



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

*Second Regional Inception Phase Meeting
10.00 – 12.30 Bangkok Time, Friday 4th December 2020*

SCS SAP UNEP GEF QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT (Q3 2020)

**United Nations Environment Programme
Quarterly Progress Report¹**

Reporting Period: From: 01 July 2020 To: 30 September 2020

1. PROJECT GENERAL INFORMATION

Project Title:	Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand				
Executing Agency:	United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC)				
Project partners:	To be completed after Inception Phase				
Geographical Scope:	Regional				
Participating Countries:	Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam				
Project actual start date	12/31/2017 - SEAFDEC 05/30/2018 - UNOPS	Project intended completion date	30 June 2023	Project expected completion date	30 June 2023

¹ Progress report is due Within 15 days of the end of the quarter to which they refer, i.e., on or before 15 April, 15 July, 15 October and 15 January, the Executing Agency shall submit to UN Environment quarterly progress reports for all components.

2. PROJECT PROGRESS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

2.1 Narrative of project progress during the past semester²

- The Inception phase of the SCS SAP is fully underway with the support of participating countries to finalize detailed activities at the national and regional level and in spite of the challenges of COVID-19, all partners and national teams are able to initiate initial actions. The First Inception Phase online meeting was held on Thursday 30th July 2020, with forty-five (45) participants from national lead agencies from Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam as well as implementing and executing agencies, UNEP, UNOPS, SEAFDEC, and the Inception Phase consultants (<https://scssap.org/9-uncategorised/136-2030-agenda-sustainable-development-01>).
- Following the meeting, national teams organized their respective internal coordination and consultations with concerned agencies and institutions to discuss the project and inception phase activities. This includes the review and confirmation of national focal points of different project bodies including memberships, review and confirmation of intervention sites, and review and updating of the draft National Implementation Report (regarded as the national project document) to include activities, workplan and budget.
- Bilateral meetings were held with China (11th September 2020), Cambodia (21st September 2020), Philippines (23rd September 2020), Thailand (24th September 2020). Bilaterals with Indonesia and Vietnam are still pending
- At the regional level, the project organized bilateral meetings with national teams to guide and provide details of the inception phase activities. The project has prepared, in different stages of progress, the following: draft Regional Implementation Report detailing the activities for regional execution, draft contracts (Project Cooperation Agreements) for national execution, draft terms of reference for project staff and consultants, draft execution scheme between UNOPS and SEAFDEC, and documentation for the project inception/first steering committee meeting, including updating the project website at www.scssap.org.
- Re-nomination of regional and national committees and working groups underway in preparation of the first Inception Meeting to be held in January 2021 (COVID permitting).
- Web-site (<https://scssap.org/>) regularly updated.

UNOPS execution:

- In view of the continued COVID-19 crisis the coordination of the SCS SAP Inception Phase is supported by two consultants (Project Manager (Inception Coordinator) and Interim Project Management Support Analyst) who work remotely on agreed tasks from home.
- TORs and contracts under further development for support technical further development of national activities as part of the Inception Phase

² Briefly describe progress made during the previous six months highlighting major outcomes/benchmarks achieved during the period.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOU of cooperation between UNOPS and SEAFDEC under development • UNOPS project database risks and issue registry updated and key project documents uploaded;
SEAFDEC Execution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination between SCS SAP and Fisheries Refugia to align activities for SAP implementation • Office fully functional and equipped

2.2 Project implementation progress³

Outputs ⁴	Expected completion date ⁵	Implementation status as of end of reporting period expressed in %	Comments if variance ⁶ . Describe any problems in delivering outputs
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			
Outcome 1.1 Appropriate forms of sustainable management established for 860,000 ha of mangrove			
1.1.1 Declaration of 57,400 ha of mangrove as National Parks and Protected Areas	May 2022	3%	All participating countries are establishing national teams and preparing detailed execution activities and budgets as part of their National Implementation Reports (NIRs), including updated baseline information, stakeholders, projects initiatives, detailed site information, activities, workplans and budgets.
1.1.2 Designation and plans for the management of 166,600 ha of mangrove as non-conversion, sustainable use areas	May 2022	3%	
1.1.3 Reform of laws and regulations for the sustainable use of 602,800 ha of mangrove forest	May 2022	3%	
1.1.4 Replanting of 21,000 ha of deforested mangrove land	May 2022	3%	
1.1.5 Biodiversity increased for 11,200 ha of mangrove forest via enrichment planting	May 2022	3%	
Outcome 1.2 153,000 ha of coral reef at 82 priority sites managed sustainably by Yr 5, including a reduction in the decadal rate of degradation in live coral cover from 16 to 5%			Execution of national site-specific actions however is pending Inception Phase Meeting final adoption of activities, establishment of regional and national
1.2.1 Management capacity built for 82 coral reef sites	Nov 2022	3%	

³ Information provided in “Quarterly Expenditure Statement and Explanation of Expenditures Reported” should be in line with output/activity progress reported in this table.

⁴ Outputs and activities as described in the project logframe or in any updated project revision.

⁵ As per latest workplan (latest project revision). Based on 2018 project document and will be revised and adopted at 1st Steering Committee in January 2021

⁶ Variance refers to the difference between the expected and actual progress at the time of reporting.

Outputs ⁴	Expected completion date ⁵	Implementation status as of end of reporting period expressed in %	Comments if variance ⁶ . Describe any problems in delivering outputs
1.2.2 Management approaches (integrated, community-based, multiple use) improved at 82 coral reef sites	Nov 2022	3%	Steering Committees and working groups and contracts with co-executing agencies National teams organized their respective internal coordination and consultations with concerned agencies and institutions to discuss the project and inception phase activities. This includes the review and confirmation of national focal points of different project bodies including memberships, review and confirmation of intervention sites, and review and updating of the draft National Implementation Report (regarded as the national project document) to include activities, workplan and budget.
1.2.3 Management tools (licensing and permit systems, seasonal closures, zoning) developed and utilized to address key threats at priority sites	Nov 2022	3%	
1.2.4 Established mechanism for the monitoring of management, ecological and socio-economic indicators at 82 sites	May 2020	3%	
Outcome 1.3 Conservation, management and sustainable use of 25,900 ha of known seagrass area in the South China Sea by Yr 5			Bilateral meetings were held with China (11th September 2020), Cambodia (21st September 2020), Philippines (23rd September 2020), Thailand (24th September 2020). Bilaterals with Indonesia and Vietnam are still pending.
1.3.1 Twenty-one seagrass areas totalling 25,900 ha under sustainable management with supporting laws and regulations	Nov 2022	3%	
1.3.2 Amended management plans for 7 existing MPAs with significant seagrass areas, to include specific seagrass-related management actions	Nov 2022	3%	
1.3.3 Designation of 7 new Marine Protected Areas focusing on seagrass areas	May 2022	3%	
1.3.4 Established mechanism for monitoring management, ecological and socio-economic indicators at 21 sites	Nov 2020	3%	Each country will be supported in the coming months to fully finalize their National Implementation Reports by the end of 2020. Expected Completion dates are based on project document adopted in 2018 and will be revised at the 1 st Steering Committee meeting planned for January 2021.
Outcome 1.4 Integrated management of 783,900 ha of coastal wetland at 19 sites, including habitat restoration and protection strengthened at priority locations			
1.4.1 Integrated management plans developed and under implementation for at least 3 lagoons (26,818 ha), 9 estuaries (614,680 ha), 5 tidal flats (96,903 ha), 1 peat swamp (45,700 ha) and 1 non-peat swamp (9,808 ha)	May 2022	3%	
1.4.2 Declaration of at least 7 wetland areas with protection status (i.e. non-hunting area, nature reserves, protected areas, Ramsar Sites).	May 2022	3%	
1.4.3 Adoption of a regional estuary monitoring scheme and its national implementation	April 2023	3%	
Outcome 1.5 National and regional level cooperation in tracking results of SAP actions for coastal habitat management			

Outputs ⁴	Expected completion date ⁵	Implementation status as of end of reporting period expressed in %	Comments if variance ⁶ . Describe any problems in delivering outputs
1.5.1 National committees and regional networks of habitat specialists established under the SCS project revitalized and functioning	Nov 2022	3%	Countries in process to establish national committees
1.5.2 Mechanism to monitor and evaluate the impacts of SAP implementation and achievement of habitat targets operational [including agreement on standardized methods and guidelines for inventory and assessment]	Aug 2019	0%	To be initiated in Jan 2021
1.5.3 Community leaders and local government from priority habitat sites networked via national and regional round-table meetings to foster cooperation and knowledge sharing on achievements and best practices	April 2023	0%	To be initiated in Jan 2021
1.5.4 Biennial state of coastal habitat reports published	April 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021
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 and action planning			
2.1.1 Algorithms for the interpretation of remotely sensed information and data on coastal habitat associations and zonation developed and applied	April 2021	0%	To be initiated in 2021
2.1.2 Mechanism for collection and exchange of regional coastal habitat information and data established	April 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021
2.1.3 Role of coastal habitats of the South China Sea in the sequestration and storage of carbon quantified	April 2022	0%	To be initiated in 2021
2.1.4 Review of the potential impacts of sea level rise, climate change, and episodic events on coastal habitats of the South China Sea	April 2022	0%	To be initiated in 2021
2.1.5 Updated and adopted National Action Plans for mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass and wetlands, including enactment of supporting legislation where required	April 2022	0%	To be initiated in 2021
Outcome 2.2 Effective integration of regional science in the management of land-based pollution			
2.2.1 Nutrient carrying capacity model for the SCS marine basin used to communicate with decision-makers about the localized v. transboundary impacts of land-based pollution in the SCS	April 2019	0%	To be initiated in 2021
2.2.2 Total contaminant loading and carrying capacity of the SCS estimated via application of quantitative modeling and	April 2020	0%	To be initiated in 2021

Outputs ⁴	Expected completion date ⁵	Implementation status as of end of reporting period expressed in %	Comments if variance ⁶ . Describe any problems in delivering outputs
GIS-based techniques for seven heavy metals (Hg, Cd, Pb, Cu, Cr, As, Zn)			
2.2.3 Impacts of estimated heavy metal contaminant loadings defined, quantified and communicated to decision-makers	April 2021	0%	To be initiated in 2021
2.2.4 Characterization of heavy metal pollution hotspots	Aug 2021	0%	To be initiated in 2021
2.2.5 Quantification of effluent volumes and contaminant loadings from coastal aquaculture to the SCS marine basin	April 2022	0%	To be initiated in 2021
Outcome 2.3 Strengthened and harmonized national policies and laws, and supporting financial mechanism, for the management of land-based sources of pollution			
2.3.1 National best practices in waste water management, law enforcement, and community and industry participation in managing land-based sources of pollution documented and shared	April 2019	2%	Initial assessment in National Implementation reports underway
2.3.2 Review of legislative and institutional frameworks for land-based pollution management in participating countries	April 2020	0%	Initial assessment in National Implementation reports underway
2.3.3 Harmonized national Standard Operating Procedures for land-based pollution control and management [including agreed sediment, biota, & water quality criteria]	April 2021	0%	Initial assessment in National Implementation reports underway
2.3.4 Revised national/provincial policies and supporting regulations for land-based pollution developed, enacted and implemented by Yr 5	Aug 2021	0%	Initial assessment in National Implementation reports underway
2.3.5 Updated and adopted National Investment Plans for land-based pollution management in the SCS [Yr 5]	April 2022	0%	Initial assessment in National Implementation reports underway
2.3.6 Regional financial mechanism for land-based pollution management [Yr 5]	April 2023	0%	Initial assessment in National Implementation reports underway
Outcome 2.4 Improved national and regional values for the Total Economic Values of coastal habitats for use in development planning and decision-making			
2.4.1 Expanded datasets of economic valuation information on the goods and services of SCS coastal habitats	April 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021
2.4.2 Estimates of the value for the service provided by coastal habitats as nursery areas for coastal fish and crustaceans	April 2021	0%	To be initiated in 2021

Outputs ⁴	Expected completion date ⁵	Implementation status as of end of reporting period expressed in %	Comments if variance ⁶ . Describe any problems in delivering outputs
2.4.3 Estimates of economic losses of coastal ecosystem goods and services consequent upon coastal shipping accidents and pollution damage	April 2021	0%	To be initiated in 2021
2.4.4 Updated estimates of Total Economic Values for coastal habitats of the SCS and converted to 2017 value by means of the consumer price index	April 2022	0%	To be initiated in 2021
Outcome 2.5 Regionally appropriate tools and mechanisms to guide the development of sustainable management systems for coastal habitats and land-based pollution			
2.5.1 Regionally applicable standards and criteria for defining the sustainability of coastal habitat management systems, including documented models of sustainable use	April 2019	0%	To be initiated in 2021
2.5.2 Online catalogue of best practice management measures and technologies for sustainable use of SCS coastal habitats and land-based pollution management	April 2020	0%	To be initiated in 2021
2.5.3 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 study tours and exchange	April 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021
2.5.4 Expanded South China Sea online public awareness centre, including awareness packages for local adoption	April 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021
Outcome 2.6 Updated and Ministerially adopted Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Programme, including prioritization of national management actions to address climate variability and change			
2.6.1 National and regional level consensus on contemporary issues and problems, including the quantification of environmental compromises and the prioritization of problems (Yr 2)	April 2020	0%	To be initiated in 2021
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)	April 2021	0%	To be initiated in 2021
2.6.3 National and regional consultative process to develop updated Strategic Action Programme SAP for adoption at the Ministerial level (Yr 5)	April 2022	0%	To be initiated in 2021

Outputs ⁴	Expected completion date ⁵	Implementation status as of end of reporting period expressed in %	Comments if variance ⁶ . Describe any problems in delivering outputs
2.6.4 Prioritization of national management actions to address climate variability and change for incorporation into national policies and plans	Feb 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021
Component 3. Facilitating regional and national level integration and cooperation for implementation of the South China Sea Strategic Action Programme			
Outcome 3.1 Regional and sub-regional co-operation in the integration of scientific knowledge and research outputs with management and policy making			
3.1.1 Regional Scientific and Technical Committee of the SCS project functioning as a bridge between the scientific community and decision-makers [annual meetings]	Feb 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021
3.1.2 Knowledge exchanges between government and scientific community through biennial Regional Scientific Conferences	April 2022	0%	To be initiated in 2021
3.1.3 Best practice exchanges between local government officials and coastal managers on science-based management via annual Mayor's Round-Table meetings	April 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021
3.1.4 Memoranda of Agreement for joint management of 2 priority transboundary water areas agreed & implemented	Jan 2022	0%	To be initiated in 2021
3.1.5 Cooperation with the GEF fisheries refugia project and other relevant regional initiatives	April 2021	0%	To be initiated in 2021
3.1.6 Operational award program on best practices in coastal habitat and land-based pollution management for communities, local governments and industry [annual]	Feb 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021
Outcome 3.2 Capacity for civil society and community organization participation in SAP implementation strengthened via operational partnership with GEF SGP			
3.2.1 Cooperation with GEF SGP in the commissioning and implementation of an additional [#] of community-based projects for SAP implementation	April 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021
3.2.2 CSO & CO inputs elicited for planning and M&E of the SCS-SGP partnership via annual NGO forums	Feb 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021
3.2.3 Training program on science and management of SCS coastal habitats and resources for SGP proponents	April 2022	0%	To be initiated in 2021
Outcome 3.3 Relationships between central and local governments and the private sector strengthened and formalized			
3.3.1 Review of past and ongoing public-private partnerships for coastal management in SCS region	April 2020	0%	To be initiated in 2021

Outputs ⁴	Expected completion date ⁵	Implementation status as of end of reporting period expressed in %	Comments if variance ⁶ . Describe any problems in delivering outputs
3.3.2 Identification of opportunities for private sector investment (e.g. oil and gas, fisheries, tourism) in implementation of the updated SAP	April 2021	0%	To be initiated in 2021
3.3.3 Two partnership forums to facilitate cooperation with private sector on implementation of the updated SAP	April 2022	0%	To be initiated in 2021
Outcome 3.4 Revitalization of regional mechanisms for communications, knowledge exchange, and information and data management and sharing			
3.4.1 A variety of multi-media information and knowledge products based on SCS SAP implementation communications strategy	April 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021
3.4.2 Regionally appropriate knowledge tools developed to support decision-making and planning	April 2021	0%	To be initiated in 2021
3.4.3 The SCS project web portal <www.unepscs.org> and associated regional databases online, updated and linked to IW-Learn and other GEF Knowledge management systems	April 2023	5%	https://scssap.org/ web-site to replace original site
3.4.4 Active engagement with GEF IW:LEARN [1% of project resources] including participation in IW conferences and 3 experience notes	April 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021
Outcome 3.5 Agreed arrangements for strengthened regional cooperation in the management of the marine and coastal environment of the South China Sea			
3.5.1 Biannual meetings of the Regional Task Force on Legal Matters	April 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021
3.5.2 National Working Groups on established and functional	April 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021
3.5.3 Process for development of a proposed arrangement for regional cooperation defined and planned	April 2022	0%	To be initiated in 2021
3.5.4 National stakeholder inputs to drafting of instrument for strengthened regional cooperation facilitated via national consultations	April 2022	0%	To be initiated in 2021
3.5.5 Adopted instrument for strengthened regional cooperation	April 2023	0%	To be initiated in 2021

2.3 Action plan to address any project shortcomings.

This section should be completed if project progress was rated MS, MU, U or HU during the previous Project Implementation Review (PIR) or by the Mid-term Review/Evaluation.

Problem(s) identified in previous PIR	Action(s) taken	By whom	When
There have been no changes to the Risks and Assumptions identified during the preparation phase of the project. Hence, table 42 & 43 on page 165 of the Project Document is still valid. However, there are project management challenges identified as listed below.	See 3.3. All these risks are being fully integrated into Inception Phase of project.	Inception consultants Supported by UNOPS and SEADFDEC	Ongoing during and after Inception Phase
Re-engagement of project partners and national focal points, experts and stakeholders following delay between SAP adoption (2008) and SAP implementation	Inception Phase to ensure relevant stakeholders are updated on progress up to date and when the inception meeting is expected to be held.	Inception consultants Supported by UNOPS and SEADFDEC	July 2020 to December 2020
Delay in startup of the project due to departure of project manager in August 2019	Interim Inception Phase team (2 consultants) in place since April 2020 supported by UNOPS and SEAFDEC. Recruitment of Project Manager to be initiated	UNOPS	April 2020 (Interim Inception Phase team) Oct/Nov 2020 (Recruitment of Project Manager to be initiated)
COVID 19 disruption to Inception Phase	No travel possible since March 2020. All work has continued online and with the use of various platforms for teleconferencing. More regular teleconferences established to ensure smooth coordination.	Inception consultants Supported by UNOPS and SEADFDEC	Ongoing until travel is possible

2.4 Risk management

If internal or external risks were rated as **Substantial** or **High** during the previous Project Implementation Review (PIR) or during the Mid-term Review, please indicate what risk mitigation measures were implemented during the period and with what results:

Risk Statement	Action taken	By who	Date	Result

3. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

3.1. Please describe activities for monitoring and evaluation carried out during the reporting period⁷

No M&E activities have been completed for the concerned reporting period
--

4. INVENTORY OF STAFF, CONTRACTS, MEETINGS AND OUTPUTS

4.1 Staffing details of Executing Partner (Applies to personnel, experts, consultants paid by the project budget)

Functional Title	Nationality	Budget Line (1101, 1102, 1201,1301, etc)
Regional Project Coordinator (employed under the project until 1st August 2019)	Australian	Output 1: Project personnel (activities 1-3)
Project Inception Consultant	United Kingdom	Output 1: Project personnel (activities 1-3)
Project Management Support Analyst	Philippines	Output 1: Project personnel (activities 1-3)

⁷ Do not include routine project reporting. Examples of M&E activities include baseline data collection, stakeholder surveys, field surveys, steering committee meetings to assess project progress, peer review of documentation to ensure quality, mid-term review, etc.

4.2 Sub-contracts⁸

Name of contractee	Address	Budget Line (2101, 2201, 2301, etc)

4.3 Meetings⁹

Meeting type ¹⁰	Title	Venue	Dates	Convened by	Organized by	Number of participants	Report issued Yes/No	Language	Dated
	The First Inception Phase meeting	online	30 July 2020	PCU	PCU	45	Yes	English	7 Sept 2020
	Inception Phase bilateral China	online	11 Sept 2020	PCU	PCU	8	Yes	English	30 Sept 2020
	Inception Phase bilateral Cambodia	online	21 Sept 2020	PCU	PCU	7	Yes	English	30 Sept 2020
	Inception Phase bilateral Philippines	online	23 Sept 2020	PCU	PCU	23	Yes	English	30 Sept 2020
	Inception Phase bilateral Thailand	online	24 Sept 2020	PCU	PCU	13	Yes	English	30 Sept 2020

4.4 List(s) of meeting participants¹¹

⁸ Expand table if necessary

⁹ Expand table if necessary

¹⁰ Meeting types: Inter-governmental meeting, expert group meeting, project inception workshop, training workshop/seminar, partners consultation workshop, project Steering Committee meeting, other.

¹¹ Expand table if necessary

Meeting	No.	Name of participant	Nationality
The First Inception Phase meeting	45	See meeting report	Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines
Inception Phase bilateral China	8	See meeting report	China
Inception Phase bilateral Cambodia	7	See meeting report	Cambodia
Inception Phase bilateral Philippines	23	See meeting report	Philippines
Inception Phase bilateral Thailand	13	See meeting report	Thailand

4.5 Documents, other printed materials, videos, and soft products (such as CDs or websites)

No	Type ¹²	Title	Author(s) Editor(s)	Publisher	ISBN	Publication date
N/A						

¹² Documents and printed material types are: Report to inter-governmental meeting, technical publication, meeting report, technical/substantive report, brochures, media releases, etc.