems (LMEs) within the East Asian Seas region, for which the Coordinating Body of the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) provides a regional coordinating mechanism for marine environmental governance among participating countries of the COBSEA.

Table 1.1 indicates dates when the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) and Strategic Action Programmes were published for each of the transboundary LMEs within the Seas of East Asia.

Transboundary LMEs in the COBSEA Region	LMEs with Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA)	LMEs with Strategic Action Programme (SAP)
1. Yellow Sea	2000, 2007	2009
2. East China Sea	No record	No record
3. South China Sea	2000; SCS-SAP Project, ongoing (2025+)	2008; SCS-SAP Project, ongoing (2025+)
4. Gulf of Thailand	2000; SCS-SAP Project, ongoing (2025+)	2008; SCS-SAP Project, ongoing (2025+)
5. Sulu-Celebes Sea	2013	2013
6. Indonesian Seas	2025	2025

The participatory process is designed to develop both the Transboundary Diagnostic Analyses and the Strategic Action Programmes for the South China Sea – Gulf of Thailand LMEs, at national and large marine ecosystem scales. More importantly, these tools are intended to underpin a climate change - informed environmental governance that can help

transform current vulnerabilities into opportunities for innovation in human resilience. The TDA-SAP process aims to provide evidence-based experiential learning and to foster collaboration among participating countries of the COBSEA, at a time when climate impacts are deemed as collectively existential threat to extremely vulnerable societies of tropical coasts.

2 PROJECT UNDERPINNINGS FOR THE TDA-SAP UPDATE

The overall goals of the GEF Project entitled "Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand (SCS SAP Project) are:

- "To maintain an environment at the regional level, in which collaboration and partnership in addressing environmental problems of the South China Sea, between all stakeholders, and at all levels, is fostered and encouraged;
- to enhance the capacity of the participating governments to integrate environmental considerations into national development planning;
- and to strengthen and expand the network of scientists, government officials and civil society established under the UNEP/GEF SCS Project."

The medium-term objective is:

- "To assist the governments of the participating countries in meeting the targets of the approved SAP through the provision of technical assistance as required in implementing national activities in support of the SAP;
- and the provision of strong regional coordination of the process of SAP implementation" (Project Document, 2016)."

To fulfill the project goals and objectives, and mindful of incorporating current organizing concepts in marine environmental governance, the project elements are organized into three components, each responding to the stated goals above:

Component 1. Reducing habitat degradation and loss via national and local reforms to achieve Strategic Action Programme targets for coastal habitat management in the South China Sea

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

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

An updated and ministerially adopted Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Programme, including prioritization of national management actions to address climate variability and change, is explicitly stated as OUTCOME 2.6, under Component 2 of the SCS SAP Project. Table 36 of the Project Document identifies the baselines, targets and project indicators for Outcome 2.6, as shown in Table 1.1.

Table 2.1 Baselines, targets and project indicators for Outcome 2.6 (Table 6, Project Document, 2016).

Baselines	Targets	Indicators
TDA for SCS published in 2000 Special Issue of Ocean and Coastal Management on South China Sea published in 2013	2.6.1 National and regional level consensus on contemporary issues and problems, including the quantification of environmental compromises and the prioritization of problems (Yr 2)	Status of national and regional level consensus on contemporary issues of transboundary significance with respect to coastal habitat and land-based pollution management
Strategic Action Programme endorsed in 2008 outlines priorities for management Established methodology for cost of action versus non-action in the context of SCS SAP implementation	2.6.2 The immediate and ultimate root causes of the problems identified, and consensus reached on priorities for intervention, including comparative analysis of the net benefits of alternative options (Yr 3)	Status of national and regional level consensus reached on priority actions for intervention Status of cost benefit analysis of comparative net benefits of alternative options for management
Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea endorsed inter-governmentally in 2008	2.6.3 National and regional consultative process to develop updated Strategic Action Programme SAP for adoption by appropriate Ministers (Yr 5)	Status of adoption by appropriate Ministers of an updated Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea
Evolving understanding of sea level rise, climate change, and episodic events in East Asia but not applied in context of transboundary planning in the South China Sea	2.6.4 Prioritization of national management actions to address climate variability and change for incorporation into national policies and plans	Level up demonstrable use of the regional review on sea level rise, climate change, and episodic events in SAP formulation

In the project inception report released in 2021, Outcome 2.6 was refined to reflect the execution arrangements and make the project more aligned with recent global and regional initiatives (e.g. Sustainable Development Goals, Convention on Biological Diversity and Aichi Targets) and organizing concepts (e.g., Blue and Circular Economy). These edits are shown in Table 1.2.

Table 2.2 Revised outputs for Outcome 2.6 (Table 1, Inception Report, 2021).

Outcome 2.6	**Revised Outputs (changes in RED)**	**Rational for changes**
Updated and ministerially adopted TDA and SAP, 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	TDA was missing
	2.6.2 ~~The immediate and ultimate root causes of the problems identified, and consensus reached on priorities for intervention, including comparative analysis of the net benefits of alternative options (Yr 3)~~ 2.6.2 SCS State of Coastal Habitats report in line with global commitments (SDGs, CBD)	Moved from 1.5.4
	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	Current SAP has not been monitored. Need a long-term monitoring and reporting mechanism
	2.6.4 Prioritization of national management actions ~~to address climate variability and change~~ for incorporation into national policies and plans, in particular for climate variability and change and blue economy.	Climate change and blue economy elements to be integrated
	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	Minor edit

Both tables provide the foundation for conceptualizing a contemporary TDA-SAP process. While drawing on the multi-scalar approach used in the development of the pioneering TDA and SAP reports, herein referred to as TDA 1.0 and SAP 1.0, respectively, for the South China Sea, a more elaborate participatory process had to be designed to operationalize TDA-SAP 2.0. The networks of national and regional experts, government and civil society representatives, and institutions, and the processes through which these participate in the current SCS SAP Project, had to be woven tightly into an executable TDA-SAP workplan within the remaining lifespan of the current project. More significantly, the sustainability of these human resources and the TDA-SAP process, must be ensured by situating them into the institutional matrix and operations of the Coordinating Body for the East Asian Seas (COBSEA). The latter is a UNEP Regional Seas Programme, the spatial domain for which includes four transboundary large marine ecosystems such as the South China Sea, the Gulf of Thailand, the Sulu-Celebes Sea, and the East China Sea.

3 CONCEPT AND PROCESS OF TDA-SAP UPDATE

As a process, the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis aims to provide the scientific underpinnings for managing environmental concerns that occur among transboundary systems, such as transboundary large marine ecosystems like the South China Sea and the Gulf of Thailand. The analysis examines impacts on and from the natural and anthropogenic components, drilling down on root causes. The strategic action planning that follows aims to address the root causes under a warming climate regime. Tools such as valuation of ecosystem services by habitats, and net benefit-cost analysis of management intervention options, provide objective bases for determining priorities, including institution of laws and policies. The strategic action programme that is then developed needs to be endorsed at both the scale of national governments, and at the regional scale, for international donors such as the Global Environment Facility of the UN, to invest on the implementation of regionally and/or nationally endorsed priority actions (Figure 2.1).

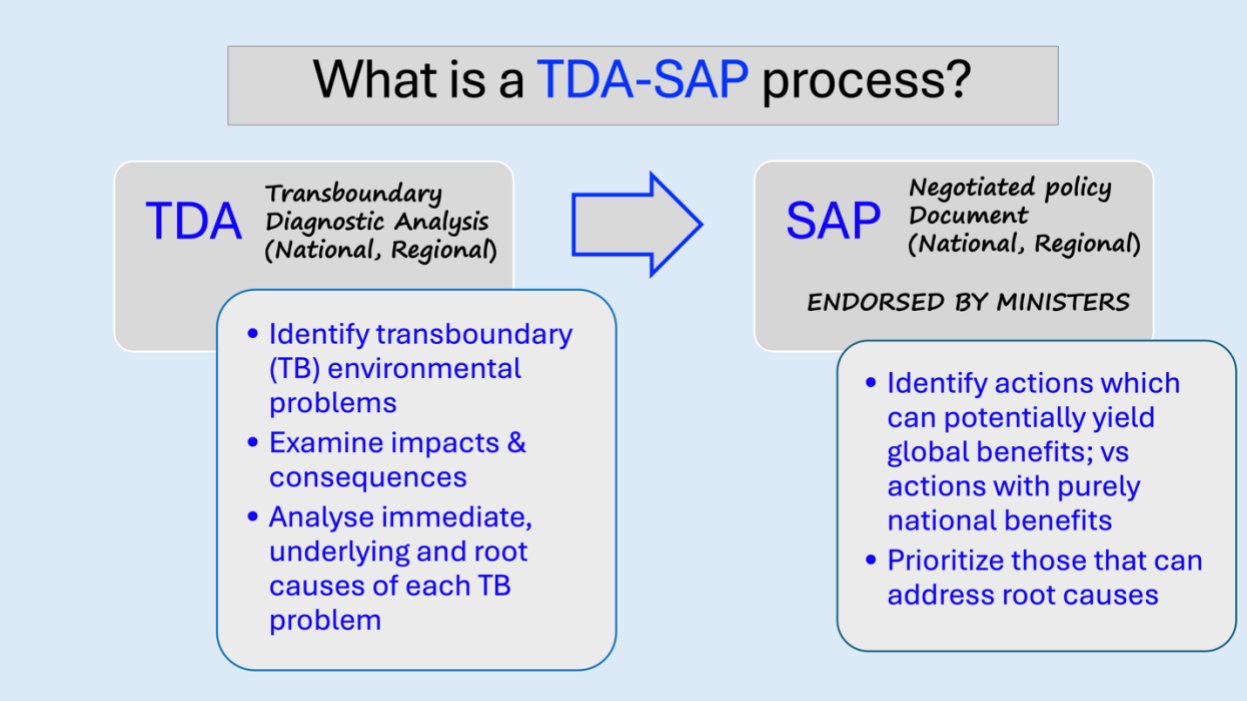

Figure 3.1 The Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis – Strategic Action Programme process aims to identify transboundary environmental problems that occur in transboundary systems, determine the underlying root causes of these, and design strategic actions to mitigate the impacts and consequences of these.

3.1 What is a transboundary environmental concern?

Figure 2.2 explains transboundary environmental concerns. These can include issues about migratory species and those for which spatial scales cross national boundaries - environmental concerns about species and ecosystems that provide regional or global ecological services, like coral reefs, seagrasses, mangroves and wetlands. Because transboundary problems involve two or more countries, a regional approach in environmental governance is the appropriate scale at which to implement interventions that would also need support at national scales.

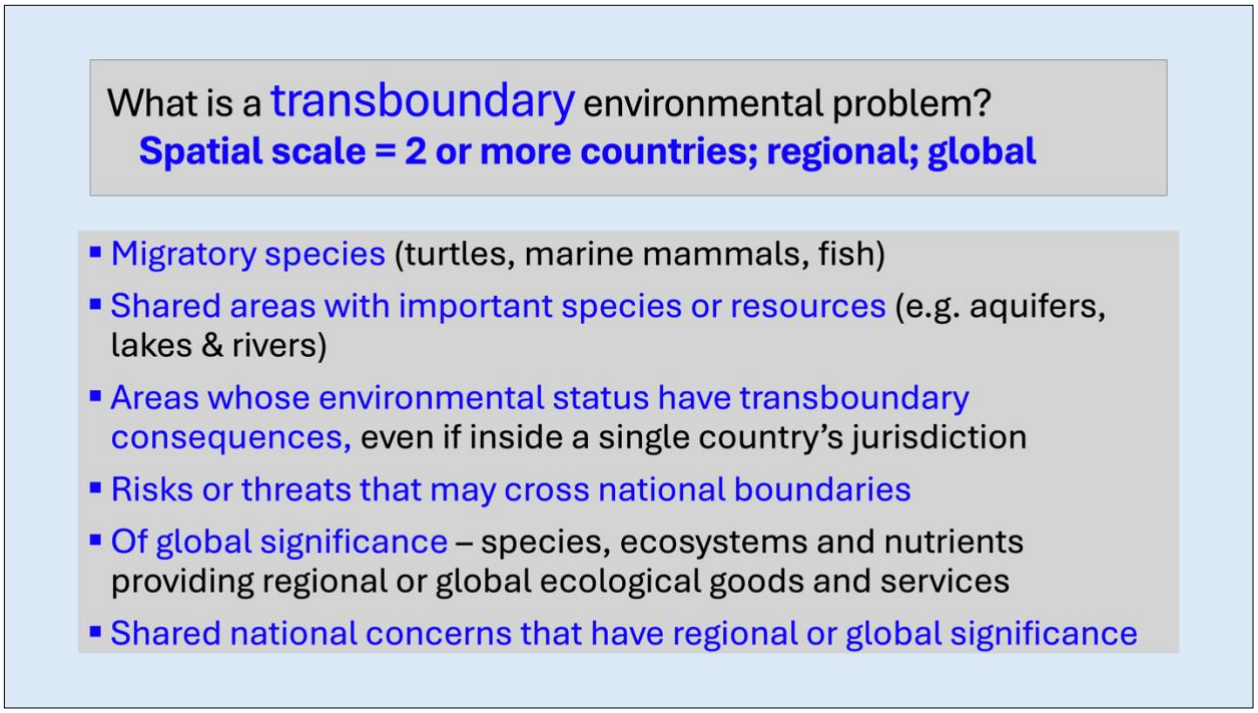

Figure 3.2 Transboundary issues in shared large marine ecosystems like the South China Sea and the Gulf of Thailand include problems on migratory species, environmental risks or threats that cross national boundaries, or issues related to species and ecosystems that are globally significant.

3.2 A conceptual framework for TDA-SAP 2.0 (2026)

Figure 2.3 allows a side-by-side comparison of the frameworks used in the conduct of TDA-SAP 1.0 (1998 to 2000), and TDA-SAP 2.0 (2024-2026). The twenty-five-year interval between the two exercises underscores the differences in the suite of environmental issues that each exercise examined. The current TDA-SAP 2.0 will assess the impacts of three planetary environmental crises - biodiversity loss, nutrient and plastic pollution, and climate change. Human well-being will be assessed within the broad rubric of the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda. In addition, TDA-SAP 2.0 will not only assess system states, but also determine risk or threat levels, relative to whether a system can sustain ecosystem services to support both human and ecosystem well-being, or not.

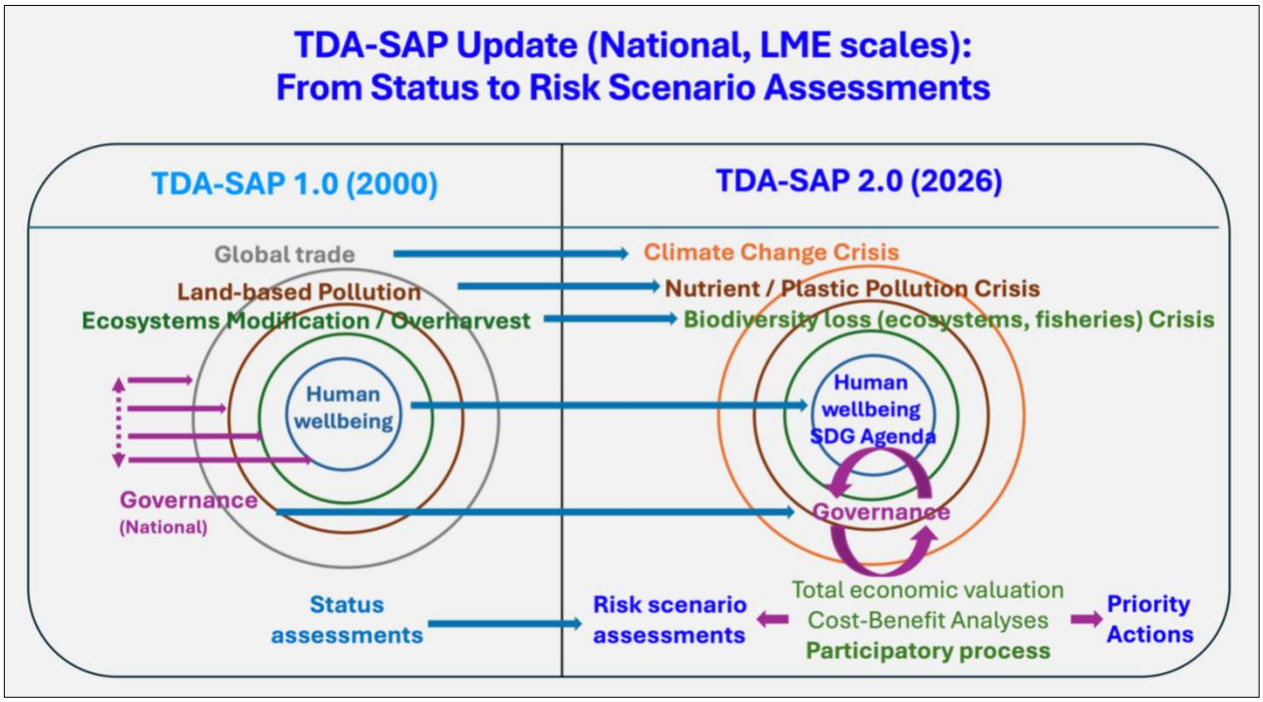

Figure 3.3 TDA-SAP 2.0 updates TDA – SAP 1.0 with the inclusion of three planetary environmental crises that plague contemporary earth: biodiversity loss, nutrient and plastic pollution, and climate change. It hopes to integrate innovative tools such as total economic valuation and cost-benefit analysis as basis for choosing priority actions. A participatory approach would be used to engage key stakeholder groups in both the scientific and management aspects of the process.

3.3 Indicator based assessment for the TDA

To conduct an integrated system assessment, quantitative and qualitative indicators will be used to examine six system components as shown in Figure 2.4. These include people, ecosystem biodiversity, living aquatic resources, pollution, climate and governance.
For National TDAs, the scale can be at subnational coastal provinces, or watershed scale that line the South China Sea or Gulf of Thailand. For Regional TDAs, the unit of study may be the country coastline that lines either of these two LMEs, or watershed scale units. For the temporal coverage, data from 2000 to 2024, as a time series, or towards 2020+, would be ideal to use.

To facilitate these assessments, an Indicator Assessment Guidance Pocket was prepared by the Project TDA-SAP Team, which includes the data support requirements and sources, assessment methods, and their statistical or numerical interpretation for indicators that characterize each of the six components. This pocket was released to the National TDA-SAP Teams on 3 February 2025, except for the Climate Guidance Assessment (to be released in mid-April 2025).

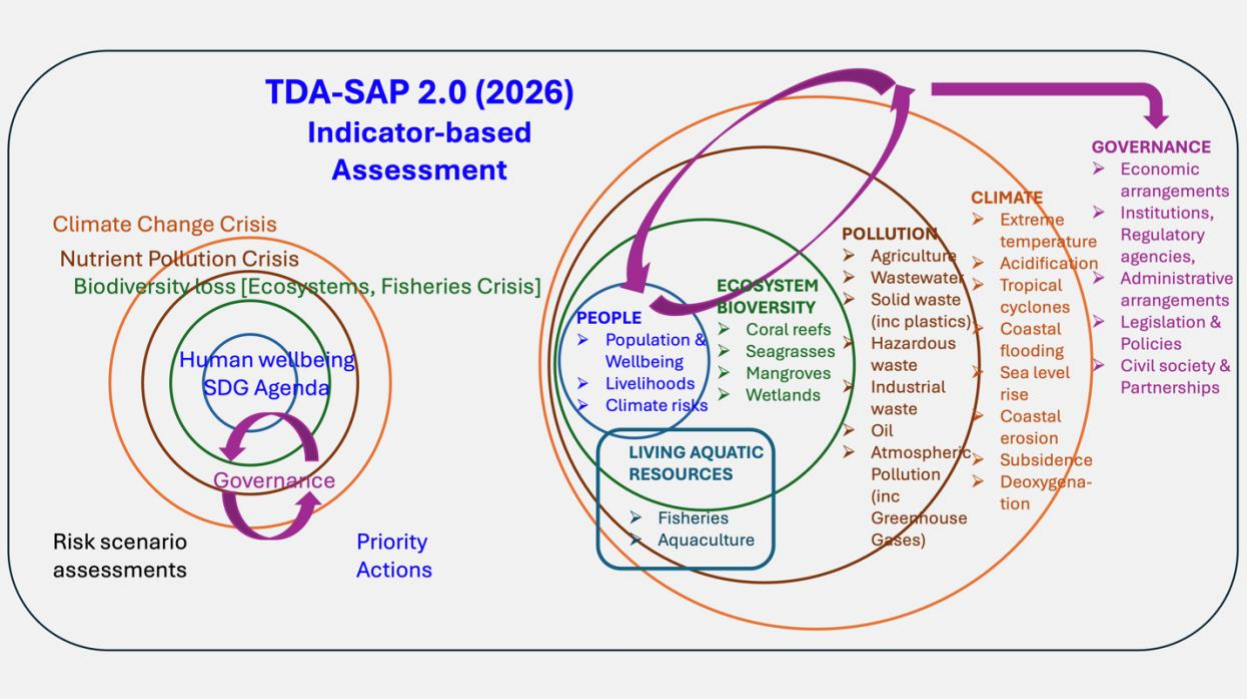

Figure 3.4 The Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis will use both quantitative and qualitative indicators in assessing six components of the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand. These components are People, Ecosystems, Living Aquatic Resources, Pollution, Climate and Governance. These integrated assessments, carried out at national and regional scales, will identify risks, and net benefits of priority actions to mitigate these risks.

To translate the assessed values of numerical indicators to risk levels, a comparable MIN-MAX Score Standardization Method may be used for directional indicators. Not all quantitative indicators are directional, so a subset of indicators across all six system components may be used to measure risk across comparable units of study, at national and regional scales (see Figure 2.5).

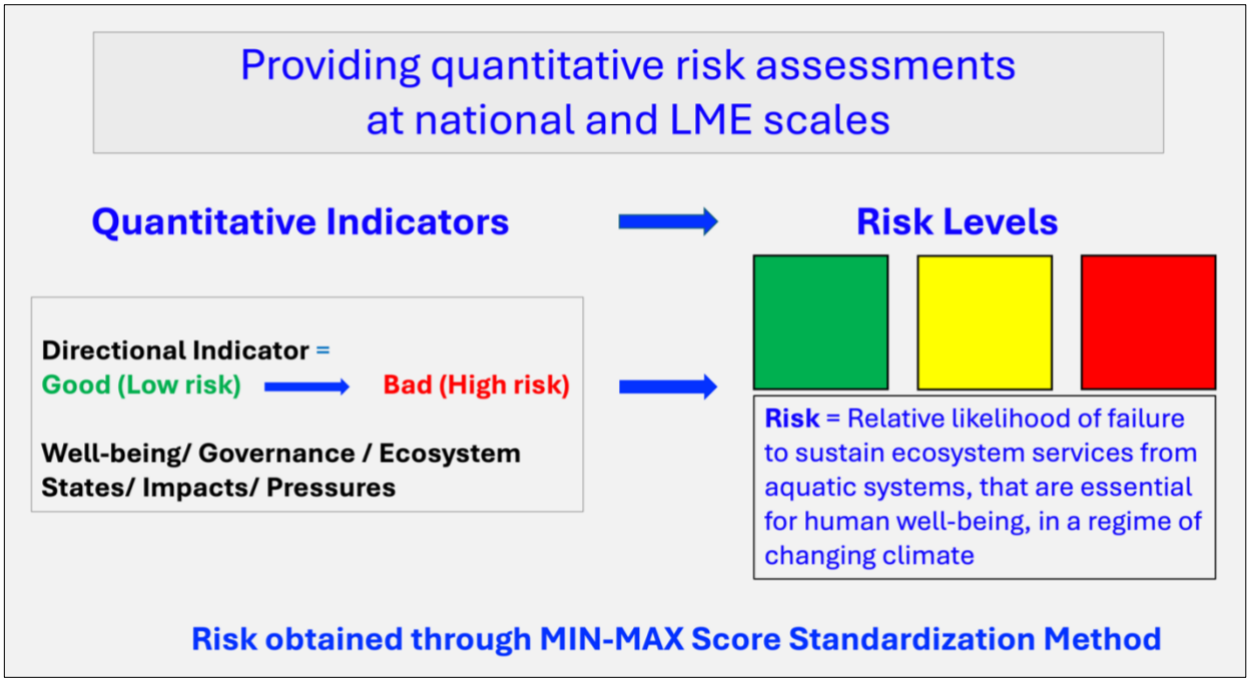

Figure 3.5 Assessed quantitative indicators that are directional can be used to convert assessed levels to risk levels where risk is designed as the relative likelihood of failure for coastal ecosystems or a large marine ecosystem to sustain ecosystem services that are essential for human and ecosystem well-being in a regime of changing climate.

4 PARTICIPATORY PROCESS FOR IMPLEMENTING TDA-SAP 2.0

The development of a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis is primarily technical in nature and can be completed by experts doing their analysis in isolation. However, the intent does not end with the completion of the analysis. The aim is to foster collective ownership of the analysis and to use it as the basis for developing a detailed action plan that includes the gamut of legislation, policy development, and the participation of civil society to effect environmental change. The following sections describe how this may be achieved in the TDA-SAP 2.0 exercise.

4.1 Engaging expert and management networks at national and regional scales in the TDA-SAP process

Figure 3.1 provides an overview of how the preparation of the TDA and SAP reports at scale are envisioned to roll out, highlighting how each step interacts as this describes transboundary features of the environmental system states at scale, in the case of both National and Regional TDA Reports. National SAP reports provide valuated intervention priorities based on the net benefits these provide as determined by experts and with concurrence of stakeholders, and which are endorsed by National Ministers. Regional SAP reports articulate valuated actions, which will be submitted for endorsement by COBSEA participating countries during their Inter-Governmental Meeting (IGM) in 2026.

One of the main highlights to be had out of multi-scalar transboundary analysis is the consistency (or inconsistency) with which transboundary environmental concerns would be ranked at national and regional scales. Despite the use of objective numerical indicators, the participatory ranking may influence the identification of actions and interventions. Convergent rankings would augur a higher degree of collaboration.

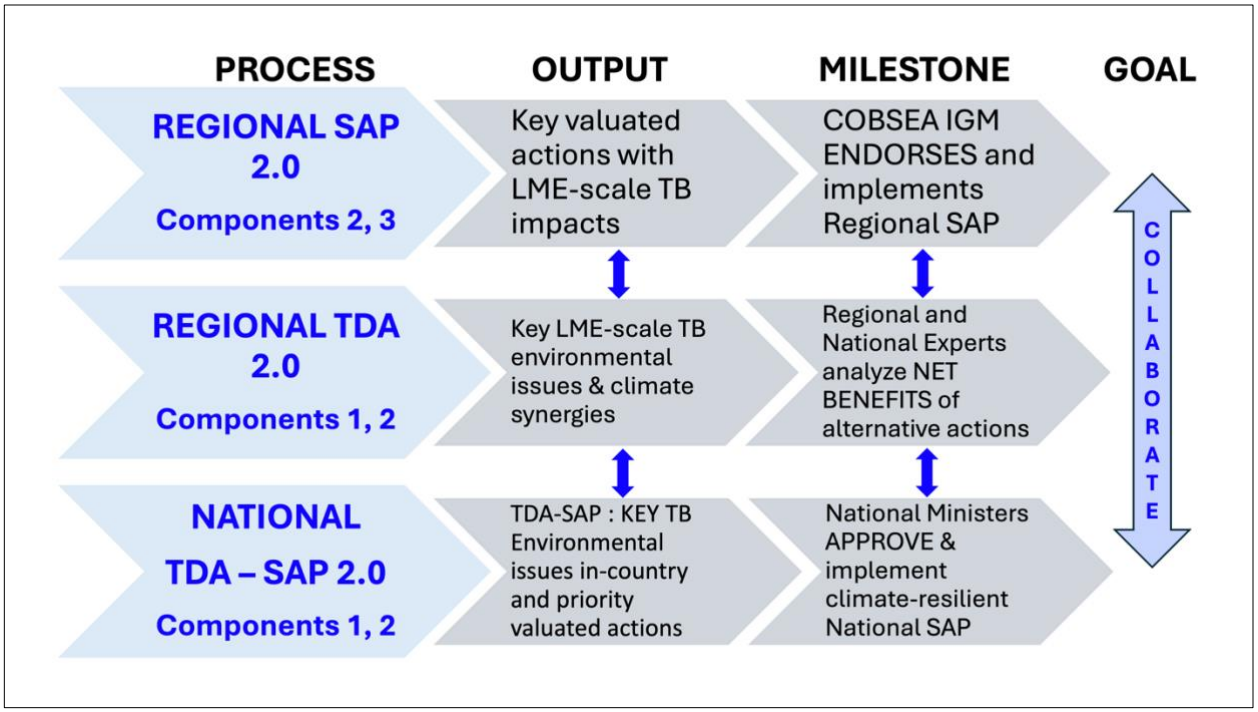

Figure 4.1 Processes, deliverables and milestone achievements envisioned in the implementation of the TDA-SAP exercise. The engagement of expert and management networks at national and regional scales aims to enhance the collaborative nature of managing transboundary environmental issues. Components refer to the three Project Components in Section 1.0

4.2 Targeted deliverables to contribute to Regional Environmental Governance in the COBSEA Region

In October 2024, the SCS SAP Project held a Project Retreat to review the key deliverables that each Project Component would target (Figure 3.2). Project Component 1 identified SAP lessons learned from activities implemented since 2018 as a key contribution. For Component 2, the completion of the TDA-SAP 2.0 is a core deliverable. Mindful of the COBSEA endorsement in 2026, Component 2 renamed SAP 2.0 as SEA StARS (Seas of East Asia Strategic Actions for Resilient Sustainability). Project Component 3 focused on a regional financing mechanism called SEA PUFFER (Seas of East Asia Partnership United towards a Financing Facility for Environmental Restoration and Conservation) to deliver.

The lessons drawn by Component 1 contribute to both the National and Regional TDA. The financing mechanism, SEA PUFFER, is a key element of the Regional SAP. Component 2's SEA STAR provides the link for all project components to put in place an adaptive management practice in the COBSEA to analyze environmental states, and determine key mitigating actions, implementing and monitoring these to identify those which are effective. Such a practice, done in an iterative manner, allows for adaptation, which is crucial in a changing climate regime.

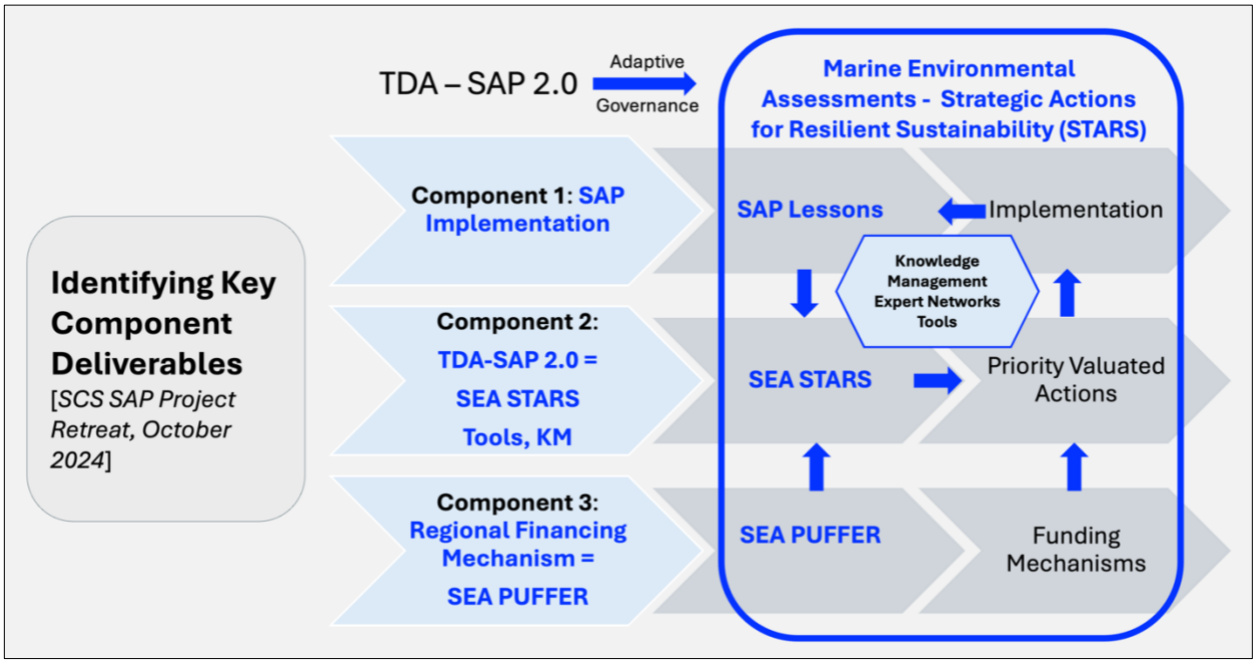

Figure 4.2 During the SCS SAP Project retreat held in October 2024, key deliverables were identified for each project component. Drawing lessons in implementing SAP activities is a key deliverable for Component 1. For Component 2, TDA-SAP 2.0 was renamed as SEA StARS (Seas of East Asia Strategic Actions for Resilient Sustainability), including analytical tools (economic valuation, marine spatial planning, benefit-cost analysis) and data required to build a Knowledge Management Platform. In Component 3, regional financing mechanism to support the implementation of strategic actions was key and named SEA PUFFER (Seas of East Asia Partnership United towards a Financing Facility for Environmental Restoration and Conservation).

4.3 Progress to date

Having laid out the concept and multi-scalar process involved in the preparation of the TDA and SAP reports at national and regional scales in Parts 1 and 2 above, this section presents an overall workplan with which to track progress. Figure 3.3 details the timelines for TDA and SAP reports according to scale.

Project TDA-SAP Team Formation

The Project TDA-SAP Team was formed by January 2025 with the hiring of consultants occurring in a staggered fashion. The lead consultant, Liana Talaue McManus, (TDA-SAP Concept, Process, Socioeconomics, Climate) was hired in July 2024; Megan Knight (Governance), November 2024; Somboon Siriraksophon (Fisheries), December 2024; Gil Jacinto (Pollution), January 2025, and Si Tuan Vo (Ecosystems), in place as Project Scientific Technical Adviser.

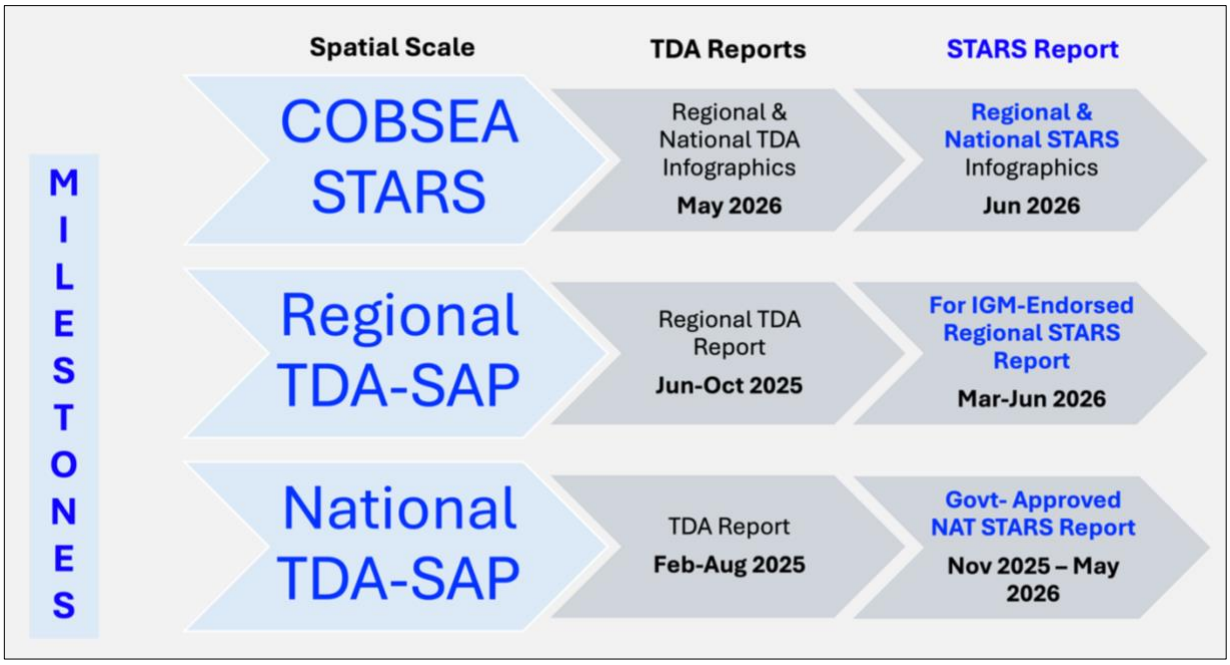

Figure 4.3 The workplan at national and regional levels are detailed including the timelines for the TDA and SAP Reports. All will be submitted to the COBSEA to obtain the endorsement of the COBSEA participating countries for the Regional SAP report, for COBSEA to incorporate these among the actions it will implement.

Facilitating the preparation of the National TDA and SAP Reports

To initiate the work, the Project TDA-SAP Team developed an Indicator Guidance Pocket in January 2025, which was released to National TDA-SAP Teams on February 3, 2025. The Project Coordinating Unit identified the National TDA-SAP Team members. Six 3-hour Zoom meetings to cover the six SAP Project participating countries were conducted in February 2025 to introduce the TDA-SAP concept and process. Two 3-hour follow-up Zoom meetings

to track progress in indicator assessment are scheduled in April 2025. Finally, an in-person meeting is scheduled in October 2025 (Hanoi, Viet Nam) for National TDA Reporting (Figure 3.4).

The National SAP Reports will be initiated through six 3-hour Zoom meets in November 2025, with a view to completing these including National Ministerial endorsements by May 2026. These will be submitted to the COBSEA IGM in June 2026. It is envisioned that the preparation of National TDA and SAP reports can remain a best practice at the national level as an invaluable capacity to undertake adaptive environmental management. These can be used to report on international commitments such as the SDG Agenda, the CBD and Climate commitments.

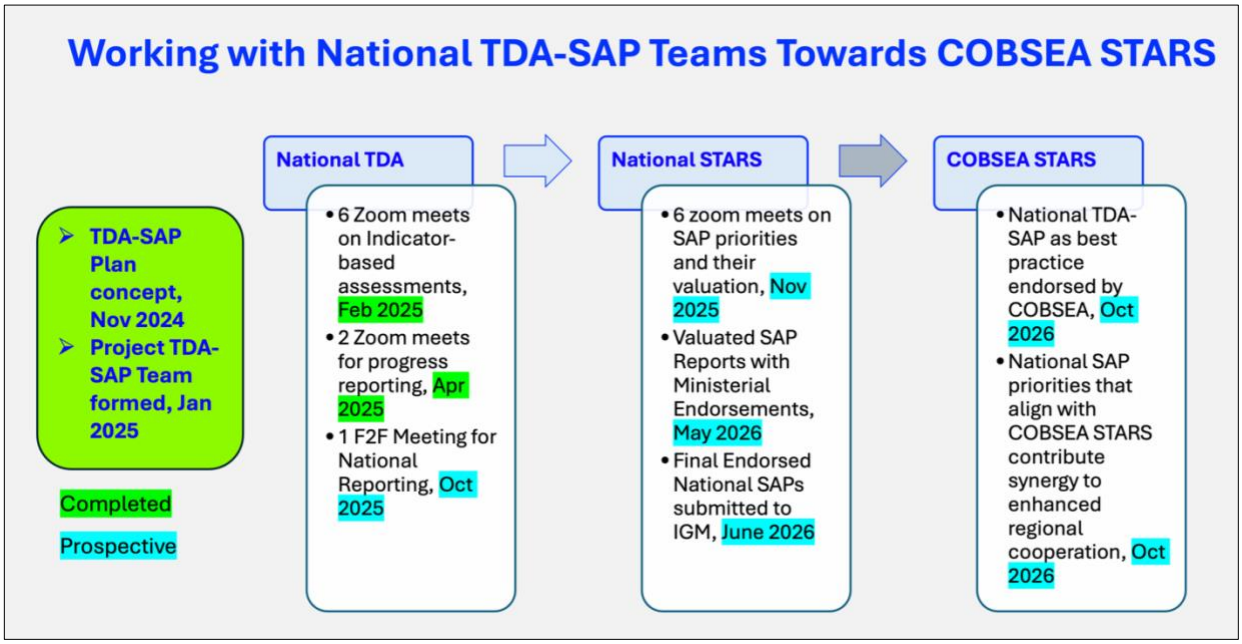

Figure 4.4 The detailed activities that have been completed and to be undertaken to facilitate the preparation of the National TDA and SAP reports, are shown.

Facilitating the preparation of the Regional TDA and SAP Reports

In March 2025, the PCU convened a meeting of two Regional Working Groups (Ecosystems Management and Management of Land-based Sources of Pollution) that have been established at the beginning of the SCS SAP Project in 2018. Prior to the meeting, their Terms of Reference were reviewed in the context of the TDA-SAP process, and their potential role in this participatory process is detailed in Figure 3.5. A 3-hour Zoom meeting was conducted, during which two draft reports were presented by Dr. Si Tuan VO, inputs for which were solicited from the regional experts with the objective to initiate drawing lessons, and which comprise the major deliverable for Project Component 1. These lessons also serve as major inputs to the National and Regional TDA Reports. Members of the Project TDA-SAP team provided overviews of how the TDA-SAP components are assessed using indicators.

How may the **Regional Working Groups for Ecosystems Management and Management of Land-based Sources of Pollution** provide critical inputs to the **TDA-SAP 2.0**?

Potential roles of the Regional Working Groups
1. **Assess** the quality, temporal and spatial coverage, and updated **status of databases** for land-based pollution and ecosystems, in collaboration with national databases of SAP participating countries. (for TDA 2.0)
2. Periodically **assess the scientific bases and procedures for determining targets** for land-based pollution mitigation and ecosystem management, **within the context of warming and variable climate**. (for SAP 2.0)
3. **Provide periodic and quantifiable targets** of land-based pollution mitigation and of ecosystem management for consideration in the SAP Project, and in SAP 2.0, with progress being assessed every four years or as considered appropriate. (for SAP 2.0)
4. **Conduct periodic assessments at a regional scale of the status of land-based pollution and coastal ecosystems of the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand** to determine progress toward management targets, and the effectiveness of management actions in a regime of **warming climate**. (for TDA 2.0)
5. **Determine the ecosystem and economic gains/ losses resulting from successes/ failures in meeting management targets**. (for TDA 2.0)
6. **Propose strategies to improve the governance capacity** of the regional mechanisms to meet ecosystem and economic targets while enhancing the mitigation of land-based pollution and ecosystem management in the COBSEA region under a **warming climate regime**. (for SAP 2.0)

Figure 4.5 The role of Regional Working Groups in preparing for the Regional TDA and SAP reports, is vital.

Figure 3.6 details the facilitation of the Regional TDA Report preparation with three three-hour Zoom meetings in June to July 2025. These meetings will obtain the insights of National Experts on the results of regional assessments of the six system components (Socioeconomics, Ecosystems, Fisheries, Pollution, Climate and Governance) that will be conducted by the Project TDA-SAP team. A follow-up Zoom meet in August 2025 aims to synthesize the results, with the goal of completing the Regional TDA Report by October 2025. This will be presented during an in-person meeting in Hanoi in the same month.

For the Regional SAP preparation, three 3-hour Zoom meetings in March 2026 will be convened to engage the National Thematic Experts and the Regional Task Force on Economic Valuation in identifying actions to mitigate risk scenarios and provide preliminary assessment of net benefits they may contribute. A follow-up Zoom meeting in the same month aims to complete the valuation of net benefits of identified actions in March, and which will be finalized in April 2026. In May, a meeting with the COBSEA Secretariat will be convened to prepare an illustrated summary for policy makers, and which will be submitted in June for the COBSEA IGM in October.

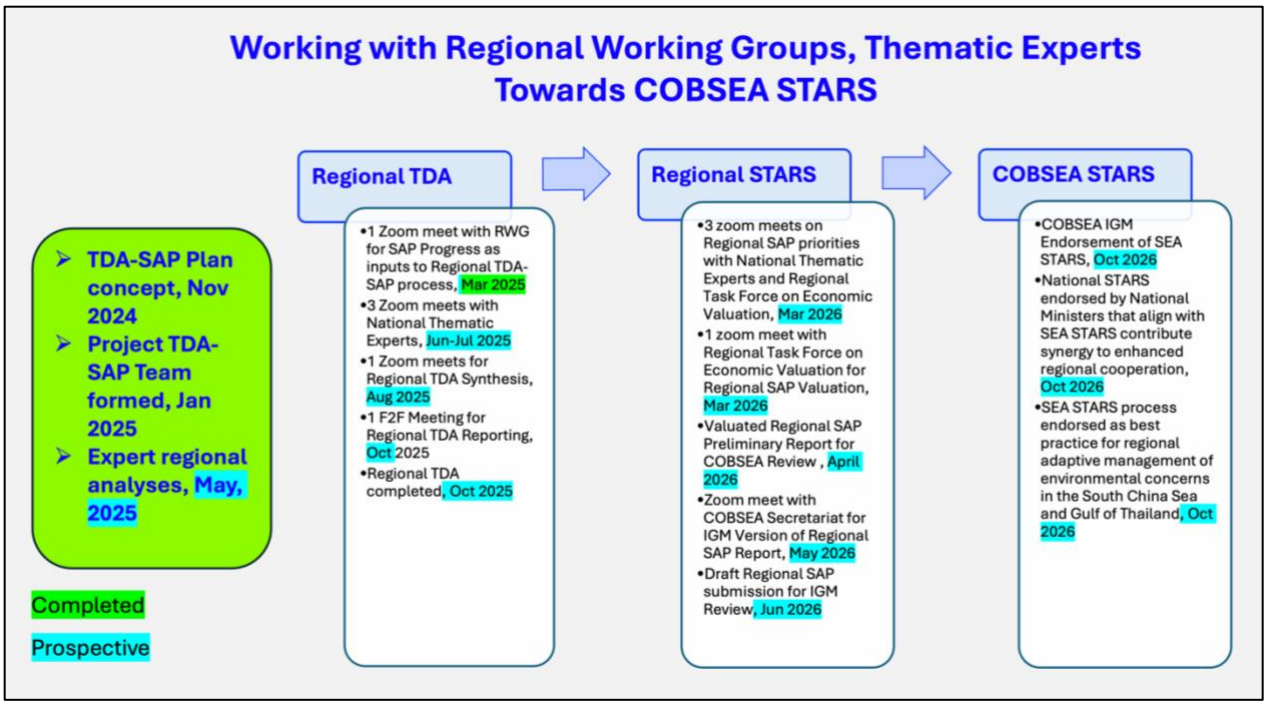

Figure 4.6 To facilitate the preparation of a Regional TDA and SAP report, Regional Working Groups, Thematic Experts and the COBSEA are engaged.

Support from the Project Coordinating Unit

Throughout the TDA-SAP process, the PCU supports the Project TDA-SAP Team by taking charge of communications, and logistics involved in convening both remote and in-person meetings. In addition, the PCU facilitates the exchange and archival of digital documents, presentations, video recordings, meeting minutes and action points, in its role as document curator and gatekeeper. Given the intensively participatory nature of facilitating the TDA-SAP process, the PCU has been an invaluable partner.

4.4 Risks and Sustainability mechanism: COBSEA as a Regional Seas Programme of the UNEP

The success of the TDA-SAP process in being adopted by the SCS SAP Project is determined largely by the ability of participating countries to commit to the deliverables at the project component level. Because of variable project contractual obligations and ongoing restructuring of government functions, three countries are delayed in forming their respective National TDA-SAP teams. As work progresses in Year 2025, adjustments will be made to see if additional facilitation is needed, the extent for which is too early to gauge after only the first quarter.

As initially outlined during the Project Retreat held in October 2024, the TDA-SAP process can potentially seed a best management practice in the COBSEA Region and among its

participating countries (Figure 3.7). An adaptive and iterative process of environmental assessment – action priority setting – action implementation – environmental assessment can be set in motion, both at national and regional scales. Such has the potential to create an effective synergy to ensure resilient ecosystems and sustainable quality of human well-being around transboundary seas in the COBSEA region. The existing scientific and management expert networks that have been formed by the SCS SAP Project are precious human resources that can be tapped by the COBSEA for their continued contribution towards collaborative environmental management.

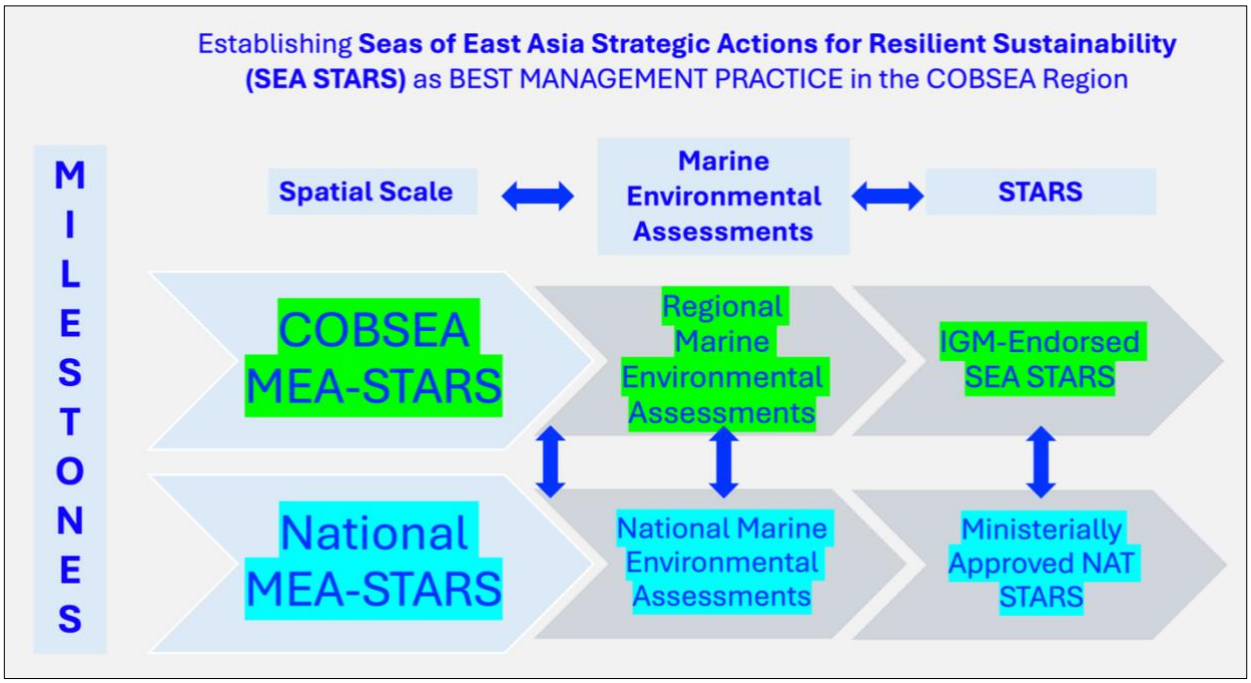

Figure 4.7 The TDA-SAP process is envisioned to evolve into the process of conducting integrated marine environmental assessments as basis for identifying key actions that allow countries and large marine ecosystems to become resilient and sustainable even in the face of climate change. The process allows for tighter alignment between national and regional institutions In addressing transboundary and shared environmental concerns.

4.5 Required actions by the SCS SAP Project Steering Committee

The comments, insights and advice of the members of the Project Steering Committee on the concept, process, progress and challenges in delivering the products of the TDA-SAP 2.0 exercise, are crucial to realizing the goals of the SCS SAP Project. More significantly, these will be invaluable in helping seed a legacy of collaborative environmental management that is foundational to a climate-resilient and sustainable COBSEA region.

4.5.1 Updates as of 2025 April 30

On April 22 and 23, 2025, the National TDA-SAP teams presented their progress on assessing indicators to describe the states, changes, and current patterns in the coastal geographic areas adjacent to the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand, within their respective national

geographies. Figure 3.8 summarized the country progress reports. Despite the tight timelines, five country teams reported only minor challenges in carrying on indicator-based assessments. Vietnam is handicapped by the current restructuring of government functions. Among the five TDA components, the lack of data, in spatial and temporal coverage has been challenging for assessing coastal ecosystems.

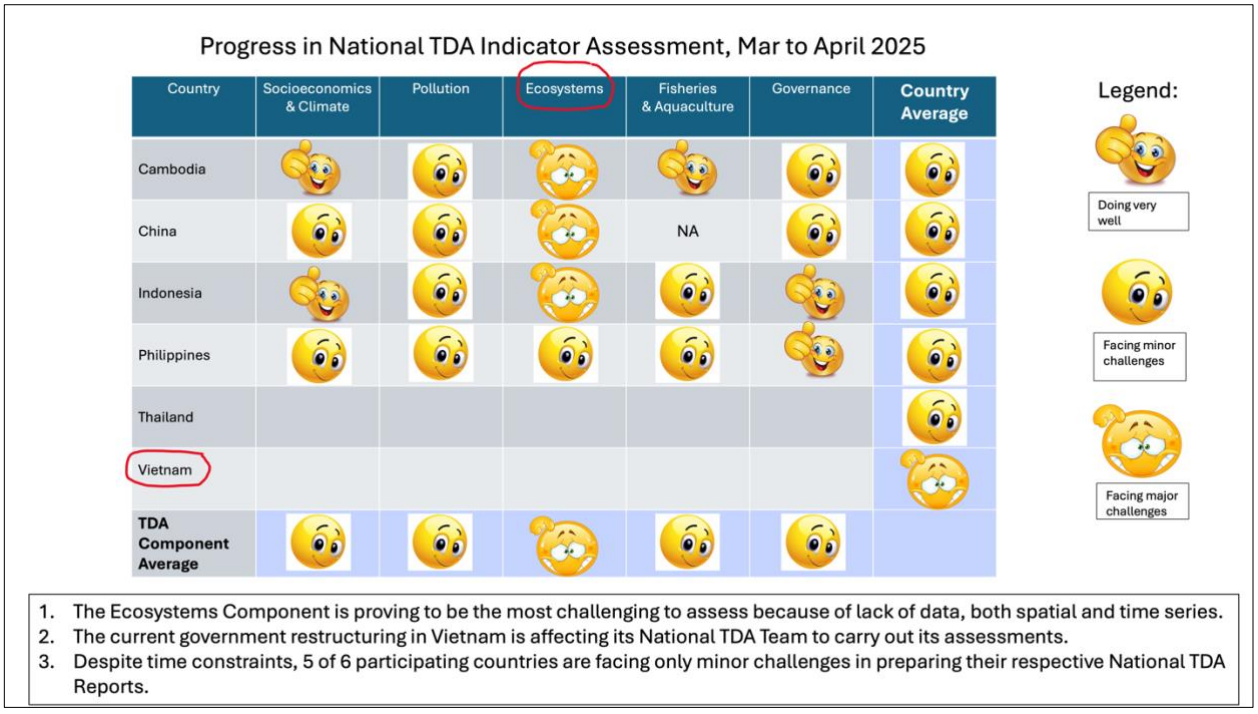

Figure 4.8 Progress in indicator assessment carried out by National TDA Teams for the period March to April 2025.

4.5.2 Specific requests to the PSC

In October 2025, it is anticipated that six National TDA Reports, as well as the Regional TDA Report will be presented to the SCS SAP Project in Hanoi, Vietnam. Following this critical meeting, the development of the Regional Strategic Action Plan will commence. To optimize the face-to-face meetings planned for the Regional Working Groups on Ecosystems and Land-based Pollution, as well as those for the Regional Task Force on Economic Valuation, the TDA-SAP Team requests that the schedule for these meetings be synchronized with SAP meetings intended to provide important inputs for the development of the Regional SAP in 2026. These meetings have been identified to: (1) critique the effectiveness of SAP implementation in current sites, and to identify those which yielded significant successes, and those which faced major barriers; (2) prioritize and where possible complement targets of priority actions at national and regional levels to harness transformative synergies, including the development of best practices and policies at multiple governance scales; (3) undertake economic valuation of major and strategic actions to establish the net benefits these actions may yield at site, national, and regional scales. The latter analysis will be pivotal in securing national and regional endorsements of these proposed action plans.