



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

First Meeting of the SCS SAP Regional Working Group on Mangroves

Teleconference, 1 December 2021

REPORT OF THE MEETING



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1. Opening of the Meeting

1.1 Welcome Address

1. Dr. Virginie Hart, SCS SAP Senior Project Manager, welcomed all the participants to the first Regional Working Group meeting on mangroves of SCS SAP project. She was grateful that some of the original focal points joined the meeting as this working group was originally established in the first SCS project. The main purposes of this meeting were to: revitalize this working group; agree on mandates and responsibilities for the next three years; share some past works and present plans; and look and discuss together the next steps of the project. This working group needs to integrate other initiatives in the region to ensure no duplication of efforts. There is also a need to consider additional challenges and issues such as impacts of plastics, climate change and its impacts on mangroves including new technologies and tools on monitoring and communications. She thanked everyone despite the difficulties and looked forward to the open and dynamic dialogues and discussion, particularly recommendations in facing the challenges on mangrove management and restoration.

2. Mr. Isara Chanrachkij provided some welcoming statements on behalf of Ms. Malinee Smithithee, SEAFDEC Secretary General and Chief of the Training Department. He stressed the importance of mangrove habitat and the global concern this habitat is facing due to both natural and man-made activities. SEAFDEC as the Executing Agency of the project is responsible for regional activities and hosting the Project Coordination Unit. Also, SEAFDEC is one of the inter-governmental organizations in fisheries to support Southeast Asian countries for sustainable utilization and management of both fisheries and human resources. Thus, SEAFDEC welcomes and supports the project by linking environmental component and fisheries component. He thanked everyone and looked forward to receiving the fruitful result of the meeting which would be the first step to conduct effective implementation of project activities to sustain mangrove habitat in the future.

1.2 Introduction of Members

3. Mr. Reynaldo Molina introduced the members of the regional working groups from Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand. There was no representative from Viet Nam. He also introduced the national lead agencies and project teams and experts including representatives from other regional organizations and initiatives. The participant list is attached as Annex 1 of this report.

2. Organization of the Meeting

2.1 Designation of Officers

4. The draft rules of procedure for the Regional Working Group on Mangroves (RWG-M) requires the election of a Chairperson, Vice-Chair and Rapporteur. The membership of the RWG-M will be formally established at the first meeting of the working group, which will elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chair from among its members. 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. The Vice-Chair shall act as Chairperson of meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.

5. The RWG-M members were invited to elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. There was no Rapporteur elected since the meeting was online and being recorded. Following deliberation, Mr. Yu Yunjun, Representative of China and Mr. Nyoto Santoso, Focal Point for Mangrove in Indonesia were elected as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, respectively.

2.2 Organization of Work

6. Dr. Virginie Hart presented the summary facts of the project, which includes the background and objectives, components and outputs of the project. The project supports the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme with the idea of a regional coordination approach in implementation as the GEF Large Marine Ecosystem approach tends to look at multi-country, multi-issue that covers land-based sources of pollution, habitat restoration, policy and legislation reform and capacity building. Component 1 aims to reduce habitat degradation and loss via national and local reforms to achieve the Strategic Action Programme targets for coastal habitat management in the South China Sea through Outcome 1.1 which is to establish appropriate forms of sustainable management for 860,000 ha of mangrove.

7. According to the Terms of Reference of the Regional Working Group on Mangroves (RWG-M), adopted at the 1st Project Steering, the purpose of RWG-M has the responsibility “for coordinating 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”.

8. The objectives of this First Meeting of the Regional Working Group on Mangroves were to: present and discuss the SAP targets for mangroves, and selected sites; present the compiled information provided on the status of SAP implementation between 2008-2020, which will be further developed into a publication in 2022; present the compiled information on the national revisions to targets and sites, building upon recent and ongoing projects, initiatives and best practices; and discuss executing arrangement and workplans for 2021-2022. To access the organization of work presentation, please click [\[LINK\]](#).

3. Adoption of the Meeting Agenda

9. Dr. Virginie Hart presented the draft annotated agenda and list of documents prepared by the Secretariat as document SCSSAP RWG-M.1/2 and invited members of the RWG-M for comments and consideration including any additional agenda that could be considered. With no further comments, the RWG-M members agreed and adopted the agenda. The annotated agenda is attached as Annex 2 of this report.

4. Consideration of the Terms of Reference of the Regional Working Group

10. Dr. Virginie Hart presented the document “SCSSAP RWG-M.1/3: Provisional Terms of Reference for the Regional Working Group on Mangroves UNEP/GEF SCS SAP Project” based on the terms of reference of first SCS project working group, which was presented in the Steering Committee meeting in June 2021.

11. The RWG-M members were invited to consider, amend and adopt the Terms of Reference as outlined in the document. There was a suggestion to add an item where all the habitat working group can have an opportunity to interact/interconnect with each other, including demonstrating the benefits of having several habitats in one site and how it affects the overall ecosystem at the site. A question was raised concerning the definition of mangrove ecosystem and other habitats including the delineation of its areas. An inquiry was made on Section 5.1 whether the outcome target of 860,000 ha includes Malaysia or not as they are not participating in the project, which may have to be revised. A concern was also raised on Section 5.4 concerning the establishment of National Mangrove Committees, which may take time to form as it requires involvement of other ministries and approval at higher level due to the word “committee”, and if other terms could be used such as “working group” or “task force”. Another concern is the short duration of two years to develop and implement legal and policy reforms, which is a long process.

14. Dr. Hart explained that the overlapping of the different habitat working groups will be captured at the level of the Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC). This committee combines all habitats including the fisheries focal area together. The Fisheries Refugia Project will be invited in each of the RWG habitat meetings. The Regional Science Conference also brings together all the working groups and stakeholders at regional and national levels. As to the definition of habitats, Dr. Tuan suggested that the issue be discussed in the RSTC meeting where all the representatives from each habitat will be attending. As to the outcome target, the PCU noted that the target, following verification, does not include Malaysia, and based on the submitted draft National Implementation Reports, the country targets appeared less than the outcome target.

15. On the legal reforms, Dr. Hart explained that there is a number of activities that can still be executed within the duration of the project like support in the review and initiation of national policies and legislation reforms on mangrove management, which does not have to be completed within the project. On the national mangrove committee, Dr. Hart clarified that the project has several levels of coordination and implementation mechanism at national level, starting with the high level National Inter-Ministerial Committee, followed by the National Technical Working Group, and followed by the national habitat committee which is a technical working group involving all key stakeholders, NGOs, and research institution.

16. Following deliberations, the RWG-M members agreed to revise the draft terms of reference based on the discussions and suggestions and reshared with the members of the working group. This includes the rewording of the national committee to working group or task force. The revised terms of reference is attached as Annex 3 of this report.

5. Review the SAP Targets for Mangrove Focal Area

17. Dr. Vo Si Tuan presented the review of SAP targets for mangroves, which was developed during the first phase of the South China Sea project, and form part of the SAP approved by all participating countries during its Steering Committee meeting in August 2008. However, the SAP was not immediately implemented due to various reasons. In November 2016, the SCS SAP Project was endorsed by GEF for implementation.

18. He presented the SAP regional and national targets on area (ha) including the target sites for SAP implementation at national level. Based on the review, the outcome target of 860,000 ha needs should be discussed and assessed by the working group as one mangrove area can be intervened by different activities and give different output. Thus, the number of 860,000 ha should be revised by the working group with inputs from countries. Another is Output 1.1.3 reform of laws and regulations for the sustainable use which has a target of 602,800 ha, bigger than the total area of 26 sites selected. This means that the reform is not just for the site but also covers the national level.

19. Dr. Hart stressed that the targets in the SAP and the targets of the SCS SAP Project is important in terms of being able to monitor the progress of the SAP and the project through quantifiable targets as required by GEF like Outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.4 and 1.1.5. Other Output like 1.1.3 on reforms is difficult to quantify and may need to identify indicative targets that are acceptable and can be reported to GEF. Output 1.1.6 on monitoring of indicators should be coordinated among all sites in each country, meaning the target hectares will be the total hectares of all sites.

20. A suggestion was raised on the revision of targets and sites which should consider and support current legislations, policies and initiatives of the government on mangrove management and conservation. Dr. Tuan noted the revision of targets for some countries based on submitted available inputs. To help countries in the revision of the targets and sites, an evaluation of SAP implementation was done using a template where countries can explain and justify why the change of targets and sites. If all targets have been achieved and based on current priorities, countries can change to other sites. Based on the evaluation, countries will be able to revise the targets for the next 2-3 years.

6. SAP Evaluation at the National Level During 2008 – 2021

21. Dr. Vo Si Tuan presented the evaluation of SAP implementations of the mangrove focal area during 2008-2021. The purpose of the evaluation was to provide evidences on proactive contribution of the participating countries in the implementation of the SAP and their national action plans. Based on the evaluation, countries can calculate their co-financing contribution as well as provide updated baseline for developing relevant activities for the SAP SCS Project. The evaluation can help adjusting targets and outputs at the national level. Moreover, the evaluation will be finalized for publication in 2022.

22. The presentation was based on the submitted National Implementing Reports from Cambodia, Philippines and Thailand. There was no information from China, Indonesia and Viet Nam since they have not yet submitted their national implementation reports. A summary of key achievement from 2008 to 2021 was also presented using the Philippines as example. The summary of key achievement would be helpful for each country in revising their targets for the next 2 years.

23. Dr. Virginie Hart presented the document SCSSAP RWG-M.1/4 Evaluation of SAP Implementations of the Mangrove Focal Area During 2008-2021 which is a template for evaluating the SAP implementation. She stressed the importance of the document as it will provide an updated baseline of the SAP targets since its adoption in 2008 where a lot of activities have been executed, resulting to the achievement of some targets. Also the GEF requested that an evaluation report for each SAP be made. The template, which can be used to evaluate the SAP implementation from 2008-2021, will not just report the targets but will also provide information on SAP implementation in terms of site management, stakeholder involvement, rehabilitation, among others. The countries were encouraged to go through the template carefully and if there are questions, can directly contact the PCU. The submission date will be discussed and agreed at the end of the meeting.

24. A concern raised is the difficulty in completing the evaluation template as many of the required information will come from other ministries. Dr. Tuan clarified that completing the template will not be difficult if there is a national mangrove committee or working group to work and provide the information, and suggested to the RWG-M members to establish a national working group that will review and complete the document. A national team member also suggested to use the NIR development process and guidance document that was shared at the third inception phase meeting on 15 March 2021 to help countries in their SAP evaluation process. To access the SAP implementation evaluation document (2008-2021), please click [[LINK](#)].

7. Reviews and Revision of SAP Targets at the National Level

25. Dr. Virginie Hart introduced the document SCSSAP RWG-M.1/5 SAP Implementation of the Mangrove Focal Area (2021-2023). The document was not immediately shared with the countries as there is a need to include all information from recent NIR submissions from countries. At the beginning of the project, there was an agreement to review and revise the targets and sites under Outcome 1.1 or the sustainable management of mangroves. The revisions will be reflected in the National Implementation Reports, which would be the basis of the Project Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) with each SAP execution agency and UNOPS. The document is a working draft that includes a summary of key information from the NIRs that still needs to be finalized once all NIRs are completed from all participating countries.

26. As to the development and progress of the NIRs, Cambodia, Philippines and Thailand are well advanced with draft activities, workplans and budget. These countries were supported by UNOPS in terms of funding and consultancy support. China, Indonesia and Viet Nam are still under preparation. In the revision of targets, there has to be a clear rationale behind the targets and sites. In cases where the SAP targets have been met, reduced targets or additional sites could be proposed. Overall the project has a commitment to the GEF to report on meeting the SAP targets before the project started as well as the revised targets of the project.

27. The project was late in terms of the finalization of the NIRs. The core information of NIRs needs to be completed and included in the PCAs for signing with the SEAs. This includes information on sites and targets, activities, budget and workplans. The PCAs must be finalized and signed by early 2022 to enable the transfer of funds to start execution. There has been a call to recruit national coordinators to support the development and finalization of the NIR including national coordination and execution.

28. The RWG-M was requested and encouraged to support the PCU in reviewing and commenting on the activities and finalization of the documents presented. The PCU is open to suggestions on regional and national experts that might be needed to support the work of the mangrove working group.

29. Dr. Hart presented in details the SAP implementation document, and requested the countries to carefully review and complete the document which already contained some information to help and guide the countries. There is a need to agree on the next steps to finalize the document including the NIRs so that the legal agreements could be signed early next year. To access the SAP implementation document (2021-2023), please click [[LINK](#)].

30. Some clarifications were raised on the selection of sites, if there is a mechanism or agreement in the selection of proposed sites. Another is the reporting of sites that were not included in the list of SAP original sites but were able to meet the output of the SAP, if these sites could be reported as country accomplishments.

31. Dr. Virginie Hart clarified that the NIR development guidance document shared at the third inception phase meeting in March 2021 provides the mechanism for the revision of sites which includes some justification such as the original sites have already achieved the SAP targets or in line with the country's national planning and priorities, there is a need to select new sites. The revision and selection of sites should also be the result of national consultation at the level of the inter-ministerial committee and national working group. Dr. Vo Si Tuan added that in the SAP evaluation template, there are three options for the revision of sites, all requiring some justifications. As to the reporting of sites not in the original SAP sites, Dr. Hart clarified that the reporting could be done in two levels, the overall achievements at the national level and the specific achievements for each site. This is clearly described in Table 4 of the Evaluation of SAP Implementation document. Thus, the sites that were not listed in the SAP can be reported as part of the overall achievement at the national level.

8. National Presentations on SAP Implementation and Future Planning

8.1. National Presentations on SAP implementation

32. Mr. Yu Yunjun, Chairperson of the RWG-M invited National Mangrove Focal Points and representatives from Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam to present key achievement in SAP implementation between 2008-2021 including the current status of consultations towards the revision of national targets and sites and NIRs.

33. Mr. Meas Rithy of the Ministry of Environment of Cambodia presented the key achievements in the implementation of SAP which includes the establishment of institutional and legal frameworks concerning mangroves including two institutional reforms to control and manage protected areas including marine and coastal area. In terms of achieving the SAP targets, the government has implemented at national level, a total area of 72,400 ha of mangroves under sustainable management, covering all coastal provinces. Specific output targets includes a total area 13,558 ha of mangroves as national parks and protected areas; 8,820 ha of mangroves as non-conversion and sustainable use areas; reforms of laws and regulations through management plan and zoning; replanting of mangroves by various sectors through special events; enrichment planting using the biodiversity corridor protection area; and monitoring of proposed sites. In the implementation of SAP, several best practices were identified such as institutional management, laws and regulations, communities' participation, collaboration from developed partners and eco-tourism promotion. The challenges were conversion of

mangrove forest for coastal aquaculture and salt pan production and other uses; climate change issues such as sea-level rise; inappropriate development activities and unsustainable collection of coastal aquatic resources.

34. With the regard to project implementation, MOE has organized consultations and site visits including gathering data and information on targets and sites. The ministry proposed to have more sites to cover Koh Kong province, Preah Sihanouk, Kampot, Kep, Koh Rong, Peam Krasaop, Koh Kapi and Koh Kongkroa. The activities proposed under the project are: Amendment on law and regulations and enforcement on mangrove management; Enhancing capacity on mangrove management and conservation; Conducting national mangrove forest inventory; Zoning and demarcation; Pollution control; Improve local livelihood through tourism and ecotourism; Develop mechanism for financial sustainability; and Mangrove restoration. As a final consideration in project implementation, Mr. Rithy proposed the following: Sustaining the project achievement including financial mechanism to take ongoing activities after project completion; Protection and restoration of mangrove habitat including research and monitoring; Pollution control; Public awareness and Campaign including promoting eco-tourism practices to the local level. To access Cambodia presentation, please click [[LINK](#)].

35. Dr. Qinghua Chen of the South China Institute of Environmental Sciences of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment presented the status, threats and restoration of mangroves in China. Mangroves are mainly distributed in Guangdong, Guangxi and Hainan provinces with a total area of 31,694 ha which is 95% of all mangroves in China are found in these provinces. From 1950 to 2019, the mangrove area in China has changed and decreased in 2001 and then increased significantly in 2019. China is the only country in the world that has seen a steady increase in mangrove distribution. At present, there are 53 major mangrove protected areas, covering 26,093 ha of mangrove area accounting to 74% of China's mangrove area. Since 2008, China has planted a total of 865 has of mangroves in the five SAP sites - Shankou, Fangchenggang, Qinlangang, Dongzhaigang and Futian. Many restoration works have been conducted in these areas.

36. Threats to mangroves in China include sea and land barrier, aquaculture pollution, biological invasion, and domestic and floating garbage. Due to these threats, several hectares of mangroves were lost in China. In terms of mangroves restoration, China has developed and issued technical guidelines and regulations on mangrove conservation and management. There are 12 officially published standards and regulations for mangrove afforestation in China. The "National Major Ecosystem Protection and Restoration Project Master Plan (2021-2035)" was also issued and implemented to clarify key tasks for mangrove protection and restoration in the future. This includes the plan to restore the country's 18,800 ha of mangrove forests and plant another 9,050 ha in the next five years. Several action plans on mangroves restoration were also formulated through projects and initiatives. China's special action to protect and restore mangroves in the South China Sea, covering Guangdong, Guangxi and Hainan provinces intends to plant and restore 8,500 ha and 9,200 ha of mangroves, respectively. To access China presentation, please click [[LINK](#)].

37. Mr. Nyoto Santoso, SEA Mangrove National Focal Point of Indonesia presented the status of SAP implementation. Indonesia's mangrove area of 860,000 ha are still in good condition and under the status of Conservation Forest, Protection Forest and Production Forest. Mangrove management and rehabilitation are covered by Presidential Decrees, Instructions and Regulations. Since 2019, the Government of Indonesia has implemented a policy to accelerate mangrove rehabilitation in the mangrove area with a total target of 89,690 ha. Status of SAP sites such as Angke Kapuk and Ngurah Rai are getting better. The other sites Belitung is threatened by illegal mining while Bengkalis and Batu Ampar are threatened by illegal cutting for charcoal. In terms of achieving the SAP targets, the government has implemented the following: Declaration of 20,000 ha of mudflat inside the Sembilang National Park as protected area for feeding ground for migratory/water birds; issuance of Presidential Instructions stopping all conversion of mangrove areas; committed to rehabilitate around 87,000 ha of mangrove areas in North Sumatra, Riau, Riau Islands, Bangka Belitung and West Kalimantan

provinces; carried out mangrove management activities such as forest cover monitoring, capacity building, community empowerment, training and law enforcement in the SAP sites.

38. Best practices on mangrove management presented were the Angke Kapuk in Jakarta where restoration and management of 328 ha have been completed, and the Batu Ampar site where an area of 65,585 ha of mangroves (around 33,235 ha of protected forest and 26,000 ha of production forest) have been maintained and in good condition. Activities carried out at Angke Kapuk were community awareness and nurseries/rehabilitation, environmental education interpreter training, mangrove restoration, management plans and ecotourism, with funding support from private sectors as part of corporate social responsibility. In Batu Ampar, the production forest under private concession does not allow mangrove cutting and only encourage the use of timber forest products including carbon trade. Challenges include raising awareness and development of environmental education activities, improvement of management infrastructure, controlling illegal cutting of mangroves for charcoal use, development of alternative livelihoods, formation of the Batu Ampar Mangrove Area as “National Mangrove Center” and strengthening local authority institution.

39. In the implementation of the project, many consultation activities were conducted at the national level. For the selection of sites, three mangrove sites were proposed: 1) Angke Kapuk in Jakarta; 2) Batu Ampar in West Kalimantan Province; and 3) Ngurah Rai in Bali Province. Activities proposed to achieve the project outputs include: capacity building, fund raising, preparation of Mangrove Sites Management Plan and funding requirements including publication, awareness raising and reporting. As a final consideration in project implementation, the sustainability of mangrove site management will be realized if: 1. There is sustainability and high commitment of stakeholder support (Government, Private, University, Community); 2. There are actors who actively coordinate, initiate, and facilitate mangrove management activities (restoration, rehabilitation, training, monitoring and research, development of ecotourism activities and National Timber Forest Products; 3. There are human resources and institutions that are responsible for managing the mangrove site; 4. There is sufficient budget support; 5. There are programs, activities, services and products that are produced, attractive and marketable; and 6. The management activities are carried out transparently and easily accessible to stakeholders. To access Indonesia presentation, please click [[LINK](#)].

40. Ms. Maria Katrina Apaya of the Biodiversity Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources presented the status of SAP implementation on behalf of the Philippine Mangrove National Focal Point. From 2008 to 2021, the Department has notable laws, policies and issuances like Republic Acts, Department Administrative Orders and Technical Bulletins, and Presidential Proclamations related to mangrove management. In terms of achieving the SAP targets, majority of the activities were/will be implemented in the Palawan province. Specifically, a total of 1,471 ha of mangrove areas will be proclaimed as protected areas; 4,357 ha were designated as non-conversion/sustainable use areas with reformed laws and regulations implemented; replanting of 590 ha of deforested mangrove areas; and enrichment planting of 32 ha of mangrove areas. Best practices observed in the course of the preparation of the national implementation report is the regular consultation and monitoring with the concerned agencies to maintain a proactive participation of a broad range of stakeholders including local communities in achieving the targets under mangrove component. Challenges and issues encountered includes the unsustainable and illegal utilization of mangrove resources; lack of public awareness on the importance of the mangrove forests and their resources; overlapping functions and conflicting policies and legislation of different national government agencies and local government units; less involvement of stakeholders in the management of mangrove resources; institutional constraints in the management and administration of the Philippine mangrove forests; lack of a comprehensive research, development program and technology on the production, rehabilitation, utilization, economics, marketing and other social aspects of mangrove management; and absence of harmonized institutional data on the extent and cover of mangrove areas.

41. Series of consultations were conducted like workshops, writeshops and small group meetings to orient and consult the concerned regional and field offices of this project as well as to update the national

implementation of the project. On the site selection, based on workshops and consultations, some sites were dropped due to insignificant targets, lack of information and stakeholder participation while some targets were reduced to fit into the available budget. The proposed mangrove sites are: Busuanga, Coron, San Vicente, Ulugan Bay and Quezon, all in Palawan Province. Proposed activities to be undertaken include the review of the status of the process in establishment of the PA and identify the support needed to complete the process; review status of ECAN Management Plan for Busuanga and propose recommendations; identification of priority sites for replanting and enrichment planting, procurement of technical and nursery services and conduct actual planting activities including maintenance and protection activities. Final consideration to ensure the sustainability of the project includes a well-crafted management plans of the established/proclaimed protected areas will ensure ecological, institutional and socio-economic sustainability of management over the target areas. Activities such as replanting and enrichment planting are targeted in consonance with other DENR projects so maintenance will be ensured and regulated pursuant to the Department's guidelines and policies. Reform of local policies/ordinances for coastal habitat management will result in regulatory framework required to guide longer-term sustainability. To access the Philippines presentation, please click [[LINK](#)].

42. Ms. Disaorn Aitthiariyasunthon of the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment presented the status of SAP implementation on behalf of the Thailand Mangrove National Focal Point. The trend of mangrove areas in Thailand has increased from 2008 to 2020, currently with a total area of 277,000 ha. Several laws, policies, plans and cabinet resolutions have been issued and used as mechanism for mangrove management and conservation in Thailand. In terms of achieving the SAP targets, a total of 11,212 ha were proclaimed as National Parks and Protected Areas; out of the total national parks and protected areas, 40,818 ha is undergoing the process as conservation mangrove forest area; five sites have enforced the Promotion of Marine and Coastal Resources Act of 2015 including improving the regulation of private sector reforestation; and a total of 25,524 ha with established monitoring mechanism. Lessons learned were as follows: 1) The success and increase of mangrove forest restoration is due to the government policy and the cooperation of people, other agencies, and private sectors; 2) Improving the law and enforcing Promotion of Marine and Coastal Resources Act of 2015 provides more opportunities for coastal communities and people from all sectors to participate in mangrove forest maintenance, thereby enabling more efficient integration; and 3) The challenge in managing mangrove forests is to balance economic use and environmental conservation by providing appropriate income for local communities from a resource base while maintaining the abundance of mangrove forest areas.

43. In the implementation of the project, DMCR convened internal coordination and meeting of stakeholders to define the SCS SAP project implementation guidelines and select operational sites including planning operational activities. Proposed SCS SAP mangrove sites are: Welu River Estuary in Chanthaburi Province, Bandon Bay in Surat Thani Province and Pak Phanang Bay in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. Proposed activities include survey, zoning and demarcation; awareness raising campaign and promotion of eco-tourism and fishery nursery; promotion of community activity and development of local products and marketing; assessment of the effectiveness on the management of mangrove conservation area; support for mangrove plantation and seed orchard nursery; promote the replantation and rehabilitation of mangroves in the pilot site; develop training curriculum and conduct training; establish the Urban Forest committee with the development of master plan; establish patrol teams and training on SMART Partrolling; establish management mechanism and monitoring and strengthen on-site management, coordination and communication. In conclusion, the SAP implementation in Thailand will follow and implement the SCS SAP output targets in the three selected mangrove sites. To access Thailand presentation, please click [[LINK](#)].

44. Dr. Virginie Hart expressed appreciation on the country presentations and noted that volume of information available to evaluate the SAP implementation. A general question raised to all the countries is the status of national committees and working groups, if they have been established and how it fits

with the national structure in coordinating the works on mangroves. The RWG-M members were requested to provide information on these national working bodies after the meeting.

8.2. Best practices in Mangrove management

45. Mr. Nyoto Santoso presented the best practice on mangrove management in Indonesia entitled Case Study in Angke Kapuk Management. The area of Angke Kapuk forest is about 1,144 ha, of which 831 ha was converted for settlement. Inside the settlement area, around 327 ha of mangroves were maintained consisting of: Protected Forest (44 ha), Wildlife Reserve (25 ha), Tourism Forest (99 ha), Nursery Area and Arboretum (110 ha) and Other Land Uses (49 ha). In 1994, a nature tourism mangrove business permit for 99 ha was granted to a private sector. In 1998, the Muara Angke Nature Reserve was changed to Muara Angke Wildlife Reserve. From 1996 – 2008 the Indonesian Mangrove Foundation started the mangrove rehabilitation in collaboration with forestry and environment offices together with private sector and non-government organizations. Main activities conducted were mostly on mangrove restoration and monitoring, stakeholder and coordination meetings and fund raising where many private sector groups contributed as part of CSR. At the moment, the proposed institution and management arrangement has not been finished as the authority and control for each mangrove status (protected forest, wildlife reserve, etc) belongs to different agencies including the local government. The cooperation between central and local governments and budget support are weak and insufficient. The proposal is to have only one institution and name with the local government taking the lead with full authority. From the Angke Kapuk experience, the sustainability of mangrove site management will be realized if: 1) There is sustainability and high commitment of stakeholder support (Government, Private, University, Community, NGO); 2) There are actors who actively coordinate, initiate, facilitate mangrove management activities (restoration, rehabilitation, training, monitoring and research, development of ecotourism activities and timber forest products); 3) There are dedicated human resources and institutions that are responsible for managing the mangrove site; 4) There is sufficient budget support; 5) There are programs and activities, services and products that are produced, attractive and marketable; and 6) Management activities are carried out transparently and easily accessible to stakeholders. To access Indonesia best practice presentation, please click [[LINK](#)].

46. Other members of the RWG-M shared information on good practices on mangrove restoration in China such as the protection and maintenance of mangrove saplings, and community involvement in mangrove restoration and management at Peam Krasop in Cambodia such as planting, protection and maintenance including management of site for ecotourism.

47. Dr. Vo Si Tuan informed the RWG-M members that an information document on best practices has been prepared and shared with the countries, which was also uploaded on project website. The document, which includes information on the first SCS project, provided best practices on habitat and pollution management including transboundary issues. The members were requested to review the document and share information not only from the SCS project but also from different sources. Dr. Tuan suggested to have an activity next year to plan and synthesize all best practices information prior to its publication in 2022. He also suggested to check the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Center (WCMC) on data and information sharing and management including the IOC/WESTPAC meeting on the UN Decade on Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

9. Execution Arrangement and National Work Plans

Dr. Virginie Hart presented the follow up actions as discussed and agreed in the meeting. The Project Coordination Unit will:

- Share NIR guidance documents that was used on the 15 March 2021 meeting for the finalization of the NIR and for the finalization of the SAP evaluation and implementation documents.

- Take note of the revision of the RWG-M terms of reference based on comments provided. Then share the revised version by 10 December 2021 for final comments, to be received by 24 December 2021. Then adopt the document via silent procedure.
- Draft the meeting report by 17 December 2021, after all the meetings have been conducted.

At national level, the RWG-M members are requested to:

- Submit pending NIRs by 17 December 2021 as there is a need to close the NIR before the end of this year. This is the baseline to move the national implementation.
- Reconfirm the Mangrove focal point (chairs of Mangrove committee/working group) by 17 December 2021 as some of the countries have not yet established their mangrove focal points.
- Status on the establishment and operation of the national mangrove committees/working groups and share workplan and information on planned meetings. It is recommended to include/invite the Fisheries Refugia project focal points and experts as well as key mangrove initiatives and projects.
- Establish the National Technical Working Group (NTWG) with all habitat focal points and conduct first meeting to ensure synergies between habitats.
- Establish the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) and conduct the first meeting to confirm workplan and budget of NIRs.
- Complete the RWG-M. 1/4 (SAP Evaluation 2008-2020) document and discuss at national mangrove committees/workshops by 31 December 2021.
- Complete the RWG-M 1/5 (SAP Implementation 2021-2023) document and discuss at national mangrove committees/workshops by 31 December 2021.

The indicative next steps and meetings for 2022 are as follows:

- January 2022: Signing of legal agreements (PCAs) between UNOPS and SAP Specialized Executing Agency (SEA) by January 2022.
- February 2022: First Regional Scientific and Technical Committee (RSTC) Meeting, back to back with workshop/training on best-practices, tools and guidelines, based on compiled information at national, regional and international levels.
- April 2022: Second RWG-M Meeting, planned to be organized twice a year (online and face to face), to present and discuss the 1) Methodology for revising the National Mangrove reports, 2) Progress in the execution of activities, 3) Monitoring and data management, 4) Any revision to work plans and budge, and 4) Compiling best-practices
- June 2022: Second Steering Committee Meeting

Dr. Hart also presented some consideration in the implementation of the project as follows:

- Assessment on travel restrictions whether meetings in first half of 2022 can be held in person.
- Assess and identify what additional support is needed from PCU in terms of executing project activities such as capacity and training needs.
- Review the key impacts on mangroves and consider these impacts and new issues such as plastics and climate change.
- Compilation of mangrove resources from regional and global level
- Launch of the Small Grants Program in 2022 for NGOs and community organizations to implement community-based projects/activities. The details and call for proposal are being prepared and will be shared with participating countries. The IMC and NTWG will lead the review and approval of applications.

To access Dr. Hart presentation on follow up actions and next steps, please click [\[LINK\]](#).

10. Any Other Business

Dr. Virginie Hart clarified that this agenda is intended to discuss additional items raised in Agenda 3 Adoption of the Agenda. There were no issues and additional items raised in Agenda 3.

11. Closure of the Meeting

Mr. Yu Yunjun expressed thanks to all the RWG-M members and the Project Coordination Unit for the active participation and organization of the regional working group which is very important for all participating countries and governments. He encouraged the countries to hurry up and implement the schedule and activities of the project.

ANNEXES

Annex 1	List of Participants
Annex 2	Annotated Agenda and List of Documents
Annex 3	Revised Terms of Reference

Annex 1. List of Participants

National Focal Points / Representatives

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National Team and Experts

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UN and Other Regional Organizations and Projects

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Project Coordination Unit

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Annex 2. Annotated Agenda and List of Documents

Wednesday 1 December 2021, 13.00 – 17.00 Indochina time (ICT)

12.40-13.00 Participants are requested to login to the zoom meeting at least 10 meetings before the meeting.

1. Opening of the meeting	
13.00-13.10	1.1 Welcome address The SCS SAP Project Senior Manager will open the meeting and deliver the welcome address.
13.10-13.20	1.2 Introduction of members The Secretariat will be invited to introduce the members of the Mangrove Working Group and other participants.
2. Organization of the meeting	
13.20-13.30	2.1 Designation of officers In accordance with the draft rules of procedure for the Regional Working Group on Mangroves, participants will be invited by the Secretariat to elect a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur.
13.30-13.40	2.2 Organization of work The Chairperson will invite the Secretariat to brief participants on the proposed organization of work, the list of documents available to the meeting and administrative arrangements for the conduct of the meeting. The meeting will be conducted online in plenary. The meeting will be conducted in English.
3. Adoption of the meeting agenda	
13.40-13.50	The Chairperson will invite participants to consider the draft agenda prepared by the Secretariat as document SCSSAP RWG-M.1/2, propose any amendments or additional items for consideration, and adopt the agenda.
4. Consideration of the Terms of reference of the Regional Working Group	
13.50-14.20	The Chairperson will invite the Secretariat to introduce document SCSSAP RWG-M.1/3: Provisional Terms of Reference for the Regional Working Group on Mangroves UNEP/GEF SCS SAP Project, previously circulated. The RWG-M is invited to consider, amend and adopt the Terms of Reference as outlined in this document.
5. Review the SAP targets for mangrove focal area	

14.20-14.30	The Chairperson will invite the Secretariat to briefly present the SAP targets on mangroves and the objectives and outputs of the SCS SAP project.
6. SAP evaluation at the national level during 2008 - 2020	
14.30-14.40	6.1. Introduction and rationale The Chairperson will invite the Secretariat to briefly introduce document SCSSAP RWG-M.1/4 Evaluation of SAP Implementations of the Mangrove Focal Area During 2008-2021.
7. Reviews and revision of SAP targets at the national level	
14.40-14.50	7.1. Introduction and rationale The Chairperson will invite the Secretariat to briefly introduce document SCSSAP RWG-M.1/5 SAP Implementation of the Mangrove Focal Area (2021-2023).
8. National Presentations on SAP implementation and future planning	
14.50-16.00	8.1. National Presentations on SAP implementation The Chairperson will invite National Mangrove Focal Points from Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam to present key achievement in SAP implementation between 2008-2021 and the current status of consultations towards the revision of national targets and sites and NIRs.
16.00-16.30	8.2. Best practices in Mangrove management Presentations from invited experts on best practices on mangrove management in the region.
9. Execution arrangement and national work plans	
16.30-16.40	The Chairperson will invite the Secretariat to present the next steps in the RWG towards execution of activities under the SCS SAP, including next meeting of the RWG-M.
10. Any other business	
16.40-16.50	The Chairperson will invite members to consider and discuss any items of business introduced under agenda item 3.
11. Closure of the Meeting	
16.50-17.00	The Chairperson will call for a formal motion to close the meeting.

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Meeting documents

The Regional Working Group on Mangroves members are required to review these documents

SCSSAP RWG-M 1/1	Provisional Agenda
SCSSAP RWG-M 1/2	Annotated Provisional Agenda
SCSSAP RWG-M 1/3	Provisional Terms of Reference for the Regional Working Group on Mangroves UNEP/GEF SCS SAP Project
SCSSAP RWG-M 1/4	Evaluation of SAP Implementations of the Mangrove Focal Area During 2008-2021
SCSSAP RWG-M 1/5	SAP Implementation of the Mangrove Focal Area (2021-2023)
SCSSAP RWG-M 1/6	Report of the Meeting

Information documents

SCSSAP RWG-M 1/Inf.1	Draft List of Participants
SCSSAP RWG-M 1/Inf.2	Best practices in habitat management
SCSSAP PSC.1/Inf.3	Cambodia Summary Profile (draft)
SCSSAP PSC.1/Inf.4	China Summary Profile (draft)
SCSSAP PSC.1/Inf.5	Indonesia Summary Profile (draft)
SCSSAP PSC.1/Inf.6	Philippines Summary Profile (draft)
SCSSAP PSC.1/Inf.7	Thailand Summary Profile (draft)
SCSSAP PSC.1/Inf.8	Vietnam Summary Profile (draft)

Reference documents

SCS SAP full project document (see www.scssap.org)

SCS Strategic Action Programme (see www.scssap.org)

SCSSAP IP 3/5 3rd Regional Inception Phase Meeting – NIR Development and Completion
[\[LINK\]](#)

SCSSAP PSC.1/9 1st Steering Committee Meeting of the UNEP/GEF Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand (SCS SAP) Project [\[LINK\]](#)

Annex 3. Revised Terms of Reference of the RWG-Mangrove

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/Working Groups 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/Working Groups 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, which will be for the period of 12 months (unless otherwise agreed). 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/Working Groups shall serve as the principal source of national scientific and technical data and information to the RWG-M.

4. MEETINGS OF THE REGIONAL WORKING GROUP

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/Working Group. The first meeting of the RWG-M will agree on the detailed activities, workplan and timetable for the first year project execution.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The RWG-M shall:

5.1 Provide direction, and strategic guidance to the National Mangrove Committees/Working Groups 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/Working Groups, 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/Working Groups, 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/Working Groups 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 finalization of the National Implementation Reports